

JESUS' FRIENDSHIP EXAMPLE

February 25, 2023

Verse: Proverbs 17:17: A friend is always a friend, and relatives are born to share our troubles.

As parents, we all want our children to develop healthy friendships. We know from our own personal experience that friendships can be difficult to navigate, especially as a child. A true friendship takes time to nurture and grow. So how do we as parents help our children form healthy friendships and teach them to be a good friend to others? We turn to Jesus, the ultimate model for a friend. Not only is he the best example for friendship, we can teach our children that he wants to be their friend too. Here are a few ideas to help guide your family on the friendship journey.



First, discuss what Jesus did to be a good friend and the impact it had on those around him.

- Jesus *spent time* with Zacchaeus ([Luke 19:1-10](#)). After Jesus visited Zacchaeus at his home, Zacchaeus changed his behavior. He stopped living a sinful life and went out of his way to make things right.
- Jesus talked with his disciples ([John 15:1-17](#)). Jesus no longer spoke to them as servants; he spoke to them as friends. He shared the secrets of God with them. Because of this, the disciples could share the love and Word of God with the rest of the world.
- Jesus listened to the cries of Mary and Martha ([John 11:1-44](#)). Jesus shared his friends' pain when their brother Lazarus died. Because of his empathy, Mary and Martha saw Jesus as a close friend who cared about their thoughts and feelings.

Next, let your child know Jesus wants to be their friend.

Sometimes children feel like no one likes them or wants to be their friend. It is important for them to know not only is Jesus a good friend, but he *wants to be their friend*. We know this because he tells us in Matthew 19:14. Read that verse to your children and talk with them about how Jesus loves them and that they belong in his kingdom.

Finally, ask your child to explain what they think it means to be a friend to Jesus. How might they respond to his friendship? Jesus sets his own best example for us to teach our kids how to be his friend.

- Friends spend time together. We show our friendship to Jesus by spending time with him. Share what spending time with Jesus looks like for you.

- Friends talk to each other. We talk to Jesus in prayer. Jesus wants us to share everything with him, just like we might with any of our earthly friends.
- Friends listen to each other. We can pause to listen to Jesus the same way he listens to us. This is a great time to teach our children that prayer is not only about talking to Jesus, but also about listening to what he has to say.

Remember that Jesus is *your* friend too! You can partner with him to teach your children the blessings of a godly friendship.

Want to do a deep dive? Check out Family Fire's article [Friends and Bullies: What Must Parents Do](#)

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