

## Unit 1: BFFs

**Faith Focus:** Jesus is our friend.

*Friends love all the time. (Proverbs 17:17)*

### SESSION 3

## GROW IN FAITH

### Friends Notice—Luke 19:1-10

Zacchaeus was short. This is likely the most well-known characteristic about him. But we also know that Zacchaeus was a tax collector. In those times, tax collectors were allowed to keep any money collected beyond the official tax demanded. This type of system was corrupt, and most tax collectors were disliked.

Zacchaeus's short stature meant he must climb a tree to see. However, in Bible times it was considered undignified for a grown man to run and climb a tree. A man of Zacchaeus's importance as a tax collector would never do these things.

Zacchaeus's almost childlike, curious action eventually led to Jesus visiting Zacchaeus's house. Jesus' visit led to Zacchaeus giving half of his possessions to the poor and paying back anyone that he had cheated. Because of these gestures, Zacchaeus looked like a hero. Yet the true hero of the story is Jesus. Jesus' choice to notice Zacchaeus, despite his dishonest choices, made a bold statement. Jesus is a friend to everyone—even tax collectors.

- Discuss mistakes and change.
- Explore what we see or notice about others.

## SESSION OUTLINE

### COME TOGETHER

Prepare to Learn

Faith Focus—Jesus Is Our Friend

Zacchaeus in the Tree (Craft)

### FAITH CONNECTIONS

Read the Story

Big Faith Video

Faith Response

### FUN WITH FAITH

Hide Zacchaeus (Game)

Emotion Cards (Game)

Change One Thing (Game)

### SHARE YOUR FAITH

Big Faith Idea—Faith in Jesus

## SUPPLIES

scissors

glue or tape

craft sticks

CEB kids' Bible or CEB Bible storybook

TV and DVD player or streaming device

sticky notes

crayons

clothing accessories such as bracelets, hats, glasses, necklaces, and jackets

# COME TOGETHER

## Prepare to Learn

**Supplies:** All-Ages Class Pack, Activity Sheets, Activity Stickers

**Prepare Ahead:** Set up your area with the supplies and activity pages needed for today's session. Display the Unit 1 Bible Verse Poster (Class Pack—pp. 10 & 15), Unit 1 Faith Focus Poster (Class Pack—pp. 2 & 23), and Unit 1 Faith Response Poster (Class Pack—pp. 11 & 14) to use later in the session.

- As children arrive, invite them to join you in a circle.
- Give each child a copy of the "Spring Sticker Page" (Activity Sheets—p. 29) and their own set of Activity Stickers. Have children place the tree sticker on the Session 3 space.

**SAY:** In today's story, we will learn about a man who was so excited to meet Jesus, he climbed a tree. Jesus noticed the man and invited the man to join him. When we notice other people, we can be good friends.

## Faith Focus—Jesus Is Our Friend

**Supplies:** All-Ages Class Pack

**Prepare Ahead:** Display the Unit 1 Faith Focus Poster (Class Pack—pp. 2 & 23).

- Show children the Faith Focus Poster.

**SAY:** Our faith focus for today is "Jesus is our friend."

**ASK:** Have you ever been excited to meet someone? What did you do?

- Give children time and space to share their ideas.

## Zacchaeus in the Tree

**Supplies:** Activity Sheets, scissors, glue or tape, craft sticks

**Prepare Ahead:** Tear out "Zacchaeus in the Tree" (Session 3 Activity Sheet) for each child.

- Give each child an activity sheet.

**SAY:** One man who was excited to meet Jesus was named Zacchaeus. He climbed a sycamore tree just to see Jesus.

- Have the children cut out the tree and the Zacchaeus figure. Have each child glue or tape Zacchaeus to a craft stick. Help the children cut across the straight horizontal line in the middle of the tree so Zacchaeus can slide up into the tree from behind.

# FAITH CONNECTIONS

## Read the Story

**Supplies:** *CEB kids' Bible or CEB Bible storybook*

- Invite the children to join you in a circle.
- Read the story of Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10) from a CEB kids' Bible or your favorite CEB Bible storybook.

**ASK:** Why do you think Zacchaeus wanted to meet Jesus?

## Big Faith Video

**Supplies:** *Big Faith DVD, TV, DVD player or streaming device*

- Watch the Session 3 video on the Big Faith DVD or via your Amplify Media subscription.
- Give children time to respond to the questions on the screen. Discuss the questions as partner pairs, as small groups, or all together.

**ASK:** What was your favorite part of the video?

## Faith Response

**Supplies:** *All-Ages Class Pack, sticky notes, crayons*

**Prepare Ahead:** *Display the Unit 1 Faith Response Poster (Class Pack—pp. 11 & 14) and Unit 1 Bible Verse Poster (Class Pack—pp. 10 & 15) if you haven't already.*

- Invite children to wonder about the images on the posters.
- Encourage children to say the Bible verse with you: "Friends love all the time" (Proverbs 17:17).

**SAY:** Jesus notices all kinds of people. He wants everyone to have a chance to change and follow God. Zacchaeus was so deeply moved by Jesus that Zacchaeus forgave people's debts and gave back money he owed people.

**ASK:** How could you notice people who might not be noticed by others?

**SAY:** Jesus helped Zacchaeus feel loved and accepted. When Zacchaeus felt love, he learned how to show love.

- Lay the Faith Response Poster on the floor or a table and invite the children to gather around it.
- Give each child a sticky note and crayons.

**ASK:** What do you see on our poster?

- Invite each child to write one way she or he wants to show love to a friend.
- Let the children stick their notes to the poster.

# FUN WITH FAITH

## Hide Zacchaeus

**Supplies:** CEB kids' Bible or storybook Bible, Zacchaeus puppet from "Zacchaeus in the Tree."

**SAY:** Jesus came into Zacchaeus's town and was met by crowds. The crowds wanted to know what Jesus was teaching. Zacchaeus wanted to hear what Jesus had to say. He had to be creative to do it. Let's take turns hiding Zacchaeus around the room so he can hear what Jesus had to say.

- Choose one child to be the hider, one to be the reader, and one to be the seeker.
- Have the hider hide the Zacchaeus puppet while the seeker closes his or her eyes.
- Once Zacchaeus is hidden, have the seeker begin to look while the reader reads aloud from Luke 19:1-10. If the reader finishes before the seeker finds Zacchaeus, have the other children help the seeker by saying "hot" when the seeker is near the Zacchaeus puppet or "cold" when the seeker is far from it. Continue until every child has had a turn doing something.

## Emotion Cards

**Supplies:** crayons, scissors

**Prepare Ahead:** Make copies of "Emotion Cards" (Leader Guide—p. 28).

**SAY:** One way to be a good friend is to pay attention to your friend's emotions. We are going to practice with an emotion card game.

- Give each child a copy of "Emotion Cards" and have the children follow the directions.

## Change One Thing

**Supplies:** *clothing accessories such as bracelets, hats, glasses, necklaces, and jackets*

**SAY:** When we pay attention to our friends, we help them feel loved. Jesus noticed Zacchaeus. When Zacchaeus felt seen and loved, he changed his whole life. Let's practice helping our friends feel noticed.

- Choose one child to be the changer.
- Have the other children close their eyes while the changer changes one thing about herself or himself, using the accessories provided or his or her own ideas.
- Have the other children open their eyes.
- Encourage the children to notice the one thing that has changed. Continue until everyone has had a turn.

**ASK:** How did it feel when people noticed your change?

## SHARE YOUR FAITH

### Big Faith Idea—Faith in Jesus

**Supplies:** *All-Ages Class Pack*

**Prepare Ahead:** *Display the Spring Big Faith Idea Poster (Class Pack—pp. 4 & 21).*

*Photocopy the Unit 1 Family Faith Letter (Leader Guide—pp. 91–92) as needed.*

- Show children the Big Faith Idea Poster.

**SAY:** Jesus invites each of us to be a good friend. When we notice each other, we show we care.

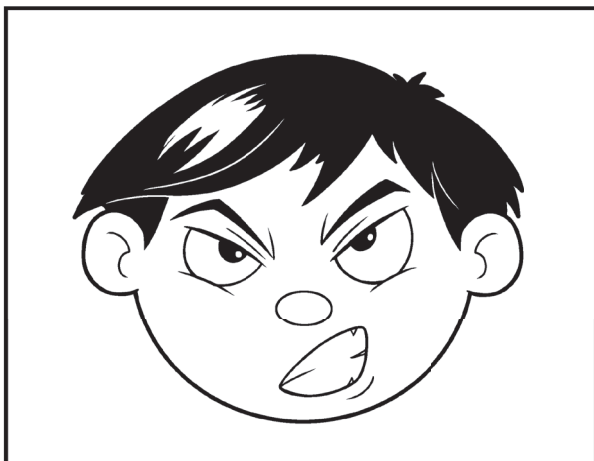
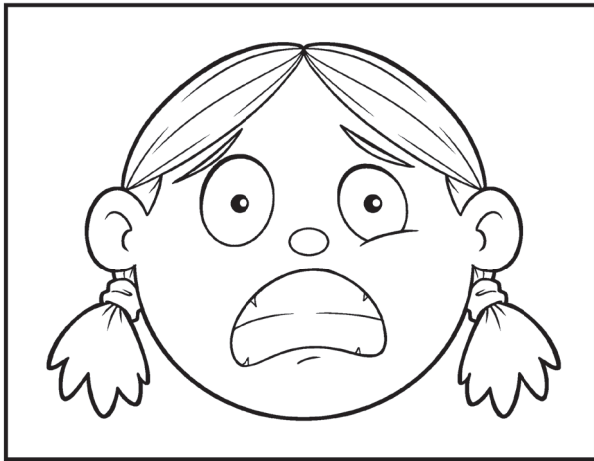
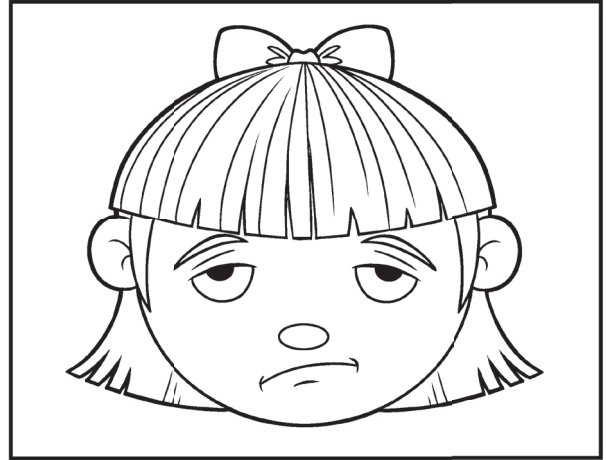
- Have the children gather in a circle.
- One at a time, invite each child to share one kind thing she or he notices about the person to her or his left.

**PRAY:** Thank you for friendship. We are grateful for the ways that friends care for us, encourage us, and notice us. Amen.

- Send the Family Faith Letter home with each child who hasn't received one yet.
- Send home any activities or items made during today's session.

## REPRODUCIBLE SESSION 3 Emotion Cards

Color the faces on the cards. Cut out the cards. Find a partner. Pick a card without showing your partner. Act out the emotion on the card and let your partner guess the emotion. Take turns until the two of you have used all of the cards.



Art: Omar Aranda/Gwen Walters Artists' Representative