



Date: _____
Series: Starting New
Fall Year 3, Lesson 15

Accepting Others

Take Home Point: *God accepts us because of Jesus; we can accept others.

*Repeat this phrase throughout the lesson.

Bible Event: 2 Corinthians 5:17-21. Accepting others as Christ has accepted us.

Key Verse: 2 Corinthians 5:19b, "He didn't hold people's faults against them, and he has given us this message of restored relationships (acceptance) to tell others."

Labor Day marks the season kids go back to school. We are aware this weekend is a challenge for churches to find enough substitute shepherds because so many families might be out of town. As a result, more time will be spent in large group.

We will help kids know:

- God accepts us through faith in Jesus Christ.
- God wants us to accept others, as well.




We will help kids feel:

- Convicted of times when they refuse to accept others with the love of Jesus because those people are annoying.
- Compassion for those who are lonely or left out.

We will help kids do:

- List traits which are annoying and that make it difficult to accept others.
- Look at annoying people with new eyes, see them the way God does, and accept them.

THIS LESSON'S ROADMAP

DESTINATION	PAGE #	DISCOVERIES ON YOUR JOURNEY	SUPPLIES NEEDED
Small Group Warm-Up 	3	Kids experience some problems of moving to a new area when playing “Who’s My Neighbor?”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a container filled with “Who’s My Neighbor?” slips—cut the strips from the appendix page titled “Who’s My Neighbor?” • poster board • yellow marker or highlighter
Large Group 	4 8	Overview Video — <i>The Puzzle Club: Pet-Napping Mystery</i> and discuss 2 Corinthians 5:17-21.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the video, <i>The Puzzle Club: Pet-Napping Mystery</i> cued to the beginning of the story. The video is produced by Envoy Productions and available through the Lutheran Hour by calling (800) 442-0324 or on the Internet at www.amazon.com.
Small Group Application 	4	Kids learn that by first looking at God through Jesus’ finished work on the cross, they see others as he does.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • blue marker • poster board used in warm-up • strips of yellow cellophane for each child

Small Group Warm-Up: 15 minutes



Purpose: *Get pointed in the right direction!* Build relationships and help guests feel at ease. Do the learning readiness activity that will point your group in the right direction for the lesson.

As today is on Labor Day weekend, attendance may be low so small groups should consider combining. As a result of this, the following game is easy for groups of various sizes to interact.

Supplies needed: slips cut apart from the appendix page titled, “Who’s My Neighbor?” and a container in which to place the slips, poster board, yellow marker or highlighter

Have the kids sit in a large circle. Walk around the inside of the circle with the container filled with “Who’s My Neighbor?” slips.

Let’s play a game to think about who our neighbors are. If I stop in front of you, ask me, “Who’s my neighbor?” I will let you draw a slip from the box and read it out loud. Then everyone that fits that description will have to get up from the circle, quickly run from his or her spot, and sit in an empty spot in the circle. Try not to be the last one to find a new seat. You cannot sit in your original place. You must go to a new “neighborhood.”

I will do the first one as an example. I first ask the question, “Who’s my neighbor?” Then I will pick out a slip and read it. It reads, “Anyone wearing yellow.” Now all of the people wearing yellow quickly get up and go to a new space in the circle that has been left by someone else.

Continue the game for a few minutes and then begin a discussion with the entire group.

Most of you have recently started school again. Was it scary when you went to a new class?

Did you worry about being accepted by others?

This is kind of like our game. Sometimes it can be awkward to get up and go to a new place or try to fit in. Did you know that some people have a difficult time accepting or helping new people fit in?

Here’s what I would like you to do. Think of someone who is difficult for you to accept. What is it about this person that annoys you? Don’t tell me his or her name. As soon as you can think of some

annoying things about this person, raise your hand. I will call on you and write down some of the things you say.

Write on a poster board or newsprint with a yellow marker or highlighter. (*Using this color of marker is important later as yellow cellophane will be placed over the children's eyes so when they try to read these words they all "disappear."*)

After the kids have given several examples, introduce the large group event.

Today we will watch a movie in which one girl has a very difficult time accepting someone who annoyed her. But she also found out that God's love was so strong that she could accept this person, even if she did not like some of the annoying things this girl did.

We will also find the secret of learning to accept others even if they annoy us. The truth is that all of us have annoyed God, but he accepts us and gives us his love in Jesus.

Today we will learn that **God accepts us because of Jesus; so we can accept others.*

Large Group Overview: 20-30 minutes



Purpose: *Help kids observe what the Bible says. Present the Bible event in creative fashion. Help kids begin to interpret what it means.*

Video: *The Puzzle Club: Pet-Napping Mystery* and discuss 2 Corinthians 5:17-21.

Small Group Application: 20-25 minutes



Purpose: *Help kids map out the meaning of the Bible event in their lives. Use the questions to stimulate discussion but don't feel tied to them. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide you. Include personal examples from your own faith journey. The example of Christ at work in your life will leave lasting impressions of how Christ can work in the children's lives.*

Use your Bibles! Children need to learn how to look up references and follow along when scripture is read aloud. Allow for quality time of prayer at the close of the lesson.

Observation Questions: What happened?/ Interpretation Questions: What does this mean?

Have kids look up 2 Corinthians 5:17-21.

2 Corinthians 5:17 says a believer is a new creation. A believer now does not live in the old sinful way, but in what way? (*A new way of living.*)

How has God restored our relationship with him? (*2 Corinthians 5:18-19. Through Christ.*)

What are we to do now that our relationship with God is restored? (*2 Corinthians 5:19. Tell others this good message.*)

If God loves us even when we are annoying, how does he want us to treat others who are annoying? (*With love and acceptance.*)

Application Questions: What does this mean to me?

Application Activity:

Supplies needed: blue marker, poster board from warm-up activity, strip of yellow cellophane for each child

Take out the poster board with the yellow writing. As you review some of the annoying characteristics written there, ask the kids if they have ever done those things themselves.

Do you think you have ever been annoying to God? (*The obvious answer is yes.*)

We do more than annoy God. Sin is an insult to God. Did he reject us? No. He looks at us in a different way.

At this point take a blue marker and draw an outline of the cross on the poster board over the writing.

God has made a way to look at you and not let the annoying things that you do separate you from him. Who can tell me how he did this? (*Jesus died on the cross for our sins and rose again. See 2 Corinthians 5:21.*)

If we have faith in Jesus, when God looks at us, this is what he sees.

Give each kid a strip of yellow cellophane and have them hold it over their eyes and look at the poster board. Since the yellow writing blends into the yellow lens color, the annoying characteristics are no longer highly distinguishable. Say:

God sees the finished work of the cross instead of our annoying habits. Can we look at people this way, too? Can we look at them the way God looks at them?

The key verse for today from 2 Corinthians 5:19b says,

“He didn’t hold people’s faults against them, and he has given us this message of restored relationships (acceptance) to tell others.”

We can see others as people God loves, too. We can be messengers for God to help them feel accepted by others and us.

Now let’s think of some ways we can look at a person who might annoy us and see this person in a whole new way. Let’s try to see these people the way God sees them so we can accept them and love them that way.

I will write down some of the ways that we can see them differently. I will write in blue so those things will show up with our special lenses.

Write the following words: forgiven, loved by God, one of a kind and valuable on the poster board.

When you see others in these ways, you can also start noticing some of the good things about them.

Tell me some good things about some of the people you might find annoying. Let’s write those things down, too.

Today we learned that **God accepts us because of Jesus; so we can accept others.*

Closing Prayer:

Kids, let’s get quiet and focus on the Lord. I would like you to pray in your heart as I pray out loud. No goofing off or letting your mind wonder. Every eye is closed and every head is bowed.

Dear God, we come to you and thank you for Jesus. We know there are a lot of annoying things about us that you could be very angry with. It seems like those things are written all over us. These are some things that we remember doing this last week that had to be annoying to you. We will name those things in our minds right now.

Pause for kids to silently reflect.

God, we pray that you would forgive those things. We thank you that because Jesus was perfect and gave his life for us, our sins are taken away. You don't focus on our sin anymore. It is like you look at us with special glasses that make all the annoying things disappear. Help us see just how much you love us.

God, now we think about some people who do annoying things to us. We will name one person in our minds right now before you.

Pause.

We need help loving this person and accepting this person the way you have accepted us. Help us to put new glasses on so we can forgive annoying things and accept these people. Help us to see these people the way you do. God, please help us to think of some things we can do this week to better accept and encourage this person. Put a thought in our minds that shows us what you would want us to do to share the love of Jesus with that person.

Pause.

Thank you for answering our prayer. We love you. In Jesus' name. Amen.

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Large Group Presentation

Without much introduction, start the video *The Puzzle Club: Pet-Napping Mystery*, produced by Envoy Productions, at the beginning of the story. *(It will last twenty-two minutes.)*

After showing the video, use an easy-reading version of the Bible (such as God's Word translation) to read 2 Corinthians 5:17-21. A key verse for today's lesson is verse 19: *"In other words, God was using Christ to restore his relationship with humanity. He didn't hold people's faults against them..."*

Because of our sin, God could have rejected us forever and never let us be part of his heavenly family. This passage tells us that God used Christ to restore his relationship with us. This means that Jesus died on the cross so that God could accept us even if we are annoying.

The rest of the verse tells us how we can accept others. It reads, "...and he has given us this message of restored relationships to tell others. Therefore, we are Christ's representatives, and through us God is calling you." That means that we can show how God has accepted us and loved us so that we can love others and show them our love.

Today you will have the chance to look at other people the way God looks at you. You will be given new glasses just like Tobias. He used glasses in the video to look at people to see them the way God sees them.

If time allows, you might ask the kids if they have ever done anything that annoyed God. Get specific and have some fun as a few responses are gathered.

Close in prayer:

Dear God, we know we are annoying to you at times. Yet because you love us so, you sent us Jesus. Because of Jesus' death on the cross, you accept us in spite of the wrong that we do. Thank you. Help us to see others and love them as you do. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Appendix

“Who’s My Neighbor?”

The following categories can be cut out in strips and put in a box, bag, or hat to be drawn out and read. These will answer the question, “Who’s my neighbor?”

Is wearing a sports shoe.

Is wearing yellow.

Has blue eyes.

Goes to _____ Elementary School.

Read at least one book this summer.

Ate cereal for breakfast.

Played(s) on a soccer team.

Is wearing a necklace, ring, or watch.