



Connections I

A man once asked Jesus about the most important commandment. Jesus said that the first and greatest commandment was to love God with all of our emotions, body, spirit and mind, and the second was like it – to love other people as much as we love ourselves. Jesus also invited his followers to love each other as he had loved them (John 13:34). But how can we really love each other the way God intended?

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Before you start:

1. Prayerfully read through the whole lesson at least twice.
2. Gather all the materials you need for each section (see right).
3. Work with another team member and plan who will manage each section of the session.

Leadership Personal Preparation:

- As you study this lesson for yourself take some time to think about your own relational connections. Which two of these five relational connectors are most important to you? When did someone relationally connect with you in one of these special ways? What did they do? How did it feel when someone showed you God's love in this way?
- Think about the relational connections that the people around you need. Try appreciating them, showing them acceptance, being warmly affectionate, etc, and notice the difference it makes to your relationship.
- If the Holy Spirit invites you to do so, be willing to share something of your experiences during today's session. Otherwise use the inspiration of your personal experience to fill you with enthusiasm for today's session.

- Biro, pencils, permanent marker pens
- Paper
- Icebreaker - Connected**
- Balls of attractive, thick, multi-coloured wool – 1 per family or group of 3-4 people
- Word Search:**
- Copies of Word Search studies - 1 per person
- Mission Possible - Connection Collection:**
- Copies of 'Connection Collection' – 1 per person copied onto thin card
- Family Focus Time:**
- Cups and drinks
- Family Discussion Cards - 1 card per family
- Family Prayer Time:**
- One plain index card or postcard-sized piece of card per person
- Felt-tipped pens
- Jesus and Me (JAM) Session:**
- CD player and CD of soft worship music
- One set of 'JAM' Journal Pages per participant
- Take-away Menu (optional):**
- A ball of attractive, thick, multi-coloured wool (perhaps the same wool you used for the Icebreaker)
- Scissors

You will need:

By the end of the session, the group members will:

- Know that they help each other to experience God's love when they take the time to 'love one another' and build healthy relationships.
- Feel a desire to connect with others by meeting the relational needs of those around them.
- Respond by asking God to help them see other people through his loving eyes so that they become more aware of other people's needs.



KID for Teens: Leaders Guide: Connections I



Welcome and Prayer – 3 mins

Say:

“ In the Old Testament God gave his people, through Moses, the Ten Commandments to show us how to love God and love other people. When Jesus lived on earth he told people that the most important commandments were to love God with all their heart and soul and mind and to love their neighbours as themselves. But how do we put these commandments into action in our everyday relationships with each other?

Paul helped by scattering lots of different relational connection commandments throughout his letters and writings. We know we’ve stumbled across one of these connection commandments when we find the words ‘one another’. These ‘one-another’ statements are jam-packed with wisdom to help us have better relationships with the people we love, and to make good connections with the people around us, all through our lives.”

Icebreaker - Connected - 10 mins

This activity is best done in family groups – but if you feel your group would be happier doing this in friendship groups you can adapt it to suit your needs.

You will need:

1. Balls of attractive, thick, multi-coloured wool – 1 per family or group of 3-4 people (or use any kind of string or wool)
- Give the oldest person in each family or group a ball of wool.
 - Ask each group to stand in a circle about 3 metres in diameter.
 - Ask the person with the ball of wool to keep hold of the loose end of the wool and to throw the ball of wool to someone else in the group, so that the wool connects them.
 - The person throwing the ball of wool must say something appreciative to the person who catches the ball of wool. Such as, ‘I really appreciated it when you helped me to clear up after dinner this evening.’

- The person who has just caught the ball of wool keeps holding onto the strand of wool and throws the ball of wool to another person.
- Again, the thrower says something appreciative about the person who catches the ball of wool.
- Allow the groups to keep doing this for about 5-7 minutes, making sure that everyone is appreciated at least 3 times.
- Ask the groups to notice how connected they have become by the strands of wool, and by their experience of appreciation.
- Ask each group to wind up their ball of wool neatly and give it back to you.

Feedback - Ask:

‘How do words of appreciation help you to feel warmly connected to each other?’

What effect might a lack of appreciation, or criticism, have on these warm connections?’





KID for Teens: Leaders Guide: Connections I



Word Search - 30 mins

You will need:

1. Paper and pens
 2. Copies of Word Search studies - 1 set of studies per person
- Divide your large group into 5 smaller groups and allocate one of the studies to each group.
 - Allow 20 minutes study time.
 - Bring the groups back together for some brief feedback and encourage everyone to study the other topics during the week.

Ask: 'What difference do you think it will make to your relationships when you put these connecting-one-another principles into practice?'

Mission Possible – Connection Collection - 10 mins

You will need:

1. Copies of 'Connection Collection' - 1 per person copied onto thin card
 2. Pens
- Give one copy of the 'Connection Collection' to each person.
 - Ask them to find 5 other people to connect with, including at least two people they may not know so well.
 - Whenever they find someone to connect with they must write something in one of the boxes on each other's 'Connection Collection' card.
 - Each person can only write in one of the other person's boxes.
 - Allow 5-7 minutes for this activity.

Ask: 'What effect did this 'connecting' activity have on your relationships with each other?'

Family Focus – 15 mins

You will need:

1. Drinks and cups
 2. Family Discussion Cards
- Serve drinks.
 - Let the everyone re-assemble into their family groups, collecting a drink on the way.
 - Give each family a discussion card.

Family Prayer Time - 10 mins

You will need:

1. One plain index card or postcard-sized piece of card per person
 2. Felt-tipped pens
 3. One plain index card or postcard-sized piece of card per person
 4. Felt-tipped pens
- Give each person a card and a felt-tipped pen.
 - Ask them to draw a pair of eyes on their card and write 'Dear God, please help me to see other people through your eyes rather than mine. Amen.'

Say: 'When we see people through God's eyes we are more likely to understand the kinds of connections we need to make with them.'

- Ask the families to sit together in their own circles and to spend a few minutes quietly thinking about each other and 'looking' at each other through God's eyes.
- Ask them to wonder about how they see each other differently when they look at each other from God's perspective.
- Ask them to use this quiet prayer experience to think about how God wants them to connect with each other.

Jam Session (Jesus and Me) - 5 mins

You will need:

1. CD player and CD of soft worship music
 2. One set of 'Jesus and Me' Journal Pages per participant
- Give out the 'Jesus and Me' journal pages for this week.
 - Allow at least five minutes for people to make a start on their pages so that they will be encouraged to complete their projects during the week ahead.

Take-Away Menu (optional)

You will need:

1. A ball of attractive, thick, multi-coloured wool (use the same wool you used for the Icebreaker)
 2. Scissors
- Cut the wool into lengths of at least 30cm.
 - Give each person a length of wool to remind them to create warm connections with other people, because every warm connection helps each person to be stronger and to experience more of God's love for them.

Closing Prayer





27 KID for Teens: Handout: Connections I Word Search - Acceptance



Welcoming each other unconditionally, without criticism or rejection, whatever mistakes have been made.

Read Romans 15:7 and write it here:

What does this verse tell us about how to accept each other?

How did Jesus connect with other people by accepting them?

John 8:1-11

Luke 19:1-10

What can we learn about accepting each other from these two stories?

How do you know when someone needs to feel accepted?

How would you show someone else that you accepted them as completely as Jesus has accepted you? What difference would this acceptance connection make to both of you?

Tell each other about a time when you felt completely accepted by someone, after you had made a big mistake.





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KID for Teens: Handout: Connections I Word Search - Affection



Showing care and love for each other through words and actions

Read Romans 16:16, and Mark 10:13-16, and write them here:

What do these verses tell us about showing warmth and love to each other?

How else did Jesus connect with people by caring for them in warm and affectionate ways?

Mark 1:40-42

John 13:3-12

What can we learn from these stories about showing caring affection to each other?

How would you know when someone close to you needs to hear some caring words, or experience an affectionate touch?

What are some of the warm and caring things you could say and do to connect with someone who needs to feel loved and wanted?

Tell each other about a time when someone's caring love made a difference to your life.



27 KID for Teens: Handout: Connections I Word Search - Appreciation



Saying thank you, or praising each other

Read 1 Corinthians 11:2, 2 Corinthians 7:4 and Philippians 1:4 and write them here:

What do these verses tell us about the importance of saying thank you and praising each other?

Paul's letter to the Corinthians suggests that there were quite a few big problems in the church in Corinth, but he still praises them! Why do you think he did this?

How did Jesus connect with a woman by meeting her need for appreciation and gratitude?

Matthew 26:4-13

How do you think Jesus felt when some people forgot to say thank you? Luke 17:11-19

What can we learn from these stories about the importance of appreciating each other?

How would you know if someone needed your appreciation?

What are some of the things you could say or do to connect with other people by appreciating them? What difference might your appreciation make to those around you?

Tell each other a story about a time when someone appreciated you in a way that was really helpful. What effect did the appreciation have on your relationship with each other?





27 KID for Teens: Handout: Connections I Word Search - Approval



Showing each other how much you value your relationship

Read Ephesians 4:29, and Mark 1:11 and write them here:

What do these verses tell us about showing each other that we value our relationships?

How did God show how much he valued his son Jesus?

Matthew 3:16-17

How do you think Jesus felt when he heard these words?

How did Jesus show his friends how much he valued his relationship with them?

John 15:15

How do you think the disciples felt when they heard these words?

What can we learn from these stories about valuing the relationships we have with each other?

How could we tell if someone close to us needed to know how much we valued the relationship we have with them?

What are some of the things we could say and do to show others how much we value our relationships with them?

Tell each other any stories you have about a time when someone showed you how much they valued their relationship with you.





KID for Teens: Handout: Connections I Word Search - Attention



Being interested in each other's lives, sharing in each other's hobbies, etc

Read 1 Corinthians 12:24b-27 and Philemon 22 and write them here:

What do these verses tell us about being interested in the things that matter to other people?

How did Jesus meet our need for attention, and enter our world?

Philippians 2:1-8

Matthew 1:23

How did Jesus connect with the Samaritan woman by paying attention to the important things in her life?

John 4:3-15

What can we learn from this story about the importance of being interested in the things that matter to other people, or the things that are important to them?

How could you tell if someone needed some attention, someone to listen to their ideas or someone who was interested in learning more about them?

What could you say or do to show someone that you're really interested in their life and the things that are important to them?

Tell each other what happened when someone took the time to be interested in the things that really mattered to you. How did this positively affect your relationship with the other person?



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KID for Teens: Handout: Connections I Connection Collection



Instructions:

- Find five people to connect with, including at least two people you don't know very well.
- Each time you find a partner you must write something in one of the boxes on each other's 'Connection Collection' card.
- Each person can only write in one of your boxes.
- Each person must write in a different box.
- You have 5 minutes to fill all your boxes.
- Connect!

Something I appreciate about what you do or have done is...

Write something warm and caring in this box.

Write a question in this box that shows you are interested in this person's life.

Write a blessing in this box, or something that shows how much you value your relationship with this person.

Something special I have noticed about you is...

Lesson 27 -

FAMILY Discussion CARD

I think the most important relational connector for me at the moment is... (acceptance, affection, appreciation, approval, attention)

A time when someone met my connection need for acceptance was ...

If someone wanted to give me attention I would like them to...

Something new I learned from today's Word Search was...

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27 Jesus and Me: Journal Lesson 27: Connections I: Acceptance



Collect some more stories of total acceptance.

<p>IN THE BIBLE</p> <p>Zacchaeus</p>	<p>IN THE NEWS</p> <p>A mother whose son had been murdered in South Africa adopted her son's killer as her own son when he came out of prison</p>
<p>IN NOVELS, FILMS, STORIES, ETC.</p> <p>Beauty and the Beast</p>	<p>IN MY LIFE</p> <p>The most meaningful acceptance I ever received in my life was when:</p>

Imagine how it felt to be the different characters in these stories when they experienced total acceptance.

What difference does it make to your relationship with God when another human being accepts you unconditionally?

What difference could your unconditional acceptance make to someone else's relationship with God?

Who is the person that most needs to experience your acceptance? What difference could your acceptance make to their life and yours?





27 Jesus and Me: Journal Lesson 27: Connections I: Affection



List at least twenty ways to show affection

10 *WAYS YOU CAN USE WORDS TO SHOW CARE AND AFFECTION:*

1. *Send a caring text message*
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

10 *THINGS YOU CAN DO TO SHOW CARE AND AFFECTION:*

1. *Pat someone on the back*
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

What's your favourite way of receiving affection?

Which person in your family most needs your hug, a pat on the back, or to hear how much you love them?

How does being warm and caring towards someone else help both of you to experience God's love in a richer way?





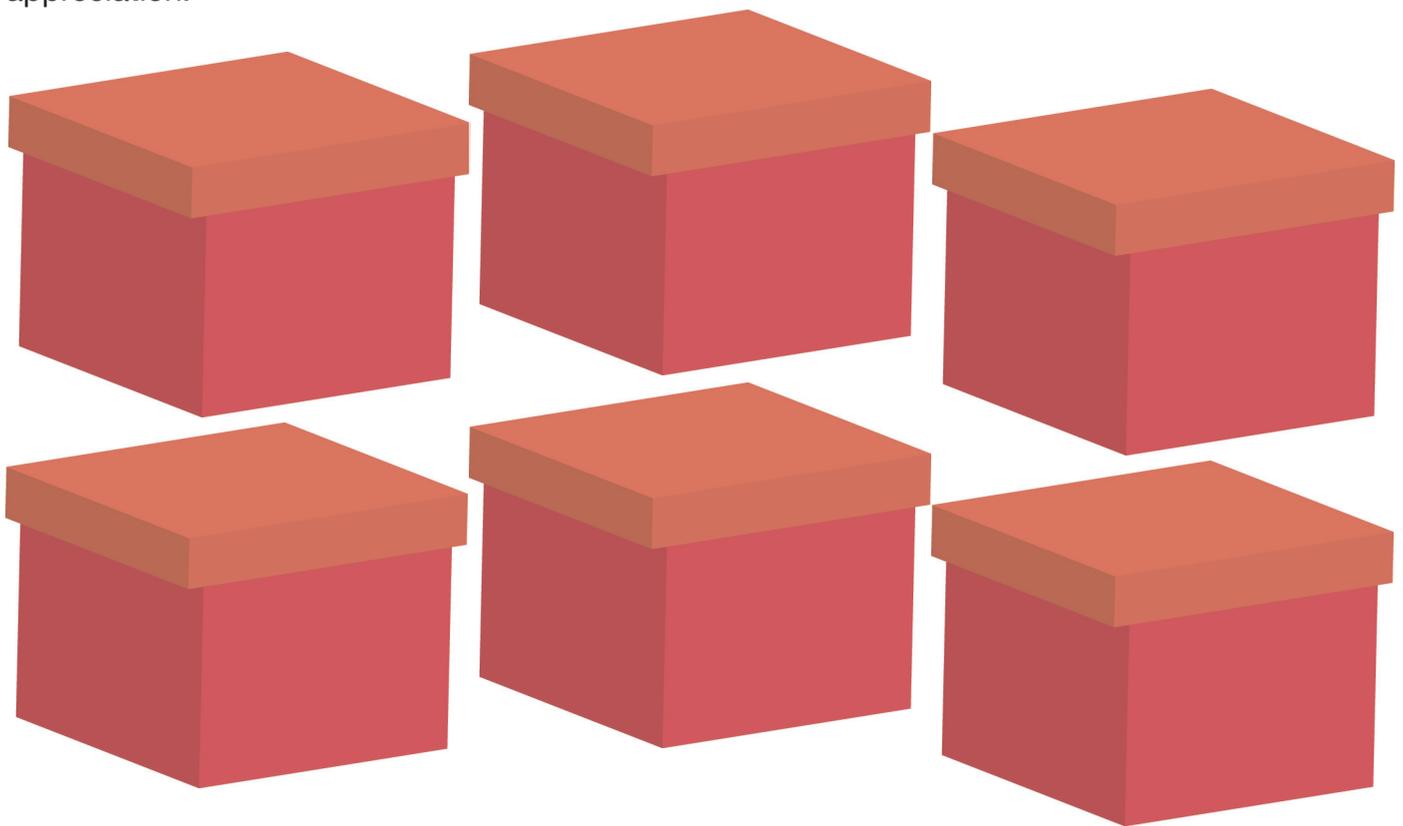
27 Jesus and Me: Journal Lesson 27: Connections I: Appreciation



What would be the best way to show appreciation to each person in your family for some of the special things they have done for you?

E.g. Thank you cards, talking to them and telling them how much you appreciate them, writing a letter, sending flowers, finding an appropriate gift, etc...

Write each person's name on a different box and then write down how you'll show them your appreciation.



Which person in your family would appreciate your appreciation the most?

What effect does being thankful and appreciative towards each other have on your relationships?

What effect does being thankful and appreciative towards each other have on each person's relationship with God?





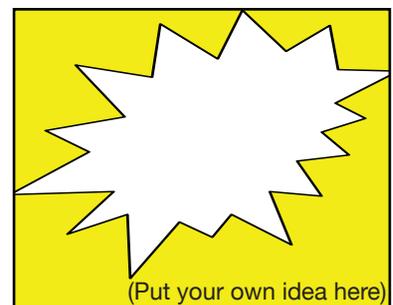
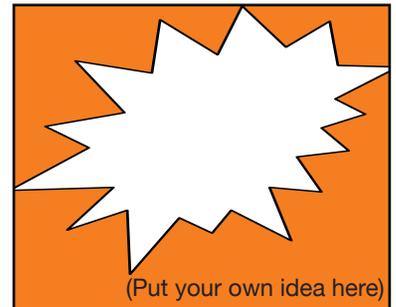
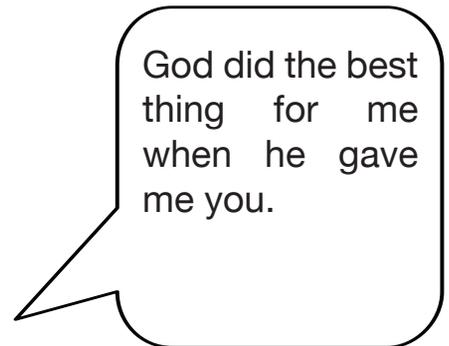
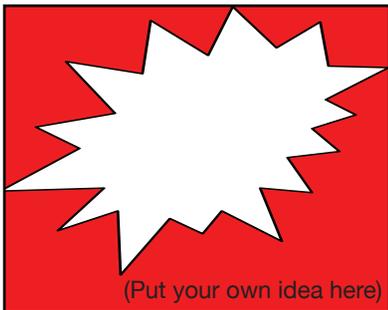
27 Jesus and Me: Journal Lesson 27: Connections I: Approval



Here are some examples of things people can say or do to show how much they value each other.

✓ Put a tick in the ones you would like someone to say or do for you.

○ the ones you would like to do for someone else.





27 Jesus and Me: Journal Lesson 27

Connections I: Attention



What are the things that interest your family and friends?
How could you take a bigger interest in their lives?

PERSON'S NAME	THE IMPORTANT THINGS IN THEIR LIVES (PEOPLE HOBBIES, WORK, HOPES, STUDY, GOD, ETC)	WHAT COULD YOU DO TO TAKE A BIGGER INTEREST IN THEIR LIVES - QUESTIONS YOU COULD ASK AND THINGS YOU COULD DO - SUCH AS SHARE IN THEIR HOBBES, HELP THEM TO STUDY, ETC.

How do you feel when someone pays real attention to you, listens to you, asks you questions about your life, cares about your hopes and dreams, and joins you in your hobbies?

Make a list of questions you could ask that would show you were really interested in someone else's life.

How can taking the time to connect with each other by being interested in each other's lives, help you to experience God's personal interest in each of your lives?

