

Loop Teaching: The People You Choose

Teaching Focus: Choose close friends who help you follow Jesus and grow in wisdom.

Scripture: “I have given you an example to follow. Do as I have done to you.” • John 13:15 NLT

1. Opening & Prayer

“Today we’re going to learn how the people we choose as close friends can influence us. As you watch the video, pay attention to what qualities show that a friend is helping you follow Jesus and grow in wisdom.”

Let’s pray.

“Dear God, thank You for the people You have placed in our lives. Please give us wisdom to choose close friends who help us follow Jesus and grow in wisdom. Help us follow Jesus’ example and be honest, kind, encouraging, and wise friends to others. Help us listen carefully and learn from today’s message. We love You. In Jesus’ name, amen.”

2. Video Lesson on Jellyfin

3. Discussion

“Let’s talk about what we learned in today’s Loop video. Jesus was the Lord and Teacher of His disciples, but during their last meal together, He chose to serve them by washing their feet.”

- “Why was it surprising that Jesus washed His disciples’ feet, and what did His actions teach them?”
(*Washing feet was normally a servant’s job. Jesus showed that loving others means serving them humbly, even when you are the leader.*)
- “John 13:15 says, ‘I have given you an example to follow. Do as I have done to you.’ What qualities show that a friend is helping you grow closer to Jesus? How can you be that kind of friend?”
(*A wise friend encourages prayer, honesty, kindness, wise choices, and obedience to Jesus. We can be that kind of friend by practicing those qualities and serving others as Jesus did.*)

“Jesus didn’t only tell His friends how to love—He showed them. The people closest to us can influence the direction of our lives, so we should choose wisely and serve our friends like Jesus. Remember our **[Teaching Focus] Choose close friends who help you follow Jesus and grow in wisdom.**”

4. Wise Friend Keychains

What You Need:

- ☐ Blank wooden keychain tags with metal rings attached, one per child
- ☐ Fine-tip acrylic paint pens or permanent markers
- ☐ Pencils and erasers
- ☐ Adjustable keychain cords, one per child
- ☐ Decorative beads (optional)
- ☐ Small cups or shallow trays for organizing beads
- ☐ One completed sample



What You Do:

Before the Activity:

- Attach one metal key ring to each wooden tag before the activity.
- Make one completed sample. On one side, write "John 13:15." Decorate the other side however you want, but write one quality of a good friend on it. Add a short beaded strand to the key ring.
- Write these suggested friendship qualities on the whiteboard:
 - KIND
 - HONEST
 - ENCOURAGING
 - WISE
 - HELPFUL
 - TRUSTWORTHY
- Prepare one adjustable cord per child. Pre-start or pre-tie the cords if needed.
- Place the decorative beads in small cups or shallow trays. Do not set out letter beads.

During the Activity:

- Give each child one assembled wooden keychain, a pencil, and access to the paint pens or markers.
- Show the completed sample and explain that one side will connect the keychain to today's Scripture. Have the children write "John 13:15" on that side and decorate around it.
- Have each child choose one friendship quality from the whiteboard. Encourage them to choose a quality they want in their closest friends and also want God to grow in them.
- Have the children lightly sketch the quality word on the other side of the wooden tag. Then they may trace it with a paint pen or marker and decorate the remaining space.
- Remind the children to keep their writing and designs away from the hole and metal ring.
- After the wooden tag is finished, give each child one prepared adjustable cord.
- Invite the children to add approximately six to ten decorative beads. They may choose their favorite colors or create a repeating pattern.
- Have the children bring their completed pieces to a leader. The leader should secure the beaded strand and attach it to the metal ring beside the wooden tag.
- Place the keychains in a designated area until the ink is completely dry.

After the Activity:

- Invite the children to show a partner the friendship quality they chose and explain why it is important.
- Collect all loose beads and return them to the appropriate containers.
- Check that every cord is secure before children take their keychains home.

What You Say:

Before the Activity:

"Today we learned that the people we choose as our closest friends can influence our words, attitudes, and choices. John 13:15 reminds us that Jesus gave us an example to follow. Wise friends should point us toward Jesus and help us grow in wisdom. Remember our **[Teaching Focus] Choose close friends who help you follow Jesus and grow in wisdom.** Today you will make a keychain that reminds you to choose wise friends and to be a wise friend."

During the Activity:

“Write ‘John 13:15’ on one side of your wooden tag. This Scripture will remind you that Jesus is our example. On the other side, choose one quality of a good friend from the whiteboard. Think about the qualities you want in your closest friends, but also think about the kind of friend you are becoming.”

“As you add your beads, choose colors and patterns that make your keychain your own. Each time you see your keychain, let it remind you to follow Jesus’ example, choose your closest friends wisely, and show this friendship quality to others.”

After the Activity:

“Your keychain can remind you that close friends have an important influence on your life. We should love and show kindness to everyone, but we should choose our closest friends wisely. Look for friends who help you follow Jesus, tell you the truth with kindness, encourage wise choices, and help you grow in wisdom. Ask Jesus to help you become that kind of friend too.”

EveryChild Pro-Tips

- Lightly pencil the chosen word onto the wooden tag for a child to trace when needed.
- Provide a larger pencil grip or allow a partner or leader to help steady the tag.
- Let children skip the beads and decorate only the wooden tag if stringing beads is difficult or uncomfortable.
- Prepare a few simple beaded strands in advance so children who need assistance can choose one for a leader to attach.

5. Wise Friend Charades (Optional, if time allows)

What You Need:

- ☐ One printed set of Wise Friend Charades cards
- ☐ Scissors
- ☐ Small container or bag
- ☐ Timer or phone timer

What You Do:

Before the Activity:

- Print and cut apart the 12 Wise Friend Charades cards.
- Fold the cards and place them in a small container or bag.
- Divide the children into two teams. Have the teams sit where they can clearly see the person acting.

During the Activity:

- Explain that players will silently act out the action written on their card.
- Players may use motions and facial expressions, but they may not speak, make sounds, spell words in the air, or point to objects in the room.
- Invite one child from the first team to draw a card. Quietly help the child read it if needed.
- Give the child 30 seconds to act out the card while their team guesses.
- Award the team one point if they guess correctly. If time runs out, reveal the answer and continue without taking away points.
- After each answer, briefly name the friendship quality represented by the action. For example: 'Helping someone up shows that you are a helpful and caring friend.'
- Alternate teams until all 12 cards have been used or time runs out. Encourage different children to act during each round. No child is eliminated from the game.

Wise Friend Charades Cards:

- Helping someone get back up
- Inviting someone to join a game
- Sharing your pencils with someone
- Cheering for a friend
- Praying with a friend
- Reading the Bible with a friend
- Listening while a friend talks
- Comforting someone who is sad
- Picking up something someone dropped
- Letting someone go first
- Helping someone carry a heavy box
- Returning something that someone lost

After the Activity:

- Ask: 'Which of these actions would you want a close friend to show?'
- Ask: 'Which action could you practice this week?'
- Collect the cards and supplies.

What You Say:**Before the Activity:**

"We're going to play Wise Friend Charades. Each card shows an action that a wise and caring friend might do. You will act it out without speaking while your team tries to guess the action."

During the Activity:

"Pay attention to each action and think about what it tells us about that person. Our actions can show whether we are helpful, honest, caring, welcoming, or encouraging."

After the Activity:

"Jesus didn't only tell His friends how to love and serve others. He showed them through His actions. John 13:15 says, 'I have given you an example to follow. Do as I have done to you.' We should look for friends whose actions help us follow Jesus, and we should practice being that kind of friend too. Remember our ***[Teaching Focus] Choose close friends who help you follow Jesus and grow in wisdom.***"

EveryChild Pro-Tips

- Allow two children to act out a card together if someone is uncomfortable performing alone.
- Quietly read the card to children who need help.
- Let children participate by guessing if they do not want to act.
- For a small group, play cooperatively instead of dividing into teams. Try to guess all 12 cards together.