



REAL RELATIONSHIPS

ABOUT THIS SERIES

Middle school is full of changing friendships, big feelings, and new relationships. In this series, students will discover that God cares about every relationship in their lives and shows us how to treat others well. Following Jesus helps us build relationships that are healthy, respectful, and help us grow.

WEEK 1 – Christ-Centered and Respectful

TEXT: Philippians 2:1-5

BIG IDEA: Healthy relationships are Christ-centered and respectful.

SUMMARY: Jesus shows us what real love looks like—putting others first, showing kindness, and choosing respect. This week, students will learn that whether it's a friendship, a crush, or dating, our relationships should reflect the way Jesus loves people. Being Christ-centered means we think about how our words, actions, and choices affect others and honor God.

DATING HIGHLIGHT: This same idea applies to dating. When you eventually meet someone you're interested in, the concept doesn't change. We're meant to treat that person the same way we would anyone else who's made in the image of God.

WEEK 2 – Healthy Boundaries

TEXT: Proverbs 4:23

BIG IDEA: Healthy relationships have healthy boundaries

SUMMARY: God tells us to “guard our hearts” because our hearts matter to Him. This week, students will learn that boundaries aren't about rules or fear—they're about making wise choices that keep us safe emotionally, physically, and spiritually. Students will explore age-appropriate boundaries in friendships and dating and learn that healthy boundaries help relationships stay healthy.

DEFINITION OF BOUNDARIES: Boundaries are decisions we make ahead of time that help us honor God and protect people

DATING HIGHLIGHT: When people start dating, if they haven't established these boundaries early, we become reactive and usually it's too late. As middle schoolers, you have the opportunity to establish healthy boundaries now that will protect you from pain later.

WEEK 3 – REALationships Help Us Grow

TEXT: Proverbs 27:17

BIG IDEA: Healthy relationships help us become more like Jesus.

SECONDARY POINT: Your best friend isn't the one you're closest to. Your best friends are the ones who consistently point you to Jesus.

SUMMARY: The people we spend time with influence who we become. This week, students will learn that good friends—and healthy dating relationships—encourage us to grow, make wise choices, and follow Jesus more closely. Students will be challenged to think about whether their relationships help them grow in kindness, faith, and character.

DATING HIGHLIGHT: This same principle applies to dating. The person you date, and maybe even marry one day, is someone you are choosing to tether your life to. They can either be a weight that drags you down or a floaty that helps keep you afloat. Choosing who you date is an essential decision because your goal is to choose someone who enables you to become more like Christ.