

Teaching resources for understanding **identity**



The Bible's answers to our big questions





Lesson 2

I AM MADE TO LOVE OTHERS

Genesis 1:26-27; 2:18-25

faith**in****kids**

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Who Am I?

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We recommend the International Children's Bible for use with children during the lesson. Our leader's notes and Take Home Sheets use the New International Version.

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Living Out (www.livingout.org) commissioned Faith in Kids (www.faithinkids.org) to produce these resources to help children build a permanent identity based on God's word. Visit www.faithinkids.org to download these resources and look out for accompanying podcasts for both children and parents.

'All for the glory of God alone' (1 Corinthians 10:31)

I AM MADE TO LOVE OTHERS

GENESIS 1:26-27 & 2:18-25



Thank you for using a Faith in Kids resource. We want to hear your feedback so we can keep improving our resources. Please [click the link](#) to fill out a short form or email us at info@faithinkids.org



Truth that changes me:

God is love. He made us to love others, like he does. It is not good for us to be alone.



Faith in Kids looks like:

Children who are willing to love others, not just seeking others to love them.



WHERE ARE WE GOING?

Our children will flourish best by learning to relate well to others. The passage shows friendship between diverse individuals. Our children can be inspired to love others, including those who are different to them, by understanding that this is part of their God-given purpose. Genesis 2 also gives us God's pattern for marriage: 1 man, 1 woman. Not everyone needs marriage. Everyone needs lasting, loving friendships. This session gives the opportunity to talk about same-sex attraction with over 8s.



NOTES

Pray and read the Bible passage. Read **Where are we going**, **The world our children live in** and **Look at the passage** to give you a better understanding of how to apply the truth.



THE WORLD OUR CHILDREN LIVE IN

'Be my best friend and you can come to my party' is the deal offered in the playground. In the early years, fall-outs and make-ups are common as children learn to navigate a world of relating to others. They see the popular kid choosing friends to reinforce their status. They see the outsider being left out because they are different. The unspoken assumption about others is, 'you are here for my benefit.' This can feed a desire for exclusivity - wanting a best friend (or boyfriend/girlfriend) who makes them the priority, providing an identity label and sense of value.

What begins in childhood can grow. At the extremes, others become stepping stones to get what we want, or barriers to be shoved aside. This is a stark contrast to the diverse and rich friendships God created us to cultivate and enjoy.



LOOK AT THE PASSAGE

Then God said, 'Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness.'

GENESIS 1:26

Made like God

When God created land, sea, animals etc. he said, 'Let there be... and it was so.' But here we read, 'Let us make mankind in *our* image, in *our* likeness.'

We have one God who within himself is an 'us'. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit are



always perfectly loving, relating to and delighting in one another. We are made in his image, for relationship with him and with others. He calls us to be part of an 'us', not just a 'me'. This doctrine of the Trinity is hard to understand, but at a simple level we can explain that God is an 'us' and made us like him to love others.

The Lord God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.'

GENESIS 2:18

Made to need friends

In the middle of God's good creation, something was 'not good'. Adam's life in the perfect garden wasn't good until he had someone to share it with. He couldn't enjoy it fully on his own. We're made to have people in our lives. We need friends because God made us to love like he does. Having people in our lives is as essential as having air in our lungs.

Made to be friends

God showed Adam every animal, but none was the helper he needed. God gave Adam someone similar but different to be his friend. She would be really interesting to get to know, bringing diversity to his world.

This first relationship was both a friendship and a marriage. It reveals God's design for marriage as being between 1 man and 1 woman, not between 2 men or 2 women. It also reveals our need for relationships with others who are similar but different. We don't all need a spouse; we do all need friends. Jesus was the perfect, complete human. He wasn't married; he did have a diverse group of friends of both genders.



WIN MY HEART

What are your friends like? Maybe you wish you had more friends, easier friendships, or friends more like you. How would you describe your ideal friend? Understanding? Patient? Caring? Supportive? Generous with their time?

We all need friends to share the ups and downs of life with. But the struggle in our kid's lives is the struggle of our own hearts - we want our needs met by others more than we want to meet their needs.

Friendship is a beautiful gift that is most enjoyed when we have friends and we are a friend. God surrounds us with diverse individuals to love. Let's embrace the God-given purpose we've been created for and look for ways to love others. Let's long to be a friend to others more than having lots of friends.

- In your friendships, how much do you want others to love you? How much do you want to love others?
- How much do you enjoy diversity in friendships?



5 MINUTES TO FOCUS ON YOUR GROUP

What do you know about their friendships? Do some love others well, while others find it harder? Do some feel like they don't have friends? How will you explain why and how Christians do friendships differently? What's your prayer for their friendships?

Over 8s: Do you know what conversations they're having about sexuality? Are they ready to discuss this? Ask parents what conversations are happening at home.



This truth is for your heart too.

What do the children in your group need?

Pray for them:

- to grasp the truth
- to live it out
- to rely on the Spirit





ALL TOGETHER TIME



Flexible resource: This has been written as an all-age slot to introduce the whole church family to what the children are learning today, but it could be adapted for the children's classes.



PROPS

Adam and Eve figures, green cloth, blue scarf, plant, toy animals, labels saying 'Friend' and 'Married', party paper plate and cup, confetti and a PowerPoint slide of the Trinity diagram (see Appendix).

(You might prefer to make PowerPoint slides with images of Adam and Eve and the garden if that will be easier for people to see.)



What to Say



What to Do

In the first glorious garden that God made,
surrounded by rivers, and teeming with life,
God placed Adam, the man he loved.
He placed him in the good home he'd designed for him.

Place the green cloth on a table to represent land, add the blue scarf for a river, a plant as a tree and some toy animals.

Place the Adam figure in the middle.

God had made everything around him and said it was good.
The trees were good - perfect for climbing, with delicious fruit.
The rivers were good - not too cold and crystal pure.
The animals were good - hilarious to watch.
The man he made was VERY good - his masterpiece!

Point to/hold up the items you are describing.

But in all this goodness there was a shudder, a moment when the party music stopped as God said something was **not** good...
'It's not good for man to be alone'.

Hold up the Adam figure.

The man was great but being on his own was **not** good - he needed a friend to enjoy all of this with.
So God made Eve. That's better! Now he had a friend.

Hold up the Eve figure. Place the **Friend** label on the figures.

Think about how it feels when you're at school or the park and your friend arrives. Your face lights up because you're so pleased to see them. That's what Adam must have looked like when he saw Eve.

Look delighted.

We love having friends. We feel sad without them because

- God made us
- like him
- to love others.

Encourage everyone to do the actions.

'God made us' - point to yourself

'like him' - point up

'to love others' - point out towards others.

continued →



What to Say

What to Do

God is perfectly loving and giving of himself - never holding back.
Being made like the God who loves others means we're made to be a friend and to love others.

- God made us
- like him
- to love others.

Do the actions.

That's why God made Eve to be Adam's friend. She was a bit like him, but also different to him.

And God gave Adam to Eve to be her friend. He was a bit like her, but also different to her.

It would be fun getting to know each other, deciding how to say tomato and paddling in the river together.

It's good to enjoy having friends who are different to you.

Hold up the **Friend** label.

They also wanted to be good friends to each other. They looked for ways to love one another.

Adam would have invited Eve to his party!

He waited for her to catch him up when they ran up the hill.

She listened to his story about the big bird he saw.

Give Adam and Eve a party paper plate and cup.

Adam and Eve were adults with fully grown bodies. God had created them male and female so they could come together in marriage. They started as friends. As adults they could also be married.

As you grow up into an adult your feelings of attraction for others start. One day, you may want to get married. God has shown us what his good design for marriage looks like: one man married to one woman.

But you don't have to get married to love others.

Jesus wasn't married. He had a group of men and women who were his friends.

Hold up the **Married** label. Throw some confetti over them.

Adam and Eve show us God's design for both friendship and marriage.

Show both the Friend and Married labels.

We can all be a loving friend because God is loving to us.

And when you become an adult you might become a husband or wife. Because God is loving to you, you can be loving to the person you marry.

continued →



What to Say

What to Do

When God made us,

- God made us
- like him
- to love others.

Do the actions.

This is our God-given identity. We're made to be in relationships with others. We don't have to worry about how many friends we have. Instead we can focus on being a friend to others.

Look around the church this morning. Give each other a wave or a high 5! We are God's wonderful gift to one another. We're truly friends who are like family. This room is filled with people who are really interesting for us to get to know, because we're similar but different.

Encourage the congregation to look around at each other. Maybe get the kids to stand up on their chairs and wave!

Our children are in week 2 of a series called, 'Who am I?'

Today we are learning that we are made to love others.

You can see that we will be touching on topics that are sensitive in our culture, such as God's design for marriage, and our tendency to prefer people like us rather than people who are different to us. The Take Home Sheet to take home will help you see what's been taught and help you to talk about it at home.

Pray.





UNDER 7's LESSON PLAN



GET GOING

I can be friends with...

Stand in a circle. The leader starts by saying 'I can be friends with people who...' followed by some description that covers some of the children, e.g. have blue trousers; are wearing trainers; have a brother etc. All the people who share that description must swap places. Let the children take turns to come up with their own descriptions. Continue until everyone has changed places several times.



Link: We can be friends with all kinds of people. God made us like him to love others.



TEACHING TIME

Ask the children to each think of two friends and tell you what they are like.

Made Like God

READ GENESIS 1:26:

Then God said, 'Let us make human beings in our image and likeness.'

Explain that God is love - he loves others. He made us to be like him - to love others too.

Together, say these words and actions (from **All Together Time**):

- God made us (*point to self*)
- like him (*point up*)
- to love others (*point to others*).

Ask: What has God done to show he loves you? How do you show your two friends you care about them?

Optional: Show the Trinity diagram. Explain that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit have always been perfectly loving one another forever.

God the Father always had the Son and the Spirit to love, even before he made Adam. Who was always there for the Son to love? Who was always there for the Spirit to love?

We're made to love like God does.



NOTES

Flexible resource: look at both lesson plans, pick what works for your group.

Use this activity to introduce today's theme.

Use a suitable Bible translation - we use the International Children's Bible (found online at www.biblegateway.com).

You will need: Paper, a pen, the Trinity diagram if needed (see Appendix), a variety of play figures (hidden around the room before the lesson starts) and figures to represent Adam and Eve.



Made to need Friends

READ GENESIS 2:18:

Then the Lord God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone.'

Hold up the Adam figure and explain that God made him and he lived in the good garden. Place Adam on the piece of paper and point out that he was alone. God had made him to love others - Adam needed friends! Draw a large heart around Adam on the paper.

Ask: How does it feel when you see your friends at church/school/home? How does it feel when you fall out with a friend? What do you love doing with your two friends?

Made to be Friends

READ GENESIS 2:18:

Then the Lord God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is right for him.'

Place the Eve figure in the heart with Adam. Explain that God made Eve - a woman. She was different to Adam, with a different body to him, but they were friends.

Ask: How are your two friends different to you?

Talk about how God gives us lots of people to be a friend to e.g. at church/school/home. Sometimes we worry about not having enough friends, or we only want a best friend which leaves others out. God made us to be like him - to love others. It's good to be a friend to lots of people, especially ones who are different to us.

Ask the children to find the hidden figures and place them in the heart as friends for Adam and Eve.

Then summarise:

- God made us (point to self)
- like him (point up)
- to love others (point to others).




BRAIN BREAK

Pass to a Friend

The aim is to get the children to interact with each other while passing/rolling the ball. Tell them that we want to be good friends to one another, so we are going to look at someone else in the circle, smile and say '[name] is my friend', and roll the ball to them. Encourage and help the children to include everyone.

Older children could extend this by adding distinctives about themselves. Give them some categories of differences like gender, hair colour, skin colour, likes/dislikes, gifting, strengths. The children pass the ball to another person, say their name and how they are different to them - being careful to keep it encouraging.

 **Link:** It makes us happy when someone says they can be our friend. That's because God made us like him to love others.



A chance to rest the children's minds before Heart and Hands. Get moving and have fun with this game.

You will need: a lightweight ball that can easily be rolled to one another.





HEART & HANDS

Craft time - Make a friends card

Prepare in advance: cut out the front covers on craft sheet 2.

Give each child craft sheet 1 - fold it in half so the printing becomes the inside of a card. Give them a front cover to stick to the outside of their card. Let them colour it in and decorate it.

Get the children to pair up to fill in the boxes inside the card. Encourage them to choose someone who they don't know very well. They draw around their hand in the 'Made to need friends' box (left side). Then they draw around their friend's hand in the 'Made to be friends' box (right side). Write names inside the hands. They could also write something that differs about them inside the hand drawings e.g. 'I like playing football', 'I like reading.'

As the children make their cards, take the chance to chat with them about how they can love others like God does. Is there someone at school or in a sports team who needs a friend? Encourage them to love others by making it personal. Say, '[Name], God made you to be a friend to others!'

Think time

Big Question: Who needs friends? *I do.* Who can be a good friend? *I can.*

A follow up question: Why should we love others? *Because God does.*

Prayer

Say together: Say together: Dear God, thank you for making me to love others like you do. Please help me to be a good friend. Amen.



Make a craft and have a chat. Give the children time to reflect on today's big truth, so it can impact their hearts.

You will need: craft sheet 1 printed on card for each child, craft sheet 2 printed on paper (1 sheet per 2 children), crayons/coloured pens, stickers, glue and scissors.





OVER 8's LESSON PLAN



GET GOING

Rush to Friends

Get the children to walk around the room in a big circle. Call out a number (e.g. 2, 3 or 4) - they must form groups of that number. Some children may be left out or in a group of the wrong size. Keep increasing the numbers encouraging them to 'find more friends'. End with a group that includes everyone.

Link: It feels good to be in the group with others and hard when you're left out. Today we're learning that God made us to love being with others.



TEACHING TIME

Read out Genesis 1:26-27 and 2:18-25. Let the children write/draw on the speech bubbles as you go through the questions.

Made like God

On the Genesis 1:26 speech bubble:

- Circle the word God uses to describe himself.
- God is an 'us'. Who does that include?
- Who did God the Father love before Adam was created? *(Use the Trinity diagram to explain that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit have always been perfectly loving one another forever.)*

We're made by God (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) to love like he does.

Made to need friends

On the Genesis 2:18a speech bubble:

- Circle what God said is not good.
- Why was it not good? *(Can they see the link between God being an 'us' and God saying that it wasn't good for Adam to be alone?)*
- What do you like to do with your friends? Why are those things more enjoyable with friends rather than alone?

Instead of being alone, we're made to live in friendship and community with others.

continued →



NOTES

Flexible resource: look at both lesson plans, pick what works for your group.

Use this activity to introduce today's theme.

Use a suitable Bible translation - we use the International Children's Bible (found online at www.biblegateway.com).

You will need: Bibles, pens, sheets of paper and a copy of the Trinity diagram (see Appendix).

Prepare in advance: Draw large speech bubbles on 3 sheets of paper. Write a verse in each one - Genesis 1:26, 2:18a and 2:18b.



Made to be friends



On the Genesis 2:18b speech bubble:

- Circle the word that describes the friend God made for Adam.
- How was Eve similar/different to Adam?
- What does this tell us about friendship? (*Diverse/both genders.*)
- What does this tell us about marriage?
- How are your friends different to you?

Talk about how Adam and Eve's relationship is also God's model for marriage: 1 man, 1 woman, different to one another, loving one another, committed to each other. As we grow from children to adults our bodies and feelings change. This is called puberty. Our feelings of sexual attraction develop.

Optional: Some people are sexually attracted to the opposite sex (heterosexual/straight), some to the same sex (homosexual/gay), some to both (bisexual) and some not at all (asexual). Sexual attractions can change over time, but they might not.

Ask 'Have you talked about this with friends, teachers or parents? What did you think about it?'

God made marriage and sex for a man and a woman to enjoy together, and so that husbands and wives can have children. We don't all need to be married, but we all need friends and to be a friend.

We're made to be like God - to love others, even if they are very different to us. We're not made to only have 1 best friend and to leave others out. Life is better when we have friends and when we are a good friend to others.



BRAIN BREAK

Human Knot

Children stand in a circle and reach across it to hold hands with 2 different people. They mustn't hold hands with the person next to them. Once all hands are held, the result is a human knot. Work together without letting go of one another's hands to untangle the knot. If that's too easy, try doing it without speaking.

➡ **Link:** God made us to connect with others.



HEART & HANDS

Did you spot it?

- Adam was in the perfect garden. What was *not* good?
- God is an 'us', how are we made to be like him?
- God *chooses* to love us, rather than waiting to be loved by us. How are we made to be like him?

continued →

A chance to rest the children's minds before Heart and Hands. Get moving and have fun with this game.

A chance to reflect and chat about how the truth, through the Spirit's work, changes our thoughts (head), feelings (heart) and actions (hands).

Use the **Chat Time** sheet – you could enlarge it and work on it together. Hand out sticky notes so children can still respond personally.



Work it out

- How do you choose your friends? Who can/can't be your friend? Be honest!
- What kind of friends do we all need? (*Diverse mix of gender/culture/likes etc.*)
- What kind of friend would you like to be to others? (*Push beyond the 'good friend' answer, e.g. what would you like others to say about you? What kinds of people need you as a friend?*)

Optional: Who is marriage for? What about people who want to marry someone of the same sex? Push beyond simply 'it's wrong' e.g. how can they love and be loved?

Live it out

Look at case study picture A of the children in the park:

- If one of these children said to you, 'I hate being alone' what would you say?
- Why would you find it hard to be a friend to each of these children?
- If you were one of these children, what would you pray?

Or look at case study picture B. Imagine you're the crying girl:

- What would you need in that situation?
- How would you feel if someone of the opposite gender was a friend to you?

Imagine you are the boy looking at the crying girl:

- How would you feel when you saw her alone and crying?
- What would stop you from being a friend to her?

Whichever case study you use, end by discussing:

- Do you know someone who feels alone? From what we've heard today, what would help you to be that person's friend?

Optional: Would you feel differently about these people if they said they were gay? Do you think some people treat gay people differently?

Extra Stretch

- We all want labels: best friend, boyfriend, girlfriend. We often want exclusive relationships that leave others out. What is different about God's plan for friendship? Is it only about your needs, or more about others?
- This passage sets God's design for marriage. Do you think your friends and the culture around us have a different view of marriage to God's? What could trusting God and being a good friend to others look like when they disagree?
- We don't need to be married, but we do need to have friends. How does remembering this help those who never marry, or are attracted to people of the same sex?

Prayer

Hand out sticky notes to write prayers on. Ask questions to help your group respond to today's truth. E.g. Can you name some friends you can give thanks for? Is there one way God can help you to be a better friend? What can God help you with if you feel like you are different to everyone else?

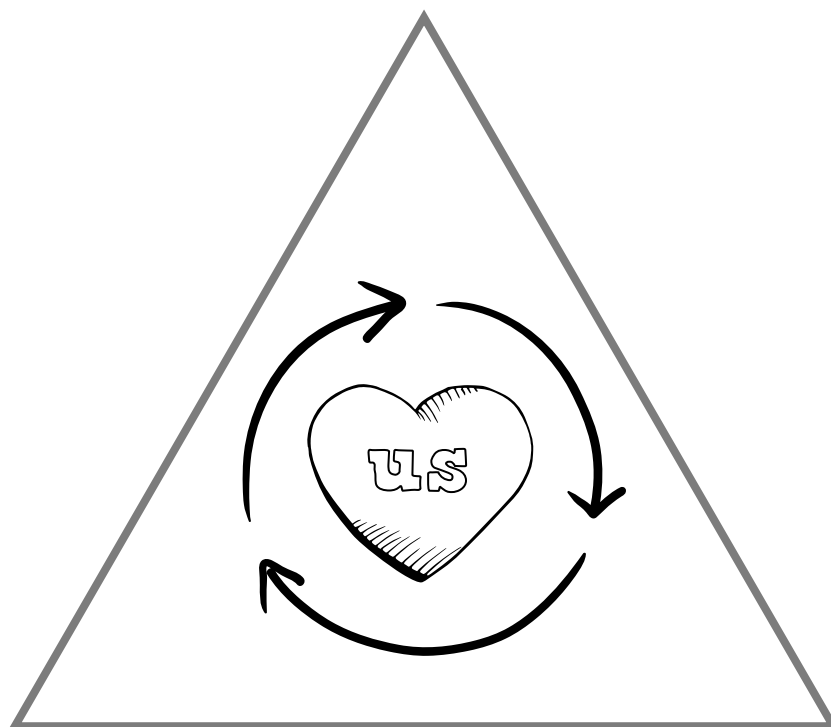


These questions are designed to stretch the resource up to teenage years. Depending on the level of discussion in your group, you may want to consider using them.





Father



Holy
Spirit



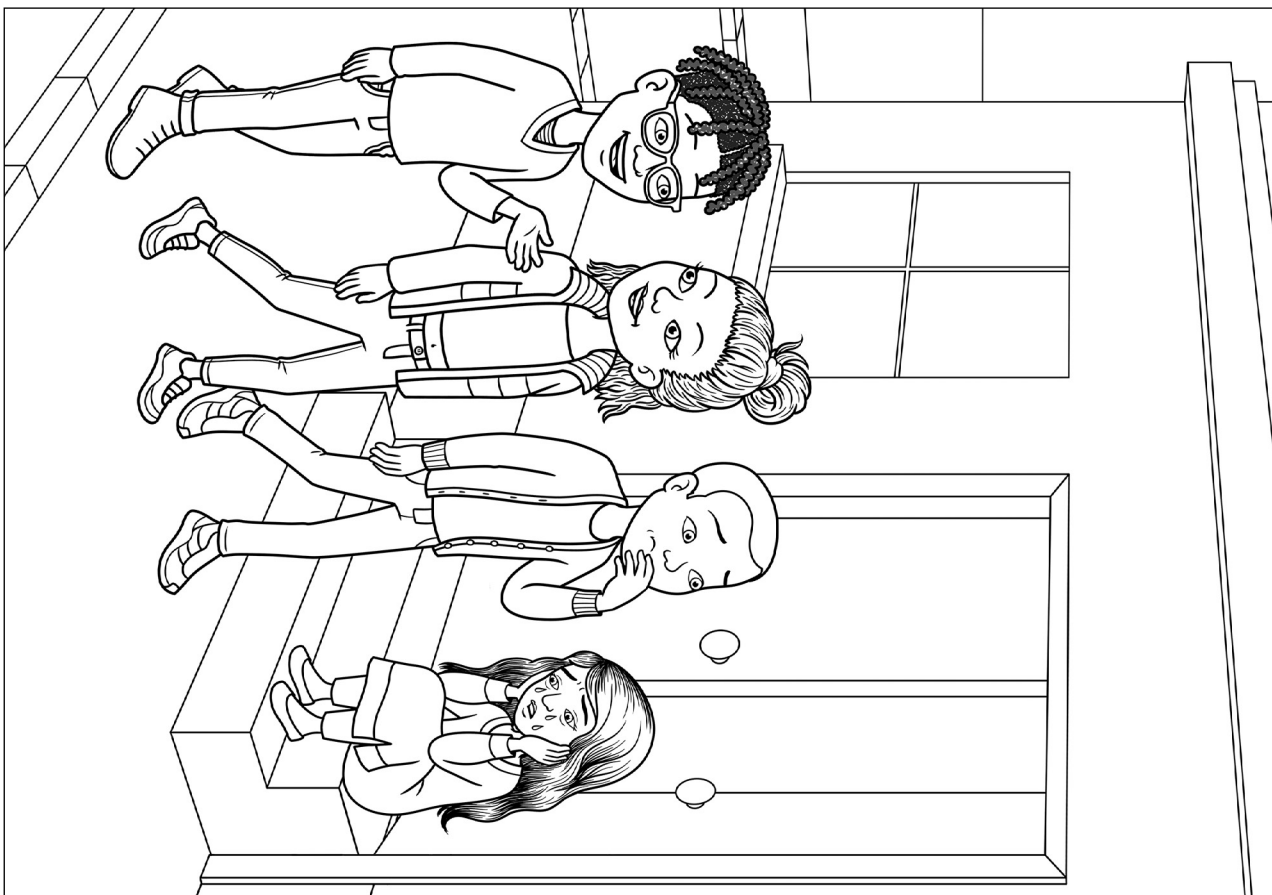
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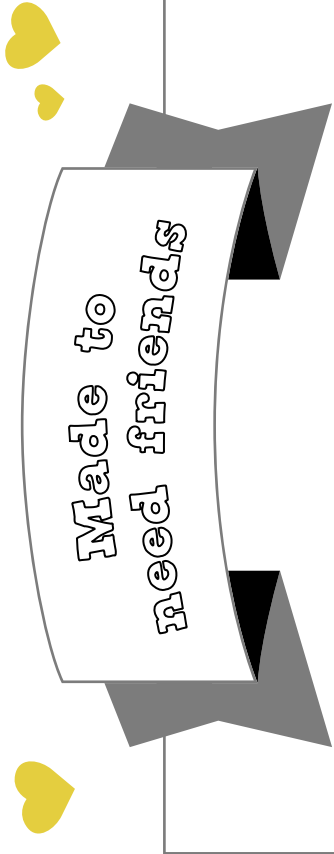


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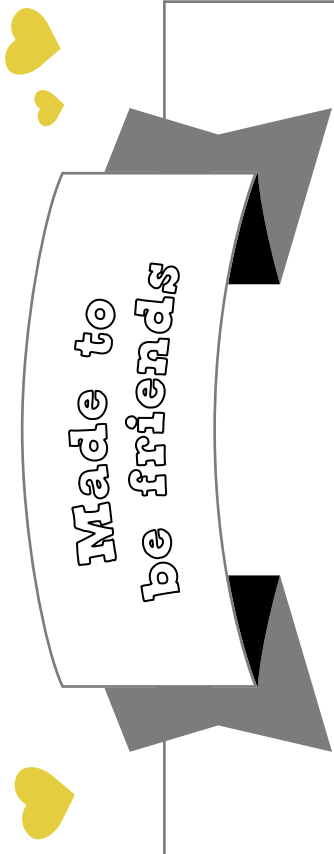
B





A large, empty rectangular box for drawing.

 Draw around
your hand

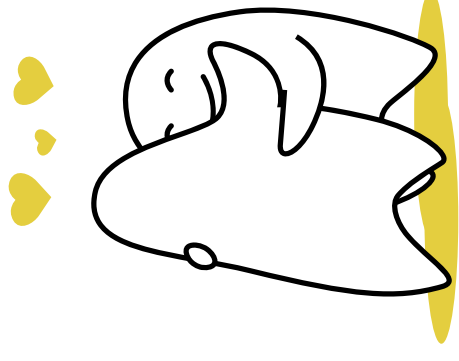
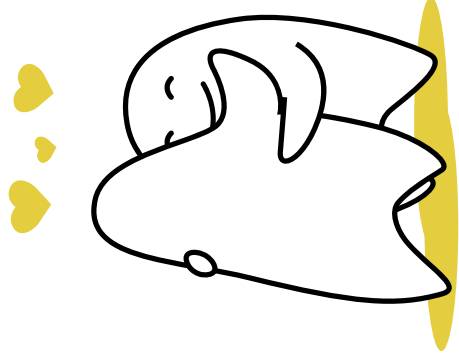
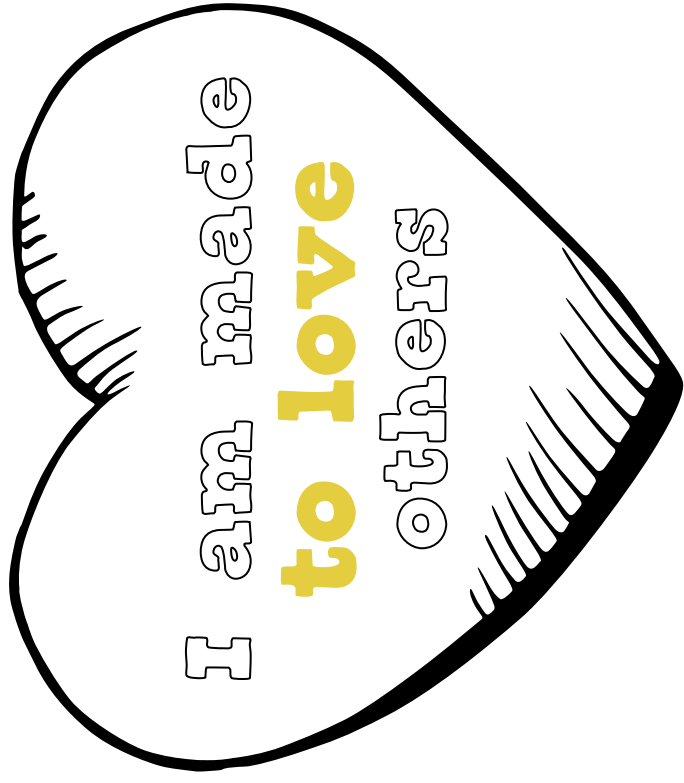


A large, empty rectangular box for drawing.

 Draw around
your friend's hand

‘It is not good for the man to be alone.’

GENESIS 2:18






WHO AM I?

I am made to love others

GENESIS 1:26-27; 2:18-25



DID YOU SPOT IT?

Give a  when you've got the answer.

Adam was in the perfect garden.



What was not good?

God is
an 'us'.

God chooses to love us.
He doesn't wait for us
to love him first.

HOW ARE WE MADE TO BE LIKE GOD?



WORK IT OUT

Give everyone a chance to answer...



How do you choose your friends?



Who CAN be
your friend?



Who CAN'T be
your friend?

What kind of friends do we all need?



What kind of friend would you like to be to others?



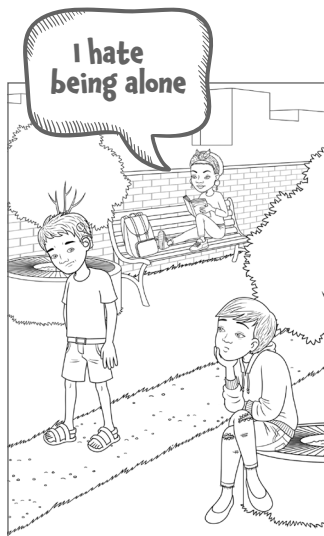
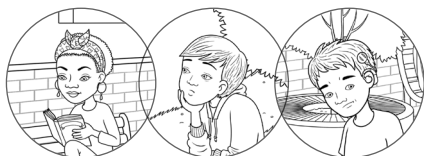


LIVE IT OUT

Give everyone a chance to speak...

If one of these children said to you, 'I hate being alone' what would you say?

Why would you find it hard to be a friend to each of these children? Be honest!



If you were one of these children, what would you pray?

Dear God...



Imagine you are alone and crying.

- What would you need?
- How would you feel if someone of the opposite gender was a friend to you?



Imagine you see someone who is alone and crying.

- How would you feel?



- What would stop you from being their friend?



Do you know someone who feels alone?



From what we've heard today, what would help you to be that person's friend?





**I am made
by God**



**I am made to
love others**



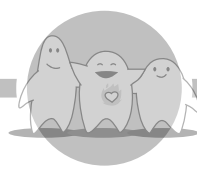
**I am
hurting**



**I am given
a body**



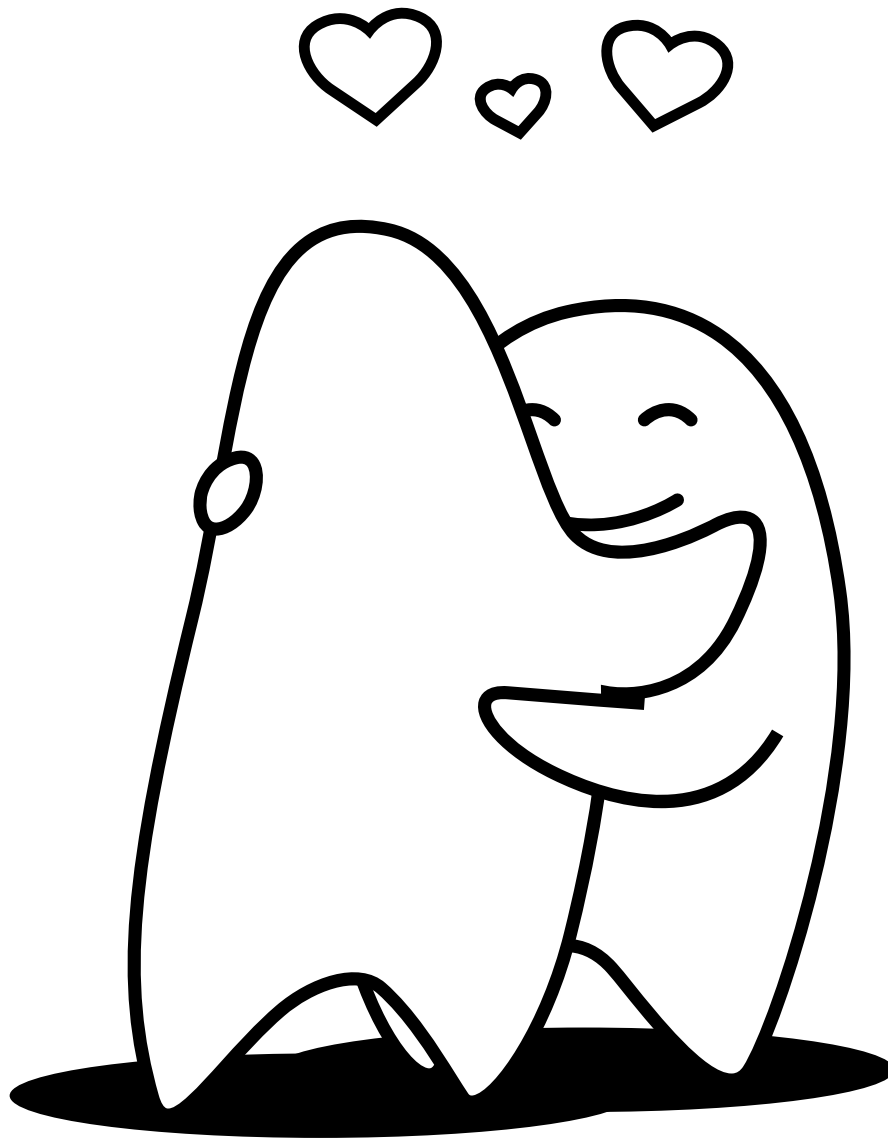
**I am loved
and forgiven**



**We are
not alone**



**We will be
like Jesus**





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