



**Best Friends
Forever**

Am I Only Supposed to Be Friends With Christians?

Key Faith Foundation: Influencing Non-Christians

Key Scriptures: Mark 2:15-17; 2 Corinthians 5:18-20; 6:14-15

grapple schedule (see pages 4-5 for descriptions)

5 minutes	grapple community
10-15 minutes	grapple games and clues
10 minutes	grapple time
15 minutes	grapple team time
10 minutes	grapple team reports
5 minutes	grapple prayer and dare

Supplies Bibles, *Grapple* DVD, DVD player, Christian music CD, CD player, copy of the Grapple Team Guide for each person, paper, pencils, two 12-inch lengths of yarn of two different colors for each person, ball of yarn, 9 large (10-penny) nails for each team, photocopy of “Nail Balance” activity at the end of the lesson

grapple community: 5 minutes

Play Christian music as kids enjoy snacks and friendship, and then play an opening countdown from the *Grapple* DVD.

grapple games: 10-15 minutes

Lead kids in the games they chose ahead of time at mygrapple.com.

grapple clues

Have kids write the answers to this week’s Grapple Clues. Award points for each correct answer. The winning team gets the Grapple Button (see page 5).

- CLUE 1** [269 points]: **Find a verse in the New Testament that refers to *ambassadors* and give a definition of what *ambassadors* means. (2 Corinthians 5:20; Ephesians 6:20)**
- CLUE 2** [343 points]: **List three people in the Bible who helped someone know God.**
- CLUE 3** [402 points]: **Find out who in your Grapple Team can balance on one leg for more than 20 seconds.**
- CLUE 4** [163 points]: **Discover who in our class most recently brought a friend to church.**

grapple time: 10 minutes

Lead the entire class in the following:

In Teams  Have kids get into their Grapple Teams, and give each group eight nails.

Let's test your balancing skills. Find a way to combine all of your nails and have one person pick them up by touching only one nail. Allow time.



Were you able to do this? Why or why not? What happened to the nails when you tried to pick them up?

The nails fell apart because you didn't balance them.



Do you think if you don't balance your friendships with kids who aren't Christians that your faith could fall apart? Why or why not?

Listen to this Scripture about being friends with kids who don't follow Jesus.

Read 2 Corinthians 6:14-15.

Ouch! That's pretty tough language! You know...that's not all God has to say about being friends with kids who don't follow Jesus. There are other Scriptures that can help us grapple with this issue, and we'll look at them in a moment. Let's try to balance the nails again. If you listen and follow my instructions, you'll be able to balance eight nails on top of one. Let's check it out.



Demonstrate the "Nail Balance" activity found on page 80.

Isn't that cool? All it took was a little balance. Let's see what God's Word says about whether it's possible to balance our faith and our friendships with kids who don't follow Jesus.

grapple team time: 15 minutes

Break into Grapple Teams. Encourage Grapple Team leaders to check in with kids about their week. Grapple Team leaders will facilitate discussion, using the Grapple Team Guide on pages 17-18. Afterward, kids will report what they learned.

grapple team reports: 10 minutes

At the end of Grapple Team Time, match Grapple Teams that chose Option 1 with Grapple Teams that chose Option 2 from page 18. Have teams present their reports.

grapple prayer: 5 minutes

Read the Grapple Prayer options. Have the class choose one prayer option that everyone will do. Allow kids time to pray about what they discovered. Then close in prayer.

Option 1: Ear Prayers

Cup a hand under each ear and listen quietly for God's voice. Reflect on what you discovered about God's message to you regarding who you should be friends with.

Option 2: Ambassador Prayers

Tie your pieces of yarn loosely onto your wrist, and pray to ask God to teach you how to follow Jesus' example in friendships.

grapple dare

Some kids don't care about following God. Others do. God wants you to be friends with everyone but in different ways. I dare you to tie yourself tightly to Christian friends this week by praying and reading your Bibles together. And, I dare you to be an ambassador for Christ by focusing your friendships with kids who don't follow Jesus on helping them know and follow God.

Remember to go to mygrapple.com this week to choose the opening games for next week, look for Grapple Clues to win the Grapple Button, play an online game, and connect with each other—and me.



grapple team guide

In your Grapple Team, use this guide to grapple with today's question.

Pick up two strands of yarn, one of each color.

Read 2 Corinthians 6:14-15.

Make a list of words in these verses that are opposites.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Place your pieces of yarn side by side.



How are Christians different from people who don't follow Jesus? Why do these verses say Christians should not tie their friendships too closely to those who don't follow God?

Read 2 Corinthians 5:18-20.

What does "reconciling people to God" mean? How does being a friend with someone help us bring that person closer to God? How can knowing Jesus help you bring kids you know closer to God?

Think of a friend who doesn't have a friendship with Jesus. Loosely tie your pieces of yarn together to represent the friendship you share with this person. Write some reasons a friendship like this is good.

Read Mark 2:15-17.

Why were the Pharisees so shocked by Jesus' choice of friends? Who do you think Jesus wants us to be friends with? Why?

Now, working in your Grapple Team, loosely tie your sections of yarn to someone else's yarn and then someone else's yarn until all of your yarn is connected in one long piece. As a team, discuss what you learned about who Jesus would want you to tie your friendships to.

Untie your yarn pieces and save them if you choose to do the *Ambassador Prayers* option.

 A decorative icon consisting of several overlapping, tangled lines forming a circular shape.
 grapple team reports

With your team, choose one of the options below to report what you discovered.

Option 1: Yarn Toss

Stand in a circle and toss a ball of yarn back and forth. Hold on to the yarn as you toss the ball to someone else. Share what you discovered about weaving together your friendships with kids you know.

Option 2: Keep Your Balance

Balance a classroom object such as a book or a paper cup on your head as you share what you discovered about balancing your friendships.



Nail Balance

Demonstrate how to place one of the nails horizontally on a flat surface with the point toward you. Place another one on top of it with the head facing to the left so that the two nails look like a cross. Add a third nail next to the last one but make the head face the opposite direction (right). Next to it place one more with the head facing to the left. Repeat the pattern until you have three nails facing right and four facing left.



Place another nail across the top aligned with the bottom nail and between the heads of all seven nails. Then slowly pick up the entire bundle by the bottom nail. The heads of the horizontal nails should lock on the top as the nails hang down.

