

A Seat at the Table

Ages 13+ • Romans 15:7



A youth group session on King David inviting Mephibosheth to eat at his table “like one of the king’s own sons.” It includes a discussion-based lesson, a memory verse, invitation place cards, a Church Welcome Walk service project, verse cards, a family note, and a 5-day devotional.

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FOR LEADERS

Before you teach

Teens can wrestle with real questions. Is our church a place where everyone has a seat at the table, or just a spot in the room? This session moves from a story of radical welcome to real action.

3.21

World Down Syndrome Day is March 21. It stands for **three** copies of chromosome **21**.

47

Most people have 46 chromosomes. People with Down syndrome have 47. It happens naturally, in every kind of family.

Socks!

People around the world wear fun, mismatched socks on 3.21 to celebrate that different is good.

SESSION AT A GLANCE (ABOUT 60 MINUTES)

Welcome	Sock check + “best seat you’ve ever had” icebreaker. (5 min)
Lesson	2 Samuel 9 + Romans 15:7 discussion. (20 min)
Verse	Romans 15:7. (5 min)
Craft	There’s a Seat for You place cards. (10 min)
Project	Church Welcome Walk. (15 min)
Pray & go	Prayer, verse card, and devotional. (5 min)

WELCOMING EVERY CHILD

- Talk with parents ahead of time: what helps their child thrive? Any sensory, communication, or mobility needs?
- Offer a buddy (a trained teen or adult) to any child who’d benefit. Buddies are friends, not babysitters.
- Use visuals: a picture schedule, the verse with pictures, and show-then-tell instructions.
- Keep a calm corner with fidgets and headphones. Taking a break is always okay.
- Give every child a real role: handing out supplies, holding the Bible, leading a motion.
- Never single out a child with Down syndrome as the example. Today is about how God made **all of us**.

THE BIG IDEA

Jesus welcomes us to His table, so we make room at ours.

David didn’t give Mephibosheth charity. He gave him a permanent seat at the family table. Christ welcomed us, and He calls us to welcome others, including people with Down syndrome, as family.

ROCK YOUR SOCKS SUNDAY

Invite the whole church, kids, and leaders to wear fun, mismatched socks the Sunday closest to 3.21. **March 21, 2027 is itself a Sunday**, a perfect fit! Snap a feet photo (with permission) and share it with **#Celebrate321**.

Scripture quotations are from the Berean Standard Bible (BSB), public domain. Swap in your church’s preferred translation anytime.



A Seat at the King's Table

King David looks for someone to show “the kindness of God.” He finds Jonathan’s son Mephibosheth and gives him a permanent seat at the royal table.

20 MIN

DISCUSSION CIRCLE

BIBLES • A REAL TABLE WITH CHAIRS (OPTIONAL)

TEACH IT

1 Icebreaker

Ask: what’s the best seat you’ve ever had (a game, a concert, a family dinner)? What made it special?

2 Read the story

Read 2 Samuel 9 in parts.

SAY

David asks, “Is there anyone left... to whom I can show the kindness of God?” He wasn’t waiting for someone to ask. He went looking.

3 Not charity, family

Focus on verses 7 and 11–13.

SAY

David didn’t just send food. He gave Mephibosheth his land back and a seat at the king’s table, like one of his own sons, for good. That’s belonging.

4 Connect to Romans 15:7

Read it together.

SAY

Paul says to accept one another just as Christ accepted us. We were all invited to God’s table. That’s why we make room at ours.

5 Our table

Discuss openly.

SAY

Is our church, our youth group, our lunch table a place where people with Down syndrome and other disabilities have a real seat, not just a spot in the room? What would it take?

BIBLE PASSAGE

2 Samuel 9 & Romans 15:7

Have students read 2 Samuel 9 aloud in parts: narrator, David, Ziba, and Mephibosheth.

TALK ABOUT IT

1. Why do you think David went looking for someone to show kindness to?
2. What’s the difference between charity and a seat at the table?
3. Who might not have a real seat at our church or school?
4. Romans 15:7 says to accept others “just as Christ accepted you.” What does that look like this week?
5. What’s one thing our youth group could change?

LEADER NOTE

The text names Mephibosheth’s disability plainly. Keep the focus on **David’s kindness and welcome**, not on disability as a picture of brokenness or neediness. Mephibosheth isn’t a symbol. He’s a person who was given his rightful place.

PRAY TOGETHER

Lord, thank You for welcoming me to Your table when I had nothing to bring. Open my eyes to people who need a seat. Make our church a place where everyone is family. Amen.

MEMORY VERSE

Hide it in your heart

Teens can memorize it in a couple of reps. The bigger goal is living it. Use the card as a phone lock screen or mirror reminder.



“Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring glory to God.”

ROMANS 15:7 · BSB



BREAK IT DOWN

Accept one another,

The command: welcome people as they are

then, just as

The standard: the same way...

Christ accepted you,

...that Jesus welcomed you, before you had anything to offer

in order to bring glory to God.

The reason: welcome shows the world what God is like

VERSE GAMES

Lock screen

Students photograph the verse card and set it as their lock screen for the week.

Paraphrase it

Pairs rewrite the verse in their own words, then read them aloud.

Where would it change things?

Students name one place (lunch table, team, group chat, church) where living this verse would change something.



There's a Seat for You

Students make folded place cards to give to someone they want to invite: to sit with them, to join youth group, or to come to Rock Your Socks Sunday.

10 MIN

TABLES

MESS: LOW

GET READY

- ☐ Print the **place card template** on cardstock (4 per page).
- ☐ Have pens, markers, and stickers ready.

MATERIALS

- Place card template (cardstock)
- Scissors
- Fine-tip markers and pens
- Stickers (optional)

MAKE IT WORK FOR EVERY CHILD

- Students can make cards for family members, new students, or anyone at church.
- Offer sample wording for students who get stuck.
- It's okay to keep a card as a personal reminder instead of giving it.

STEP BY STEP

1

Think of someone

Ask students to think of one person who might not feel they have a seat: at church, school, or on a team.

2

Write the card

On the inside, write a personal invitation: to sit with you, to join something, or just "I'm glad you're here."

3

Fold & decorate

Fold on the dashed line and decorate the front.

4

Commit

Students tell a partner when they'll give their card.

TALK WHILE YOU MAKE IT

"Who came to mind first? Why?"

"What might make it hard to give this card? What would help?"

"When has someone made room for you?"

TIE IT BACK

Jesus welcomes us to His table, so we make room at ours. "Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring glory to God." (Romans 15:7)

CRAFT TEMPLATE

There's a Seat for You: place cards

Cut out each card and fold on the middle dashed line so it stands up like a table place card. Write your invitation on the upside-down half.



INSIDE: WRITE YOUR INVITATION

**There's a seat
for you.**

Romans 15:7 · #Celebrate321

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PROJECT

2

Church Welcome Walk

Teams walk the church building and look at programs through the eyes of someone with a disability, then share real recommendations with church leaders.

15 MIN (OR A FULL SESSION)

TEAMS OF 3-4

AROUND THE CHURCH

MESS: NONE

GET READY

- ☐ Get the okay from your pastor or facilities team.
- ☐ Copy the **Welcome Walk checklist**.
- ☐ Invite a church member with a disability, or a family member, to join a team and share their perspective (only if they'd like to).

MATERIALS

- Welcome Walk checklists
- Clipboards and pens
- Phones for photos of spaces (no people)

MAKE IT WORK FOR EVERY CHILD

- Assign roles: note-taker, photographer (spaces only), reporter.
- Include students with disabilities as team leaders, not subjects.
- Shorten the route for a shorter session.

STEP BY STEP

1

Frame it

Explain the goal.

SAY

We're not looking for what's wrong. We're looking for where we can make more room at the table.

2

Walk

Teams walk their assigned area: entrance, worship space, kids' area, restrooms, and fellowship hall.

3

Notice programs too

Teams also discuss: are there buddies, sensory-friendly options, and roles for people of all abilities?

4

Recommend

Each team picks their top 3 recommendations and presents them to a church leader.

DEBRIEF

"What surprised you?"

"What's one easy change we could make this month?"

"What's already great that we should celebrate?"

TIE IT BACK

Jesus welcomes us to His table, so we make room at



ours. "Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring glory to God." (Romans 15:7)

TAKE-HOME

Memory verse cards & family note



"Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring glory to God."

ROMANS 15:7

Celebrate 3.21 · #Celebrate321

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FOR FAMILIES

Today we talked about: a seat at the table



Tonight your teen studied 2 Samuel 9, where King David welcomed Mephibosheth to eat at his table as family, and Romans 15:7: "Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you." We talked about making real room for people with Down syndrome and other disabilities at church and beyond. World Down Syndrome Day is March 21 (3/21), for three copies of chromosome 21.

ASK YOUR CHILD

"Who did you make a place card for?" and "What did your team notice on the Welcome Walk?"

TRY AT HOME

Invite someone new to a family meal this month. Talk together: who in our life needs a seat at our table?

PRAY TOGETHER AT HOME

Lord, thank You for welcoming me to Your table when I had nothing to bring. Open my eyes to people who need a seat. Make our church a place where everyone is family. Amen.

Wear fun, mismatched socks on 3.21 and share a feet photo with [#Celebrate321](#). More free family resources at [Celebrate321.org](#).

SERVICE PROJECT

Church Welcome Walk checklist

Observe spaces and programs, not individual people. Look for what's great AND where we can make more room.



Getting in

- | | | | |
|--|------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Is there an accessible entrance, and is it clearly marked? | ☐ Yes | ☐ Some | ☐ No |
| Are there accessible parking spots close to the door? | ☐ Yes | ☐ Some | ☐ No |
| Is someone greeting people at every entrance? | ☐ Yes | ☐ Some | ☐ No |

Worship space

- | | | | |
|---|------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Are there wheelchair spaces that aren't separated from everyone else? | ☐ Yes | ☐ Some | ☐ No |
| Are there large-print or visual options for songs and Scripture? | ☐ Yes | ☐ Some | ☐ No |
| Is there a quieter space for someone who needs a break? | ☐ Yes | ☐ Some | ☐ No |

Kids & youth areas

- | | | | |
|--|------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Is there a buddy program for kids who'd benefit? | ☐ Yes | ☐ Some | ☐ No |
| Are rooms and activities accessible for all kids? | ☐ Yes | ☐ Some | ☐ No |
| Do leaders know how to include kids with disabilities? | ☐ Yes | ☐ Some | ☐ No |

Belonging

- | | | | |
|---|------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Do people with disabilities have roles (greeting, serving, reading, music), not just seats? | ☐ Yes | ☐ Some | ☐ No |
| Do our photos, slides, and signs show people of all abilities? | ☐ Yes | ☐ Some | ☐ No |
| Would a family with a child with Down syndrome feel welcome here? How do you know? | ☐ Yes | ☐ Some | ☐ No |

Our top 3 recommendations

Something already great to celebrate

TAKE-HOME DEVOTIONAL

5-Day Devotional

Read the passage, think about the question, and write a few honest sentences. Five minutes a day.

Day 1: Kindness that goes looking

2 Samuel 9:1-3

David went looking for someone to show kindness to. Who could you go looking for this week?

Day 2: From Lo-debar to the palace

2 Samuel 9:4-8

Mephibosheth lived in Lo-debar and expected the worst. How does it feel when someone welcomes you unexpectedly?

Day 3: A permanent seat

2 Samuel 9:9-13

David gave him a seat “like one of the king’s own sons.” What’s the difference between being tolerated and being family?

Day 4: Welcomed first

Romans 15:7

Christ accepted you before you had anything to offer. How does that change how you treat others?

Day 5: Make room

Luke 14:12-14

Jesus says to invite people who can’t pay you back. Who will you invite, and to what?
