



## EXPLORE THE BIBLE.

Session 12: Including  
Suggested Week of Use: August 18, 2024  
Core Passage: Acts 10:34-48

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### News Story Summary

Being included is a big deal for children and teens—and adults, too, if we’re being honest. Those with an intellectual disability like Down Syndrome often find themselves on the outside looking in, left out of rites of passage like birthday parties and other celebrations. That’s why a recent social media post went viral overnight.

Heather Avis, whose 15-year-old daughter Macy has Down Syndrome, posted a video of her daughter’s reaction to receiving an invitation to a classmate’s birthday party. While Macy is limited in her language capabilities, the video captures her palpable excitement. Heather, Macy’s mom, said she could count on one hand the number of invitations Macy has received since kindergarten. In a follow-up video after the party, Macy said, “I love birthday parties.”

For more about this story, search “teen with Down Syndrome gets party invitation.”

### Engage

To supplement the Engage activities, play a game called “Clumps.” Explain that you will call out a number. Adults will need to form groups of that number. The person(s) who does not become a part of the group is out. Repeat the process for several rounds. Group sizes can go up or down for each round. Eventually, only a couple of people will remain.

*Ask: What was it like to be included in a group? What was it like to be left out? Allow adults to share. Tell the story of Macy Avis, a teen with Down Syndrome who received an invitation to a birthday party, as well as her response to being included. (You can find video clips of Macy’s reaction and a follow-up post after the party.) Say: Today’s Bible study will focus on Peter and a lesson he learned about including all people in the invitation to follow Jesus.*

### Challenge

To supplement the Challenge activities, recall the story of Macy Avis. Point out that she had been excluded because of her disability. *Ask: Why do humans exclude others? Who might feel excluded, left out, or not invited into our church? Write adults’ answers on the left side of the board. Discuss why those groups might feel left out. Ask: How can we reach out and seek to include the people on this list? Write their answers on the right side of the board. Challenge adults to evaluate their attitudes toward those on the list. Offer a time of quiet to allow adults to talk with God about their efforts to offer the gospel to all people. Close in prayer.*