



## WEEK TWO

### ROMANS 15:7

Accept One Another

## SAY THIS

**Friends accept one another.**

## DO THIS



## MEAL TIME

Ask a Kid: Who is your most "unlikely" friend? Why do you think you're friends?

Ask a Parent: Who was your best friend when you were a kid? What did you like to do together?

## REMEMBER THIS

"A friend loves at all times. They are there to help when trouble comes."  
Proverbs 17:17, NIV

## LIFE APP

**FRIENDSHIP** – Using your words and actions to show others you care

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## YOUR FAMILY VOICE

by Carey Nieuwhof

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There's this thing that I believe every family has. I don't actually know what to call it. If we were having a conversation, I wouldn't be able to imitate it.

But I know it when I hear it. I hear it in shopping malls, in crowds, at restaurants, and when I'm a guest in someone's home. I've heard it for years in my home. And I have one, too.

What is it? This isn't the scientific name for it at all, but in my head I call it *family voice*. You know what I'm talking about. It's the tone of voice you would never use except around the people closest to you. It contains hints of expectation, exasperation, frustration, and quiet fatigue. Add in tones of command, whining and a touch of rudeness, and you've got family voice. Sometimes it's strong. Sometimes it's subtle. But all the time it's reserved for the people you live with.

If you used it at work, you'd be shunned or maybe even get fired. If you used it in your social circle, you'd have no friends. You're likely distant enough as a grown adult to not use it on your parents or siblings anymore. Chances are you only pull it out in the square box you inhabit with a handful of other people we call family.

And ultimately, it's disrespectful. That's why you would never use it on other people. But somehow on the people we love most we feel free to pull it out regularly. I don't know why. We just do.

So if you want to increase the level of respect you show for each other at home, try this: eliminate your family voice. I know—it's hard. Because I'm convinced we don't even hear it in ourselves after a period of years.

When I catch myself, this is what I do: I pretend my wife and kids are perfect strangers, someone from work, or a friend I haven't seen in a while. Why? Because then I would be kind, courteous, charming, and engaged. Which is what they deserve. Every day.

Try it today. Speak to your family as if they weren't your family. You might be amazed at what happens to the levels of respect and delight in your home

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