



Asking for a Friend

Week 2: Abandonment and Loneliness

What we want students to learn: Jesus is my place of freedom.

What we want students to do with what they've learned: Understand and trust that Jesus understands their loneliness and comes to them in their loneliness.

Scripture Focus: Isaiah 53:3 and Hebrews 4:15

The Main Point

You know the questions that you really want to ask, but you don't actually want anyone to know you asked them? Maybe you do a quick google search and then delete your search history, just in case. Maybe you ask someone a question and begin with "hypothetically..." Or, you approach someone to ask out of desperation, "so, my friend was wondering..." When it comes to your "asking for a friend" questions, what do you wish you could ask? During this series, we will be unpacking topics that many students deal with regularly, yet are afraid to ever ask questions about. We will learn about real life stories of people who struggled to find freedom in some of these areas. Then, we will see what God's Word has to say. During this series, we will discover where true freedom rests.

Also, do not forget to access and use your Crisis Conversation Guides as necessary.

INTRODUCTION

- **Describe your favorite friend group that you have seen on Netflix, in a TV show, or in a movie. What was the movie and what was the friend group like?**

Have you ever noticed how easy it is to compare friend groups? Maybe you do this in real life or maybe you do it when you watch your favorite show or movie. It is in this space that comparison thrives and loneliness grows with it, because we believe we either don't have enough people around us, or don't have the people we want around us.

Tonight we are going to talk about two very relational subjects, abandonment and loneliness. Abandonment and loneliness can look different from person to person. Some struggle with loneliness during a breakup. Other struggle with literal abandonment from their parents. Even still, others have friends, but can't seem to find joy even with tons of people around. No matter what these subjects look like to your students currently, tonight we want to take time to talk about them.

PRAY as you begin small group tonight that students would learn that Jesus understands their loneliness and comes to them in their loneliness.

LESSON

The interesting thing about loneliness is that it doesn't seem to subside when more people are around us. Now, can we feel lonelier when our best friend moves away? Absolutely. But, the ultimate FREEDOM from loneliness isn't found when more people come into our life, it is found when we can experience Jesus in the midst of their loneliness.

- **What does it feel like to be lonely?**
- **Do you think everyone feels the same way when they are lonely?**
- **What are some common responses that people give you when you are lonely? Does it usually encourage you or discourage you?**

Isaiah 53:3 (NLT) - He was despised and rejected— a man of sorrows, acquainted with deepest grief. We turned our backs on him and looked the other way. He was despised, and we did not care.

- **What was your first reaction when you found out that even Jesus was rejected?**
- **Why do you think that Jesus was rejected?**
 - *If they do not know, encourage them to guess some reasons why.*
- **What emotions did Jesus face, according to this passage?**

Encourage them that Jesus didn't deserve rejection, but He got it anyways. We deserved rejection from God and yet He welcomed us, through Jesus.

When it comes to abandonment situations, many students struggle to not connect it to themselves. Whether they try to rationalize why it happened or just assume it was their fault, we have to continually remind them that it was not about them. No matter how they feel, it is not their fault and it was not about them.

Even still, in the midst of this, we can be encouraged that Jesus understands the times when we feel rejected, lonely, or even abandoned.

Hebrews 4:15 (NIV) - For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin.

- **What does this verse mean for your everyday life?**
- **Since Jesus understands rejection and loneliness, how can He help you in the midst of yours?**

LIFE APPLICATION

Discuss the following questions to close out group for the night and determine action steps to take.

- **What would you say to encourage someone who is lonely?**
- **This week, how can you remind someone specifically that Jesus understands their loneliness and comes to them in their loneliness?**

We need each other, and we need to remind each other of what Jesus has done for us and continues to do for us.

TAKE IT OUT

Close small group out with prayer requests. Pray specifically that your small group would experience true freedom in Jesus in the midst of any and every circumstance.

After prayer, be sure to remind them of any upcoming group serving activities or student events and THE WEEKEND!