

**SUB TOPIC THEME:**  
**When It Happens to a Friend**

**Lesson Objective:**

*Relationships are an important part of a person's life, especially those of a teenager. Friendships made through the school years, even in a military teen's life, can have an impact that will last their entire lives. It is hard to see friends going through a difficult time, especially when it is something beyond their control. The loss of a parent, and the ensuing grief, is possibly the hardest thing for a teenager to experience—even for their friends. The lack of knowledge about what to do, and how to comfort a friend, can cause large amounts of stress and anxiety on the teenager. It's important to know how to counsel a friend in their grieving process and how to show the love of Christ through that.*



**Set Up Info:**

***Supplies Needed:***

1. Straws cut at different lengths
2. Copies of the Student Response sheet (printed below)
3. Bibles so you can look up the Scripture story (or copy the ones below)
4. A passion to see students transformed in their understanding of God's love and presence in their lives!

**Intro:**

*Seeing a friend go through a traumatic experience can make you feel helpless and frustrated. It can be one of the hardest experiences to go through for a teenager. There is no easy fix, no right words to say to make it all better. Sometimes you struggle to be with your friend, uncertain of what to say or do around them. What's important for you to realize is that it's all right. You don't have to say any magic words. You should just be there for your friend, showing them that you care. In that way, you'll share the love of Christ with them and be able to help them cope with their grief.*

**Intro Story:**

*To begin to recognize where you are in your process of grieving we are going to look at the story of the death of Jesus' friend Lazarus. His sisters, Mary and Martha, called Jesus and asked him to come, but he didn't come until it was too late. Read how they reacted when he came to the funeral.*

**John 11:1-35****The Death of Lazarus**

**1-** A man named Lazarus, who lived in Bethany, became sick. Bethany was the town where Mary and her sister Martha lived. (**2-** This Mary was the one who poured the perfume on the Lord's feet and wiped them with her hair; it was her brother Lazarus who was sick.) **3**The sisters sent Jesus a message: "Lord, your dear friend is sick."

**4**When Jesus heard it, he said, "The final result of this sickness will not be the death of Lazarus; this has happened in order to bring glory to God, and it will be the means by which the Son of God will receive glory."

**5**Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. **6**Yet when he received the news that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was for two more days. **7**Then he said to the disciples, "Let us go back to Judea."

**8**"Teacher," the disciples answered, "just a short time ago the people there wanted to stone you; and are you planning to go back?"

**9**Jesus said, "A day has twelve hours, doesn't it? So those who walk in broad daylight do not stumble, for they see the light of this world. **10**But if they walk during the night they stumble, because they have no light." **11**Jesus said this and then added, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I will go and wake him up."

**12**The disciples answered, "If he is asleep, Lord, he will get well."

**13**Jesus meant that Lazarus had died, but they thought he meant natural sleep. **14**So Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead, **15**but for your sake I am glad that I was not with him, so that you will believe. Let us go to him."

**16**Thomas (called the Twin) said to his fellow disciples, "Let us all go along with the Teacher, so that we may die with him!"

**Jesus the Resurrection and the Life**

**17**When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had been buried four days before. **18**Bethany was less than two miles from Jerusalem, **19**and many Judeans had come to see Martha and Mary to comfort them about their brother's death.

**20**When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed in the house. **21**Martha said to Jesus, "If you had been here, Lord, my brother would not have died! **22**But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask him for."

**23**"Your brother will rise to life," Jesus told her.

**24-** "I know," she replied, "that he will rise to life on the last day."

**25**Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me

will live, even though they die; **26**and those who live and believe in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

**27**"Yes, Lord!" she answered. "I do believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who was to come into the world."

### Jesus Weeps

**28**After Martha said this, she went back and called her sister Mary privately. "The Teacher is here," she told her, "and is asking for you." **29**When Mary heard this, she got up and hurried out to meet him. (**30**Jesus had not yet arrived in the village, but was still in the place where Martha had met him.) **31**The people who were in the house with Mary comforting her followed her when they saw her get up and hurry out. They thought that she was going to the grave to weep there.

**32**Mary arrived where Jesus was, and as soon as she saw him, she fell at his feet. "Lord," she said, "if you had been here, my brother would not have died!"

**33**Jesus saw her weeping, and he saw how the people with her were weeping also; his heart was touched, and he was deeply moved. **34**"Where have you buried him?" he asked them.

"Come and see, Lord," they answered.

**35**Jesus wept.

### Questions

1. Why do you think Jesus waited?
2. What did Martha and Mary say to Jesus when he arrived? What do you sense they were feeling?
3. What do you think is the best way to help others with their grief?

### Personal Reflection Questions:

1. How do you cope when a friend is going through a hard time?
2. Are there any biblical characters that you can think of who went from friend to family?
3. How do you think God's love can help a friend in need?
4. Take a minute and write down how you feel when a friend is suffering from a personal loss. (Use Student Response Sheet)
5. Ask others in your group how they cope with friends during their grieving process. Jot down a few ideas \_\_\_\_\_

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### Central Bible Passages:

*Perhaps the most important thing to realize about God's presence in your life is that he is the only one with the strength and unconditional love that you need to support your friends. By trusting in his love and having confidence in his purpose you will find the steady hand you desperately need in the midst of your friend's pain. Others will help you and be there for you but, as all humans are, they have limits, faults, and pain of their own. Jesus Christ will be there for you completely, totally, wholly, to the fullest extent, with no conditions, cracks, or flaws in his perfect peace and love.*

#### **Galatians 6:2**

Help carry one another's burdens, and in this way you will obey the law of Christ.

#### **Proverbs 18:24**

Some friendships do not last, but some friends are more loyal than brothers.

#### **1 Corinthians 12:27-31**

**27**All of you are Christ's body, and each one is a part of it. **28**- In the church God has put all in place: in the first place apostles, in the second place prophets, and in the third place teachers; then those who perform miracles, followed by those who are given the power to heal or to help others or to direct them or to speak in strange tongues. **29**They are not all apostles or prophets or teachers. Not everyone has the power to work miracles **30**or to heal diseases or to speak in strange tongues or to explain what is said.

### Life Application:

1. List the ways that we can continue help others bear up their burdens(use Student response sheet)
2. Develop your own group list of the three best ways to express devotion to God while being a fellow brother or sister in Christ to others. Decide when and how to use them. (use Student response sheet)
3. Actively pray together after group members have a opportunity to talk about the life situation they are dealing with. Make a commitment to pray for each other every day this week! (use Student response sheet)





6. WRITE DOWN GROUP MEMBERS' PRAYER REQUESTS: