

MOVIE: “P.S. I Love You”**Sub Topic Theme:**

Where Do We Go From Here?

Lesson Objective:

Losing a parent prematurely is possibly the worst thing a teenager could ever go through. It’s hard for them to figure out how to move on. Is going to a movie bad? Can they laugh? Is it OK to



have fun with their friends? Are they not grieving long enough? It’s important for teenagers to know how to move on and adjust to their lives, forever changed by the death of a parent. Continuing to seek guidance from Christ and the Bible as well as trusted adults is pivotal during this time. Understanding that God’s love surpasses all understanding will help encourage struggling teens and let them know that the grief will pass, and they can still remember and honor their lost loved ones in their lives.

Intro to the Movie:***P.S. I Love You***

Holly Kennedy is beautiful, smart and married to the love of her life - a passionate, funny, and impetuous Irishman named Gerry. So when Gerry's life is taken by an illness, it takes the life out of Holly. The only one who can help her is the person who is no longer there. Nobody knows Holly better than Gerry. So it's a good thing he planned ahead. Before he died, Gerry wrote Holly a series of letters that will guide her, not only through her grief, but in rediscovering herself. The first message arrives on Holly's 30th birthday in the form of a cake, and to her utter shock, a tape recording from Gerry, who proceeds to tell her to get out and "celebrate herself". In the weeks and months that follow, more letters from Gerry are delivered in surprising ways, each sending her on a new adventure and each signing off in the same way; P.S. I Love You. Holly's mother and best friends begin to worry that Gerry's letters are keeping Holly tied to the past, but in fact, each letter is pushing her further into a new future. With Gerry's words as her guide, Holly embarks on a journey of rediscovery in a story about marriage, friendship and how a love so strong can turn the finality of death into a new beginning for life. (From IMDB)

Through 3D Lenses

Focus on how Holly's outlook on life changes with each new message that she receives from Gerry, and note how she progressively moves forward.

Discussion Group Questions:

1. If **you** were Holly, how would you have responded to each subsequent message?
2. What is one way that Gerry encouraged her to move on?
3. What do you think in Gerry's messages most encouraged Holly to push past her guilt and grief?
4. Do you see any similarities between your story and this one? If so, what are they?

Group input:

Leader-solicited responses from the large group on reactions to some of the questions. Gathering of ideas and themes recognized in the discussion groups with a focus on guiding the audience toward the main objective:

Losing a parent prematurely is possibly the worst thing a teenager could ever go through. It's hard for them to figure out how to move on. Is going to a movie bad? Are they not grieving long enough? It's important for teenagers to know how to move on and adjust to their lives, forever changed by the death of a parent. Continuing to seek guidance from Christ and the Bible is pivotal during this time. Understanding that God's love surpasses all understanding will help encourage struggling teens and let them know that the grief will pass and they can still remember and honor their lost loved ones in their lives.

Bullet Objective:

Feel free to put this summary section in your own words, but here is an idea you can use:

The film starts out fairly easily. Gerry and Holly are a typical couple, in love even through the small arguments. Then the unexpected happens: Gerry suddenly dies of an illness, leaving Holly to struggle to move on without him.

For a while, it seems as if she'll never get past the grief and anguish of her husband's death, but then he leaves her gifts encouraging her to move on. And in time, and with his help, she does.

A similar event happened to King David. After his totally immoral intercourse with Bathsheba *and* arranging to get her husband killed, God was so angry he struck their firstborn with sickness that led to the child's death. David, upon realizing why this had happened (he was making a married woman sleep with him) and that it was his fault, reacted in a positive way.

2 Samuel 12:20-25

²⁰ David got up from the floor, took a bath, combed his hair, and changed his clothes. Then he went and worshiped in the house of the LORD. When he returned to the palace, he asked for food and ate it as soon as it was served. ²¹ "We don't understand this," his officials said to him. "While the child was alive, you wept for him and would not eat; but as soon as he died, you got up and ate!"

²² "Yes," David answered, "I did fast and weep while he was still alive. I thought that the LORD might be merciful to me and not let the child die. ²³ But now that he is dead, why should I fast? Could I bring the child back to life? I will some day go to where he is, but he can never come back to me."

Solomon Is Born

²⁴ Then David comforted his wife Bathsheba. He had intercourse with her, and she bore a son, whom David named Solomon. The LORD loved the boy ²⁵ and commanded the prophet Nathan to name the boy Jedidiah, because the LORD loved him.

David's reaction to grief is, as someone points out, almost unreal. Why isn't he screaming and cursing God for taking away his son? Like Holly, King David knew that God wanted him to move on and not dwell on the consequences that his disobedience caused. God wanted a better life for him. And so, like he always had, David worshipped God. That was the first thing he did! I then he lived a life of trust.

Challenge:

1. Identify a part of your grief that seems incapable of going away. Consider how accepting the love and support of God will impact your life. Now ask Jesus to act on your behalf and build your faith in his power and presence.

2. Decide on a way to specifically express your grief this week. Talk to a Club Beyond leader or counselor or chaplain about how you might accomplish that.
3. Write out a prayer asking Jesus to show you his compassion and provision. Pray it daily this week and feel free to share it with your family, close friends, and leaders.

Pray for God's purpose and love to put it into action and transform lives. Remind them of the online personal journey at ReZilient Life for further involvement with this topic of Grief and Guilt!