

Betrayal and Rejection



SMALL GROUP LESSON

Lesson Objective:

Being betrayed or rejected can leave some of the deepest scars we will ever encounter! Much of that comes through words we say or have said about us. God can heal these deep broken trusts, but we can take steps to avoid them altogether.

Set Up Info:

Supplies Needed:

1. Computer or internet connection to watch the YouTube video
2. A ball or a sock
3. Copies of the Student Response sheet (printed below)
4. Bibles so you can look up the Scripture story (or copy the ones below)
5. A passion to see students transformed in their pain from words of betrayal and rejection to healing with the words of Christ.

Instructive Prep:

Betrayal rocks our world, and rejection makes us question ourselves on so many levels. And sometimes we are the ones causing the pain for others. One of the primary sources of betrayal and rejection for military kids comes through the harsh use of words – written or spoken – and often in the insidious form of gossip.

This session is designed to permit teens to feel and talk about their experiences of betrayal and rejection in friendships. As well as being the object of these actions and subsequent feelings, we also need to look at how we cause pain in others by doing similar things with our words. Insults, obscene talk, gossip, lying; God addresses them all and calls us to a new life in Christ and a putting away of these things. The goal is to help kids understand

that Jesus can heal our relational scars while, at the same time, demanding that we stop slicing away at others.

The progression of these studies is four-fold: *learn, feel, do and what next*. The aim is for students to learn something new, connect at an emotional level to some degree, and participate in doing something during the study (like pointing out all of the places they have lived). Finally, the *what next* focuses on a change in attitude and/or behavior, which you will find in the challenge of the Life Application section. Remember, the movement is toward spiritual and emotional transformation in kids' lives, so the application section based on God's truth is really the crux of the time together! Have fun and lead well.

INTRO:

The Narnia series explodes with relational themes, but none is more poignantly illustrated than the betrayals made by Edmund on his sisters, brother, Aslan and others! You can focus on both the pain of the betrayal, but also the consequences of Edmund's words and actions.

INTRO STORY:

Narnia's Edmund.

Edmund is a British boy who lives in London during the World War II. He and his older brother Peter, along with their two sisters, are forced to leave the dangerous city which was being bombed by the Nazi's regularly. The four of them find themselves relocated in the country in a big stuffy house owned by an eccentric professor. The quiet estate and limited activities frustrates Edmund, and his attitude is sullen and negative in contrast to the rest of his siblings who are trying to make the best of their situation.

His older brother Peter constantly chastises Edmund for his treatment of the youngest, Lucy. Edmund constantly teases her and sets her up for embarrassment. The motivation for his actions is unclear, but it is obvious that this young man is deeply dissatisfied with his lot in life.

During a game of hide-and-seek, he follows his little sister Lucy into the Wardrobe to hide, and it is then that he stumbles into the magical land of Narnia. Stunned to find himself suddenly in a wintry woods, and even more surprised that Lucy had not been just imagining this place, Edmund stumbles around searching for her. Instead

of his sister though, he encounters a strange and powerful woman. She is tall and dressed in white furs. Her carriage is drawn by reindeer and everything around her seems to glimmer and shine. That boy is dazzled by her presence and though she scares him, Edmund cannot help but be entranced by her, particularly after she takes such an interest in him and feeds him some treats to keep him warm.

Unbeknownst to him, this cold, pale woman is not the Queen of Narnia as she professes, but, in fact, an impostor to the throne and a witch. She is the White Witch and has put all of Narnia under her spell, making it always winter but never Christmas. She swears her new young friend to secrecy and bids him to bring his brother and sisters to her to meet. She says that she wants to make Edmund her prince, and he will need his siblings there to be subservient lords and ladies.

Finally feeling as if he is appreciated, Edmund readily agrees not to tell of his meeting with her and to somehow convince his family to come with him to her castle. But Edmund has a bigger problem -- he already ridiculed little Lucy mercilessly over her fantastical story of the world she discovered in the wardrobe. He does not want to lose face by admitting that he was wrong and so, even though he and Lucy did find one another in Narnia, he denies its existence to Peter and Susan. Lucy is crushed by her brother's betrayal, but unfortunately it is not to be the only time Edmund puts himself first before his siblings.

Soon after Edmund and Lucy have their separate adventures in Narnia, all four of them find themselves in the other world. Peter and Susan immediately apologize to Lucy for their doubts, but Edmund withdraws even more and is argumentative and negative about their situation. He tries to convince his brother and sisters to head toward the White Witch's castle, but Lucy is named the leader and she heads off in another direction. Stinging from perceived insults and boiling quietly with anger toward his family, Edmund sneaks away and heads off on his own to his waiting queen.

He believes her to be the only one who really appreciates him and sees his potential. Her compliments and flattery puff up his self-image, and he begins to think himself superior to his siblings. However, his dreams of being a Prince are quickly dashed when he reaches the White Witch. Her attitude toward him has completely changed, and she is frightening and demanding. His failure to bring his other family members infuriates her, and she drills him for information about their whereabouts. Though he is beginning to realize that this queen is not as wonderful as he thought and perhaps a little dangerous instead, Edmund still allows his anger toward his siblings, particularly Peter, to cloud his judgment.

So he tells her their plans to meet Aslan and how they came to be in Narnia in the

first place. After he has revealed all he knows, the White Witch drops any last remains of her facade and throws him into the dungeon. It is there that Edmund begins to realize what he has done. His willingness to help the White Witch and selfish motivations have put his family in real danger. His betrayal looms over him, and Edmund becomes more and more horrified over what he has done. The White Witch is intent on destroying Aslan and all his followers and this betrayal of Edmund's has given her the information needed to do that.

The weight of his actions stays with him even after he is rescued by Aslan, Peter, Susan, and Lucy. The shame over his actions seems too much to bear, and Edmund has trouble even meeting the eyes of his siblings. After speaking privately with Aslan, Edmund must make amends with his family. Before he even stutters out an apology, Lucy is hugging him and the others are equally ready to forgive.

The generosity of spirit and forgiveness that Edmund experiences following his actions as a selfish traitor truly impact him. His bravery emerges and there is a new passion within him to see the White Witch vanquished and Narnia restored. He now knows better than anyone the evil that she brings to the land. Empowered by his restoration to his family, Edmund explodes with power on the battlefield. He zealously fights for Aslan and Narnia and even comes face to face with the witch again. After she is defeated and the four brothers and sisters are crowned Kings and Queens of Narnia by Aslan, Edmund continues to remember the betrayal he committed and the forgiveness he received from those around him. The impact of that molds King Edmund into a wise ruler. In fact, he becomes known as King Edmund the Just.

Here are three different video montages expressing Edmund's betrayal and some painful consequences. See which one works best for you:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tZ8VljQIzwM>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=og-8yEukP5g>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b9WHm24m4vY&feature=related>

Intro Questions:

1. Which of the four main characters (Peter, Susan, Edmund, and Lucy) do you identify with and why?
2. What do you think you would be if you lived in Narnia?

PERSONAL REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

Take a ball or sock and give it to one student. They can pass or toss it to another student to begin the discussion on question one. After answering, each person gets to pass it to someone who hasn't answered. Do the same randomness though all the questions.

1. Why do you think Edmund chose to betray his brother and sisters and others? What are motivations for betraying someone?
2. Name some of the consequences of Edmund's betrayal.
3. Would you rather be betrayed or rejected by a friend?
4. Describe a time when you were rejected or betrayed by someone close.
5. Write your own questions: _____

CENTRAL BIBLE PASSAGES

The following passages portray God as our protector, defender and healer when we are hurt by rejection and betrayal, followed by verses that call us to be very different in our words and actions toward others. As Christ followers, our standard is Christ, not the world. This is a big challenge for kids, but as a group they could actually change the attitudes and 'feel' of their school.

Psalm 140

A Prayer for Protection

¹Save me, LORD, from evildoers; keep me safe from violent people. ²They are always plotting evil, always stirring up quarrels. ³Their tongues are like deadly snakes; their words are like a cobra's poison. ⁴Protect me, LORD, from the power of the wicked; keep me safe from violent people who plot my downfall. ⁵The proud have set a trap for me; they have laid their snares, and along the path they have set traps to catch me. ⁶I say to the LORD, "You are my God." Hear my cry for help, LORD! ⁷My Sovereign LORD, my strong defender, you have protected me in battle. ⁸LORD, don't give the wicked what they want; don't let their plots succeed. ⁹Don't let my enemies

be victorious; make their threats against me fall back on them. ¹⁰May red-hot coals fall on them; may they be thrown into a pit and never get out. ¹¹May those who accuse others falsely not succeed; may evil overtake violent people and destroy them. ¹²LORD, I know that you defend the cause of the poor and the rights of the needy. ¹³The righteous will praise you indeed; they will live in your presence.

Psalm 62:5-8

⁵I depend on God alone; I put my hope in him. ⁶He alone protects and saves me; he is my defender, and I shall never be defeated. ⁷My salvation and honor depend on God; he is my strong protector; he is my shelter. ⁸Trust in God at all times, my people. Tell him all your troubles, for he is our refuge.

Psalm 147:3

³He heals the broken-hearted and bandages their wounds.

Colossians 3:1-10

¹You have been raised to life with Christ, so set your hearts on the things that are in heaven, where Christ sits on his throne at the right side of God. ²Keep your minds fixed on things there, not on things here on earth. ³For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴Your real life is Christ and when he appears, then you too will appear with him and share his glory!

The Old Life and the New

⁵You must put to death, then, the earthly desires at work in you, such as sexual immorality, indecency, lust, evil passions, and greed (for greed is a form of idolatry). ⁶Because of such things God's anger will come upon those who do not obey him. ⁷At one time you yourselves used to live according to such desires, when your life was dominated by them. ⁸But now you must get rid of all these things: anger, passion, and hateful feelings. No insults or obscene talk must ever come from your lips. ⁹Do not lie to one another, for you have put off the old self with its habits ¹⁰and have put on the new self. This is the new being which God, its Creator, is constantly renewing in his own image, in order to bring you to a full knowledge of himself.

Comment: *God wants us to know that gossip, lying, hateful feelings, insults and all of those things are evil and hurtful and in opposition to his will. We are to take an active part in 'putting to death' and 'getting rid of' these things in our*

lives (and in the lives of our friends). Take a quick inventory of this list and your own life and speech and see how it's going.

Proverbs 11: 3, 5, 6, 9, 12, 13

³If you are good, you are guided by honesty. People who can't be trusted are destroyed by their own dishonesty.

⁵Honesty makes a good person's life easier, but the wicked will cause their own downfall.

⁶Righteousness rescues those who are honest, but those who can't be trusted are trapped by their own greed.

⁹You can be ruined by the talk of godless people, but the wisdom of the righteous can save you.

¹²It is foolish to speak scornfully of others. If you are smart, you will keep quiet.

¹³No one who gossips can be trusted with a secret, but you can put confidence in someone who is trustworthy.

Comment: *This series of wisdom statements from the same section in Proverbs hits hard the theme of being an honest person who is trustworthy in speech and actions. Such a person makes a good friend because they will not gossip or betray or reject a friend. Wouldn't we all want to have a friend and be a friend who doesn't take pleasure in scarring others?*

LIFE APPLICATION:

1. Have you ever noticed the increase of rejection and betrayal among friends the closer someone gets to PCSing? Discuss how you've experienced this with your small group friends and make a pact not to do that to one another the next time someone moves, even though the separation is painful (remember, rejection is even *more* painful). (see section on Separation from/losing friends)
2. Make a list of people who have betrayed or rejected you. Then make a list of the people you have betrayed or rejected. As a group, pray for the ability to forgive them, then ask God to forgive you for your transgressions. Once that's done, tear up the list of those who have offended and hurt you. Take the list of ones you have hurt and ask their forgiveness personally (YES, this will be hard, but as a group, you can support each other and begin to change the mood of your campus and maybe even the whole base! At the very least, you will be living in obedience to what Christ has asked of you)
3. Write your own challenge: _____

STUDENT RESPONSES:

1. PCSing PACT:

2. PEOPLE LIST:

HURT YOU:

HURT BY YOU: