

Rooted in Messy Community

Lesson 3: “Get Back Up” – Surviving Messy Relationships

Objectives:

Students will

- define the characteristics of a good friend
- establish strong partnerships with friends/mentors to support them
- find ways to avoid negative pressures from relationships
- develop healthy outlook on life from salvation forward despite past mistakes

Materials Needed

- Whiteboard
- Paper
- Pens
- Bible (Matthew 26:31-35; Matthew 26:69-75)
- Court-room props (gavel, large, cushioned judge’s chair and a regular chair)
- Scenarios written out onto chart paper or printed off onto index cards

Minds On

As students arrive, invite them to pair up or form small groups to read a scenario that they will act out. Allow students time to brainstorm how they will act out the scenario. Listed below are two suggested scenarios. (These are also found on Lesson 3 Handout “Get Back Up”)

Scenario #1

Two friends are together and one learns that the other likes his or her boyfriend/girlfriend. Elaborate the details of this conversation to the point of one person claiming that the other is not friend at all if they pursue such a relationship.

Scenario #2

A group of friends are together attempting to encourage a new kid to participate in a small shoplifting adventure that would land the kids some new clothes and some cool electronic toys. Vincent, the new kid, avoids the temptation of Seth, the so-called leader of the group, and instead gives a stern lecture on what characteristics are found in true friends. The other kids in the group begin to agree with Johnny and leave Seth to do the shoplifting himself.

Allow students to act out their scenarios. Celebrate the acting skills and the clear presentation of some difficult situations among groups of friends. After the skits, ask the following questions to begin preparing kids for the scripture lesson:

1. What characteristics did we see in these scenarios that are like characteristics in some friendships you have?
2. Were the scenarios a fair representation of characteristics of some friendships you have? Why or why not?
3. How would you re-write the scenarios to include positive, godly characteristics?

During the de-brief, have a student record on the whiteboard the positive characteristics that are mentioned. Refer back to these characteristics throughout the course of the lesson.

Action

Invite one student to read aloud Matthew 26:31-35; another to read verses 69-75.

Say something like: In Matthew chapter 26 Jesus deals with a situation that includes his friends, his best friends, and an acknowledgement that one of his very best friends will deny him very soon.

At this time announce that each student will participate in the court case “Peter: Good Friend or Bad Friend?” being held in the local courthouse of your hometown. Divide the group in half: the defence and the prosecution. Peter (you, the leader) is the accused in this case and each group will have the opportunity to cross-examine Peter (you), and make a case against or for him (you). Assign a student as the judge and give him/her a gavel. Invite him/her to use “judge language” during the presentations from the defence and the prosecution.

Give the students 10-15 minutes to build their case and then convene the court.

Allow each side to present their case. Watch the time, this could get long, but you want all points to be made.

Consolidate/Debrief

Distribute a blank sheet of paper to each student. Tell them to draw a line half-way down the page and then make two columns on the top half and two columns on the bottom half (see below)

Their Name:	
Good	Bad
Their Friend's Name	
Good	Bad

Instruct them to write their name at the top and a friend's name on the bottom half. Have them list the positive characteristics that they and their friends display in their friendship. Do the same with the negative characteristics. Give them a few minutes to list these characteristics. After they have listed them, ask them to complete the following statement by writing it on the back of their piece of paper:

In my friendship with _____ I commit to being a good friend who:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Encourage them to think seriously about the kind of friendship that Christ displayed to Peter after Peter had denied him and to include forgiveness in their list of positive characteristics.

After they have completed their charts and statement, gather as a large group and invite two or three students to pray that they will be a good friend to all of their friends and that they will display Christ-like friendship qualities in all of their relationships.