

Lesson 6 / April 6, 2008

# Throwing Away Loneliness

for use as

## STEP 1

### Lesson 6 Focus:

Jesus understands  
our loneliness.

### Lesson 6 Bible Basis:

Matthew 26:36-41, 47,  
56; 27:35-36, 45-46

Students will be reminded that even though we often feel no one understands us when we are lonely, in fact Jesus understands and is with us always.


#### Materials:

- Large, clean trash can.
- 5 different colors of construction or copy paper large enough to wad up into balls—green, blue, orange, yellow, and purple. You can use scraps because the paper will become trash.

**B**efore class, prepare the room by moving your students' chairs to the outside edge of the room to form a circle. Then, place the trash can in the center of the room and place the five different colors of paper on the student tables for easy access.

After greeting your students, tell them that you are going to play a game and that they will discover some things about each other. Then say, **Here's how it works. I'm going to ask you a group of questions. After each question, if your answer is Yes, I'll tell you which color of paper to choose, and I want you to crumple it up and shoot it into the trash can. The goal is to make it. Do not throw the paper in if your answer is No. Ready?**

For the first question, if your answer is *Yes*, you'll need to choose a (green) piece of paper, wad it up, and throw it in the trash can.

-  **Have you ever felt frustrated that you didn't get to do something someone else did?**

Of course, they'll all respond 'Yes' by throwing their paper at the can. Give them a moment to have fun, but don't wait too long. Move on quickly to the next question.

For this next question, if your answer is *Yes*, choose a (blue) piece of paper to throw into the trash can.

-  **Have you ever felt sad?**

For this next question, if you answer *Yes*, choose an (orange) piece of paper to throw.

Lesson 6  
**Memory Verse**

Surely I am with you  
 always, to the very  
 end of the age.  
 —Matthew 28:20b

▶ **Have you ever been angry?**

Again, let the paper fly!

For this next question, if you answer *Yes*, choose a (yellow) piece of paper to throw into the trash can.

▶ **Have you ever had a difficult time doing some of your homework?**

For this next question, if you answer *Yes*, choose a (purple) piece of paper to throw into the trash can.

▶ **Have you ever felt lonely?**

Next say, **Now, I want to show you something.** Then, dump the paper contents of the trash can out onto the floor. They will be curious and wonder why you are throwing trash onto the floor! Then say, **Lots of us have been frustrated when they didn't get to do something someone else did. We can tell by the green paper. Lots of us get sad sometimes. We can tell because we said Yes by throwing the blue paper. Many of us have been angry. We can see that from the orange papers. We've even struggled with homework. We can tell that by the yellow papers. And last, but not least, all of us have felt lonely sometimes. We know because there's a lot of purple paper here!**

Then smile and say, **It can be really tough feeling all of these things sometimes, huh? But, isn't it interesting that we've all felt these things? How many of you have felt like no one understands you when you feel like this? (Sweep your hand over the paper.) Then say, I want to focus on loneliness. Let's talk about that for a minute.**

▶ **What things, times, events, or places make you feel the loneliest?**

▶ **Do you think it's hard to admit to another person when you feel lonely if you think they don't understand? Why?**

▶ **What do we usually do when we are lonely if we think no one "gets it"?**

They will say things like, "I like to be alone," or "I don't talk to anyone." Encourage them to reach out to others since we know now that everyone gets lonely, including Jesus Himself!

(Continue on to Steps 2 and 3 in your *Middle School Teacher's Guide*; Step 4 appears below.)

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# Throwing Away Loneliness

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STEP 4 

## Lesson 6 Focus:

Jesus understands  
our loneliness.

## Lesson 6 Bible Basis:

Matthew 26:36-41, 47,  
56; 27:35-36, 45-46

### You will need:

- Pictures of orphans from around the world

**B**efore class, visit a few websites to find some photos of orphans around the world. Print out enough photos so that each student can have one.


<http://www.abandonedtkids.com/romania1a.html>

<http://www.africanorphans.com/photos/uganda/uganda.html>

<http://www.stmarys-ca.edu/news-and-events/saint-marys-magazine/archives/v26/wi05/feature4.html>

[www.orphanages.ws/images/GIDCCO/orphans.jpg](http://www.orphanages.ws/images/GIDCCO/orphans.jpg)


To begin, say to your students, **Earlier we learned that everyone is lonely at times, right? Not only do people who live here in the United States get lonely, but people from all over the world get lonely sometimes, too, just like you.**

-  **Do you ever get lonely because you think your parents don't understand you? If so, raise your hand.**

Imagine if you didn't have any parents. Imagine if you didn't have anyone to take you to school, help you with your homework, or pray for you when you need help. Imagine if you didn't have a parent to hug you, say 'Great Job!' or take you on vacation. That would be tough.

-  **That would be really lonely, right?**

There are children all over the world who are lonely because they don't have any parents. There are a lot of these orphans.

-  **How many orphans do you think there are in the world? How many kids don't have parents? (Let students guess for a minute, before you surprise them with the real statistic.)**

Nope, you're all wrong. There are 50-70 million orphans worldwide in different countries like the United States, Africa, Ethiopia, Russia, and China. This means that if we took all the people out of New York City who live there

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and repopulated it, we could do it with orphans. We could fill up the entire city with kids who don't have parents and who are often lonely.

▶ **How does this make you feel thinking about these orphans?**

Some of them might say that it makes them sad. Tell them that they have a heart like God because it makes Him sad, too. **In fact, James 1:27 says that it's important to care for orphans and that God sees this is a very important way of serving Him. One way that we can look after orphans is to pray for them. I brought some pictures with me today of orphans. I'm going to hand out one picture to each person, and I'd like each of you to commit to pray for the children in this picture this week. Pray for their loneliness and their other needs. And ask God if there is anything He'd like you to do to help orphans. In fact, let's pray for them right now.**

▶ **What are some things that we can do, right here and this week, to help orphans?** (*Allow for brainstorming. If needed, make suggestions about clothes or toy drives, or adopting an orphan as a class through any of several ministry organizations.*)

If you can, commit with your class to supporting an orphan/orphans, and then say, **By helping an orphan, we're doing God's work in making sure that they are not left alone.**

Now let's use what we've discussed about orphans to get some perspective.

▶ **Compared to an orphan, what people and situations do you have in your life that you can turn to when you feel lonely?**

No matter how lonely you might feel sometimes, take comfort in knowing that God finds similar ways to keep you from being alone, too. Keep this week's memory verse in mind, Jesus is always with you.

Close in prayer.

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