

for use as
STEP 1 

Lesson 4**Focus:**

Jesus understands our loneliness.

Lesson 4**Bible Basis:**

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

Lesson 4**Memory Verse:**

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

After watching a video about a study on the use of social media to cope with loneliness, your students will discuss the feelings surrounding popularity, friend groups, and loneliness.

Materials:

- Internet access

When your students arrive, engage them in a discussion.

- **How would you describe the feeling of loneliness?** (Accept all reasonable responses.)
- **What things in our culture and society might contribute to feeling lonely?** (Accept all reasonable responses.)

While social media can make us feel more connected, it can also make us feel lonelier. Let's watch results of a study on the link between social media and loneliness.

Share the following video [3:23; stop at 2:19]:

How do teenagers use social media to cope with loneliness?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kwpECZvxIh0>

- **What were the results of this study? Why do you think social media isn't always an effective way to combat loneliness?** (Students will likely see the difference between having a lot of Internet followers or notoriety as contrasted with real connection.)
- **Have you ever been in a big crowd of people and still felt all alone? How is that possible?** (Loneliness is more about feeling emotionally isolated than simply about whether you're around other humans. In fact, sometimes just the opposite can be true; large groups can make us feel even lonelier when there's no meaningful connection.)
- **Why do you think kids who spend lots of time on social media might experience loneliness at a higher rate? What's your theory?** (Accept all reasonable answers. Perhaps it's linked to comparing oneself to others. Perhaps happy videos and frequent postings give the illusion that everyone else has more friends than you do.)

➤ **What do you like to do if you are feeling lonely?** (Students may try to connect through video gaming or inviting a friend over. They may find a “friend” in a good book, etc. Accept all reasonable answers.)

➤ **Is something wrong with you if you feel lonely sometimes?** (Absolutely not! Jesus felt lonely and He was perfect and sinless.)

It is natural for teenagers to feel lonely sometimes. But Jesus knows what it feels like—and He’s always ready to listen.

(Continue on to Steps 2 and 3 in your teacher’s guide; your Step 4 appears below.)

middle school



Lesson 4 / March 26, 2023

Never Alone

for use as
STEP 4 

Lesson 4

Focus:
Jesus understands our loneliness.

Lesson 4

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

Lesson 4

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

Materials:

- Internet access
- Paper (1 sheet per student)
- Scissors
- Pens/pencils
- Whiteboard and marker (or screenshared document)

If your class is meeting online, invite students to bring supplies with them.

If desired, view this video tutorial on how to create a mini-booklet so that you can share directions with your students when the time comes for them to make their mini-journal. An alternative would be to show the video to your class at the appropriate time, stopping after each step to allow your students time to keep up.

Watch the following tutorial [1:10]:

How to Make a Quick and Easy 8 Page Mini-Book from One Piece of Paper

<https://youtu.be/21qi9ZcQVto>

Loneliness is a very real emotion for young people. To diminish their need for community is to ignore how God created them for deep connections with others. Use this step to encourage even your most isolated students to find comfort in Jesus’ humanity and empathy.

Did you know that you don’t need a million friends to feel included and valuable? Sometimes just knowing that one or two people understand you is all it takes to feel like you belong. Let’s think about the people that God has placed in your life so far.

Let students “popcorn” names of people in their lives who offer comfort and connection. Encourage your adult leaders to participate as well, speaking out names of friends, family members, and other Christians who care for them.

When you are finished, provide each student with a piece of paper and walk them through directions for creating a mini-journal. Or, you may choose to let your students watch the tutorial; stop and start the video after each step to allow your students time to follow through.

Jesus knows exactly what it feels like to be all alone. His response? He talked openly with His Father God in the middle of His feelings. Some people like to use personal journals to pray and talk to God. Let's spend a few minutes by ourselves, writing down the following sentences in our journals.

On the whiteboard (or screenshared document), write down the following sentence frames for students to copy. Encourage students to write in their journals by filling in the blanks in a personal way. If time allows, encourage them to use each sentence as a prompt to continue sharing their thoughts with God.

- When I feel _____, I know that Jesus _____ me.
- I am so thankful that God is _____.
- Jesus hears my _____, and He always gives _____.
- I am never alone because God _____.
- Even when I am _____, Jesus is _____.

When your students have had time to construct their sentences, gather everyone together to answer the following questions:

➤ **It's easy to feel sorry for ourselves when we feel lonely. But how can we identify someone else who might be feeling the same way? What are some signs?** (Attention-seeking behavior like loud humor or inappropriate outbursts can sometimes be a sign of loneliness. On the other hand, extra quiet or isolated students may be hinting that they need love and affection.)

➤ **If you identify someone who is feeling lonely, what are some things you might do to share Jesus' love with them?** (Answers will vary. Students might think that coming alongside with an encouraging word, eating lunch with them, or inviting them to youth group might be a good plan. Sometimes just offering a listening ear and praying for them is the best idea.)

➤ **Can feelings of loneliness ever be a good thing?** (Sometimes sad feelings drive us back to Jesus. It's good to depend upon Him, even if it takes some sad feelings to get us there.)

➤ **Should you feel responsible for "fixing" a lonely person at school or church? What can you do if someone is really going through a hard time and they can't feel the love of Jesus?** (Discuss the importance of sharing concerns with a trusted adult or parent. Emphasize that they're not responsible for keeping secrets or trying to solve someone's problems alone.)

As you close, remind your students that even though Jesus lived on the earth thousands of years ago, He is still right beside them to comfort, listen, and love.

(We are not affiliated with and do not endorse any website or any other media listed on these pages. At the time of writing, we carefully review the referenced material and non-referenced web page content. However, due to the nature of the Internet, non-cited content on the website [including pop-ups, links, and ads] changes frequently and is beyond our control. Please review carefully before showing links in the classroom.)