

*loving Jesus and loving my friends...*

*THE ESSENTIALS*

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# Brokenness

*I know my friends need Jesus, but why do I need Jesus?  
And why is that important?*

# Brokenness

*"You do not desire a sacrifice, or I would offer one. You do not want a burnt offering. The sacrifice you desire is a broken spirit. You will not reject a broken and repentant heart, O God."  
**Psalm 51:16-17 (NLT)***

*"Going through the motions doesn't please you, a flawless performance is nothing to you. I learned God-worship when my pride was shattered. Heart-shattered lives ready for love don't for a moment escape God's notice."  
**Psalm 51:16-17 (MSG)***

*"You're blessed when you're at the end of your rope. With less of you there is more of God and his rule."  
**Matthew 5:3 (MSG)***

*"Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye?"  
**Matthew 7:3-4 (NIV)***

*"Each time he said, "My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness." So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me."  
**2 Corinthians 12:9 (NLT)***

We often look at our friends and peers at school and think, "Man, they're so messed up!"...but how often do we look at our friends and think, "Man, they're broken just like me. Dang, we BOTH need Jesus!?"

It's easy to look at others and see how messed up they are, but how often do we look at ourselves and realize how messed up WE are and how much we STILL need Jesus EVERY day??

We all have to realize that we're in the same boat together. We all fall short and are in need of God's grace! Daily! Not just at salvation!

The beauty of it is that God desires to use us in the midst of our brokenness to relate to our friends and share the love and healing of Christ with them (See 2 Corinthians 12:9 above!)

The bottom line is this: We have to understand our own need for Jesus before we can fully understand the needs of our peers, how badly they need Jesus, and how we can best share Him with them. Understanding OUR brokenness and need for Jesus is key in understanding how to love our friends in THEIR brokenness. So...let's get started!

# Brokenness

## STORY TIME

### *Anna and the Cheerleaders*

Anna was a junior in high school who loved Jesus and was loved by tons of people at her school. She was outgoing (sometimes a little too hyper!), friendly, involved in track, cross country, drama, and clubs galore. Anna usually liked everyone...but there was one group of girls at her school who drove her crazy...the cheerleaders.

The problem wasn't that they were cheerleaders, but that they were an obnoxious group of girls who were always trying to get attention. They were notorious for getting drunk and going wild at parties, being promiscuous, etc. Anna told her campus ministry team that she was having a hard time showing love to this group of girls because they drove her nuts and she didn't understand them!

She prayed about the problem with her team that night and prayed for the girls. The next week she came back with a HUGE revelation! She realized that these girls were probably acting this way because they were insecure and wanting attention because they were longing for connection, feeling lonely, and wanting to be understood.

When Anna looked at her own life, she realized that she often felt all of those things! But when she felt those things, it showed up as being depressed at home in her room or being super hyper in social situations...to get attention and pretend there was nothing wrong!

Anna realized that she wasn't so different from these girls at all! She understood why they were doing what they were doing because she understood how they were feeling underneath it all! The only thing that helped Anna in her struggle was Jesus' love for her and pursuit of her. She knew she needed Him daily...and so did these girls.

Because she understood her brokenness and need for Jesus, she was able to find common ground with these girls and the motivation to go back to school and actively love them the way Jesus does!

# Brokenness

*\*\* This solo exercise is an opportunity for you to work through some questions about your own brokenness, on your own, with Jesus.*

## SOLO EXERCISE

**Here are some quotes from anonymous postcards that people sent in to a well-known website. They expose the secret thoughts of people your age around the country. Read through the quotes and answer the following questions...**

*“I wish my phone would ring more often. :( “*

*“I only ever played sports to feel like my father loved me.”*

*“I make everyone believe that I like to be different, but really I just don’t know how to fit in.”*

*“I think more than usual about killing myself after I have a really good day.”*

*“I only feel beautiful when I’m hungry.”*

*“A real friend would have stayed around and helped me.”*

*“I listen to my friends. I listen to everybody. But no one listens to me.”*

*“I try to be content, but the truth is, life would be so much easier if I were pretty.”*

*“Every time I work up the nerve to swallow the pills, someone does something to make me want to live and I’ve never said thank you for saving my life. People have no idea how far kindness can go. I’m LIVING proof.”*

*“Sometimes I put up walls. Not to keep people out, but to see who cares enough to knock them down.”*

- **After reading these secrets, what are you thinking? Which secrets stuck out to you and why?**
- **Can you relate to any of these secrets? Write down a few secrets you have...a few areas of your life where you are broken and still need Jesus...every day...**
- **What difference does Jesus make in these broken areas of your life?**
- **What do you think you would be like if you didn’t know Jesus?**

(continued...)

# Brokenness

## SOLO EXERCISE (...continued)

- Read through the secrets on the previous page again. Now, think about some of the friends/peers God has put in your life who need Jesus and list their names below.
- What might some of their secrets be? Why might they act the way they do? Are you aware of any needs in their life? If so, write them next to their names above.
- Think about your own secrets and deep needs...do you feel like you might be able to relate to any of these friends? How?
- Why is it important to understand your own brokenness before you can understand how to better love these friends?
- How might Jesus want to work through your areas of brokenness to extend love to these friends? What might that look like?
- Now take some time to pray for each of these friends and how God might want to use you in their lives. What is God saying to you?

### CHALLENGE:

Now it's time to live it out! When you get to school in the morning, take a step of faith to show love to each of the people God put on your heart above. How will you tangibly show love to them? How will you let God work through your weaknesses to extend His love to your peers?

# Brokenness

*\*\* This team exercise is an opportunity for you and your community or campus team to work through some questions about your brokenness together.*

## TEAM EXERCISE

**If your team is serious about being a community who exhibits the love of Jesus to others on your campus, it is important that you are honest and real with each other about your need for Jesus, both as individuals and as a group.**

- **Take a few minutes and share with each other what you think you would be like if you didn't know Jesus. How does He make a tangible difference in your life every day?**
- **Now share with each other one thing you are currently struggling with and how Jesus is meeting you in your brokenness.**
- **How does your individual brokenness, and your willingness to share that with each other, make your team stronger?**
- **How can your team's collective brokenness help you reach out to and relate to others on your campus or in your youth group?**
- **Take some time to pray together and ask God how He wants to use your collective brokenness, as a team, to love people together and make an impact on your campus. What do you hear Him saying?**

### CHALLENGE:

**What did God say to your team as you prayed together? What difference would it make if your community became a comfortable place for broken people on your campus to feel loved, welcomed and understood? WELL? There's no time like the present! Go make it happen! TOGETHER!**