

## **YOUTH GROUP GAME ON FRIENDSHIP**

**Bible:** Galatians 6:2; Matthew 22:37-40

**Bottom Line:** True friends share joy and pain.

### **SUPPLIES**

- 2 Rolls of paper towels
- 2 Rolls of toilet paper
- 2 Pencils
- 2 Paper airplanes
- 2 Cups—any size
- 2 Plastic forks
- 2 Books
- 2 Styrofoam plates
- 2, 2-liter drinks
- 2 Plastic Bags

### **GAME PREP**

Divide students into two teams of equal size and instruct them to form single file lines.

Give each team a plastic bag containing the following items:

- Roll of paper towels
- Roll of toilet paper
- Pencil
- Paper airplane
- Cup
- Plastic fork
- Book
- Styrofoam plate
- A 2-liter drink

### **HOW TO PLAY THE GAME**

**Say:** Our game is not about how strong you are, but how well you can balance things.

The first person in your line will be given a plastic bag full of items.

They will take out the items and balance them in their hands/arms.

They can have assistance only from the person standing in line behind them.

When the first person on each team has successfully balanced all the items, the game will begin.

The first person will pass the balanced items to the person in line behind them.

If any items are dropped, then the person that dropped them will place all of the items on the floor and go to the back of their team's line.

The next person in line will pick up the items, with assistance from the person in line behind them, balance the items, and pass them to the person behind them.

The game will continue until all of the items make it to the last person in line, who will then take all the items to the front of the line.

If they drop any items while walking to the front of the line, they will have to go to the back of the line and try again.

When they make it to the front of the line, they will open the 2-liter drink and fill the cup they were carrying to the top and drink it.

The first team to successfully pass the items, run to the front, pour the drink and drink it, WINS!

## **TEACH**

**Say:** That game was awesome!

You were great at balancing all of the ridiculous things we gave you to carry.

Imagine how much more difficult that game would have been if we would not have allowed the person behind you to help you out.

We really need each other!

Here's a random question.

Did you know that a horse can pull about 3 times it's weight?

Anyone want to guess how much that is?

It's about 2,500 pounds.

Horses are pretty strong—at least stronger than most of us.

But, listen to this.

In 1924, a pair of Shire draft horses pulled 50 tons—that's 100,000 pounds or 20,000 pounds *more* than the weight of a semi-truck.

That's absolutely incredible!

And it's a great example of what we're talking about today—sharing the load each of us carries.

**Read Galatians 6:2 (NLT).**

*"Share each other's burdens, and in this way obey the law of Christ."*

God desires us to live in community with each other, to have people that we share life with.

It's His plan.

If you live life all by yourself, you can't carry someone else's burdens.

So, let's agree we need friends in our lives.

And having friends is about more than what you can get out of a friendship—it's really about what you can give.

Sure, friends are great to hang out with, talk, laugh, and cry with, but it's more than that.

The verse we just read says that when we care for each other, we "obey the law of Christ."

What is the law of Christ?

*Allow a few responses from students.*

The law of Christ is found in Matthew.

**Read Matthew 22:37-40.**

*Jesus replied, "You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind." This is the first and greatest commandment. A second is equally important: "Love your neighbor as yourself" The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments."*

Jesus actually said it's equally important to love each other as much as you love God.

That's pretty important!

So, what does it mean to share each other's burdens?

*Allow a few responses from students.*

True friends understand that you support each other through joy and trials.

But, sharing someone's burden isn't easy—it takes time, effort, and sacrifice.

That's why after Paul tells us to share each other's burden, he follows up with this...

**Read Galatians 6:3.**

*If you think you are too important to help someone, you are only fooling yourself. You are not that important.*

I want to share an example of extreme selflessness.

In 2009, Dave Hartstock, a skydiving instructor, was in the middle of a 13,000-foot-high tandem jump when he realized that neither of his two parachutes would open all the way.

He had jumped out of the plane with Shirley, a grandmother and first-time skydiver, and found himself having to make a really quick and hard decision.

Although his brain was racing and he was panicking, at the last minute, he was able to rotate his body so that he could cushion Shirley's fall when they hit the ground.

Dave's quick thinking saved Shirley's life, but he suffered lifelong consequences of his selfless action.

Shirley made a speedy recovery because of Dave's sacrifice.

But, Dave is now permanently paralyzed from the neck down and requires help to do everything in life.

When asked if he would still do the same thing after knowing what would happen to him, he said, "Absolutely. Better me than her."

Dave made that sacrifice, essentially, for a stranger.

Most of us will never have to make that kind of choice for even our closest friends.

**Ask:** What types of burdens do our friends carry that we could share with them?

*Allow a few responses from students.*

**Here are a few reasons why sharing our burdens with each other is important:**

**1. Sharing our burdens reminds us of the example Jesus set for us as He lived His life on earth.**

Jesus traveled from place to place responding to the needs of the people—He was empathetic and caring.

He even took on the sins of the entire world when He died on the cross—that is the ultimate example of sharing each other's burdens.

**2. Sharing our burdens reminds us to rely on God's strength and not our own.**

Occasionally, in the New Testament, we read that Jesus went away to spend time in prayer with God.

When we share other's burdens, it's important to rely on God's wisdom and strength so we can point our friends to Him and avoid feeling overwhelmed.

**3. Sharing our burdens reminds us to look beyond ourselves and care for others.**

It's easy to become self-absorbed and pre-occupied with our own problems—that's the norm in our culture.

When we focus on caring about the needs of others, we become less selfish and sometimes our own troubles don't seem as bad.

I want to challenge you to take a step in your friendships toward sharing each other's burdens.

And, remember that true friends share joy and pain.