

Skit: Jolene's Text Message **by Carol Duerksen**

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION:

This session includes a skit that could be used for Youth Sunday or another time when the youth want to share a message with a larger group. If you have musically talented youth, one fun option would be to put new words to Dolly Parton's song "Jolene" to go along with the skit. One youth group that did this skit had a guy dress up as the older woman and the congregation got a good laugh out of that.

Here are questions to use to discuss the message of the skit:

- Does this skit remind you of a Bible story? (Joseph)
- Did Jolene know she was making her friends angry with her? Did she care?
- What do you think about the way the friends responded?
- What was a good result of the fight between Jolene and her friends?
- How did Myrtle and Bert benefit from their friendship with Jolene?
- How did Jolene benefit from her friendship with the Myrtle and Bert?
- Who needed to forgive whom in this skit?
- Can you share an example from your life when God used a negative thing and brought about a positive outcome?

Session Reproducibles

JOLENE'S TEXT MESSAGE

Characters:

- Jolene
- Jolene's friends
- Jolene's older friends, Myrtle and Bert
- Props: Signs for the different times

Jolene's friends are on stage, talking, when she comes striding in, talking on her Blackberry. She comes over to them and excitedly shows them her new phone.

Jolene: Check this out! Look what I got for my birthday! Pretty cool, huh?

Friends admire it.

Jolene shows them different features but she goes on and on and starts making negative comments about their phones not being able to do that etc etc etc.

Friends start so say "Nice phone, Jolene, but I've gotta go ... and they leave until she's alone on stage. She walks off, texting someone as she walks.

ONE WEEK LATER

Jolene's friends are on stage, talking about how they've had it with her and how she lords it over them that her phone is better than theirs. One girl says that Jolene teases her all the time that she doesn't even HAVE a cell phone. Another one says that Jolene makes comments about picking up her email on her phone, etc.

Girls ... create this conversation.

One friend finally says she has an idea: They will all start ignoring her. They won't answer her texts or phone calls. They'll only talk to her if they have too—nothing more. They all agree to it, and while they are talking, Jolene comes on stage, talking on the phone as she walks. One of the girls says "How about if we start now" and they all look at each other and nod. Jolene tries to talk to them but they ignore her. Jolene finally leaves in disgust, texting someone as she goes.

NURSING HOME, ONE MONTH LATER

Jolene, Myrtle and Bert are on stage, playing dominoes.

Session Reproducibles

Myrtle: Jolene, I love it that you come and play games with us here at (put in name of local nursing home.) It seems like every day you're here ... how do you have time for that? Don't you have homework and things to do with your friends?

Jolene: I do my homework later. As far as friends ... huh ... I don't have any friends.

Bert: A nice girl like you doesn't have friends?

Jolene: I used to. Then one day they just started to ignore me. After 3 weeks of that, my mom suggested I come here to fill some of my time. So that's why I've been here.

Myrtle: I can't imagine that us old people are a good substitute for your friends.

Jolene: It's fun ... in a different way. But yeah, I really miss doing stuff with the girls after school.

Bert: You could bring them here.

Jolene: That's be great ... if they'd come. But they won't. Not with me.

Myrtle: I just don't understand that. You're such a nice girl.

YOUTH GROUP, ONE MONTH LATER

A youth sponsor is leading a youth group session. Everyone is there except Jolene. Leader asks where she is ... why she hasn't been coming? Girls look at each other, shake their heads ... nobody's saying. Leader says s/he'll have to call Jolene and find out. One of the friends says: "You might try TEXTING her ... I'm sure she'd answer that."

Leader says that the topic for the evening is the possibility of creating a youth center in town for kids to come hang out and to be a ministry to youth. Some issues would be finding a building, staffing it, etc. (*Create this conversation/discussion.*) At the end, youth promise to pray about it and ask around for others' opinions.

NURSING HOME, THE SAME EVENING

Jolene, Bert and Myrtle are playing a Wii game.

Bert: This game is wearing me out!

Jolene: Yeah it's great exercise, isn't it?

Myrtle: You can say that again.

Jolene: Shall we take a break?

Bert: Yes!

Session Reproducibles

They go sit down.

Jolene: Where did you live before you came here?

Myrtle: In a big wonderful house on south main street. You know where the Kwik Shop is?

Jolene: Yes

Myrtle: The big brick house two doors south of it.

Jolene: Isn't it hard to move from a big house of your own to a little room like this?

Myrtle: Yes, very hard. I miss my house so much. But I couldn't take care of it anymore, so I had moved to a duplex here. And then when I couldn't take care of myself anymore, I moved here.

Jolene: I can't imagine how that feels. What happened to your house?

Bert: It's just sitting there. We need to sell it. We just keep putting it off. So many memories in there ...

Silence for a few moments.

Bert: Sorry ... I didn't mean to get all sentimental. Life goes on.

Jolene: Yes, I guess it does. And I guess it's time for me to get going ... I have homework to do.

Myrtle: I just realized ... it's Wednesday evening. Why aren't you at youth group?

Jolene: I'm not going anymore.

Myrtle: Why not?

Jolene shrugs: The girls are mean to me, so it's not a fun place to be anymore.

Bert: What happened?

Jolene: I don't know and I don't care. I don't need them.

Myrtle: You must be lonely.

Jolene looks at her phone: Yeah, Well, I've gotta go ... homework to do. I'll see you tomorrow.

Myrtle: Okay, Jolene. See you tomorrow.

Bert: See ya.

LATER THAT EVENING

Jolene is reading a text message on her phone out loud.

Session Reproducibles

Hi Jolene, missed you at youth group. We talked about a youth center in town. Cool idea, huh?
Later, (youth leader)

Jolene thinks for a moment: Huh! I just might have an idea about a youth house, but if they think I'm going to share it with them, they've got another guess coming.

Jolene storms off stage.

YOUTH GROUP, ONE WEEK LATER

Youth group meeting. Jolene is there in disguise. Kids welcome her but she doesn't seem to want to talk so they leave her alone.

Youth group member whispers to another YGM: She reminds me of somebody ... who is it?

Other member: Jolene! She reminds me of Jolene ... maybe it's a cousin of hers.

Member: Speaking of Jolene. I feel kinda bad about how we treated her, you know?

Member: Yeah, me too. I mean, I didn't think it would alienate her so bad that she wouldn't even come to youth group anymore.

Member: I'd probably have acted the same way if I had such a cool phone.

Member: Yeah, me too. I wish I could tell her I'm sorry.

Jolene takes off her disguise: You really mean that? Are you truly sorry?

Everybody: Jolene!!!

Jolene: Yes, it's me. I missed you guys so much!

Everybody: We missed you too! ETC ETC

Jolene: Hey, I heard you're looking for a building for a youth center. I know somebody that might have an answer for you. But before that, I have a "Text Message" for everybody:

Jolene hands out Bibles to everyone. They all stand up, open their Bibles to Romans 8:28, and read together: "For we know that all things work together for good for those who love the Lord and are called according to his purpose."