

## CONNECTING

*And all of this is a gift from God, who brought us back to himself through Christ. And God has given us this task of reconciling people to him. For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation. (2 Corinthians 5:18-19)*

### THE BIG IDEA

Jesus wants your friends to get to know him. Do you want that, too?

### LISTEN IN

*The pain inside me had been burning my heart into ashes for years. No one knew about this pain. Not my family or friends. I didn't dare let them realize how weak I was. I had many friends, yet every day, I lived a nightmare and I felt so alone. I usually put on a mask—one of great confidence and happiness—and tried to look like I didn't have a care in the world. I succeeded in fooling everyone. No one saw past my mask. That hurt. I used to cry myself to sleep. I felt really pathetic and useless...then I tried to commit suicide... —L*

### GOING DEEPER

Close your eyes and think about your friends who don't know Jesus. Could one of them have written the words above? Because L is a real person—a young girl who silently struggled to carry on without hope. Like each of the “Listen In” stories that appear in this book, L's story is a true story.



L's account in her own words shows us that we may be surprised by what's actually going on inside our friends who live without the hope Jesus brings. But whether their lives are full of pain or they're happily pursuing stuff that in the end will shrivel up and blow away, the spiritual reality is that they are distant from God. Either way, their lives will be difficult because they will be empty of the great joy that comes from knowing God. And their afterlife will be even more difficult—an eternity spent separated from God in a place the Bible describes as unbearable and unending.

They need to hear about Jesus' offer of salvation and his free gift of a close, personal relationship with God. You hold those words of life. Are you willing to help your friends get connected to God?

## **DO SOMETHING!**

Close your eyes and ask God to bring to mind the name of one friend who needs Jesus. Write that name down in today's journal entry. Then write a note to Jesus about this person and ask him to prepare the way for you to spend some time talking to this friend about Jesus.

*Note to Jesus about my friend...*