

THE GREAT EXCHANGE: SIN FOR ABUNDANT LIFE



THEOLOGICAL QUESTION

What is sin, and how does it impact my life and my relationship with others?

BIG IDEA

We all sin, but there is hope to avoid it and live the abundant life God has called us to if we trust Christ alone.

SCRIPTURE USED

Romans 3:23: *For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard.*

Isaiah 64:6: *We are all infected and impure with sin. When we display our righteous deeds, they are nothing but filthy rags. Like autumn leaves, we wither and fall, and our sins sweep us away like the wind.*

Romans 6:23: *For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.*

John 15:5: *Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing.*

OPENER

For the opener you will need:

- 2 decks of cards
- A sturdy flat surface like a large table (enough room for 2 teams to spread out and not bump into each other)
- Stop watch/timer feature on smart phone
- 2 student teams of 2-3 people each

Ask for 4-6 student volunteers, depending on the size of your youth group. Instruct them to come to the front of the room and divide them into two teams. Handing a deck of cards to each team, inform them that they will "have 90 seconds to meet your standard and build a seven-story card tower" on whatever flat surface you have chosen. Make sure to mention the "your standard" part because it will tie in with Romans 3:23. Let the students know they may not bend the cards nor use any extra or foreign objects. Only the decks of cards themselves are allowed in the construction of the tower. The cards may only be placed on top of the flat surface. Set the timer to 90 seconds and then watch

as the two teams make their house of cards, making sure to tease them a bit and yell things in good fun like: “It keeps falling!” “Will you guys EVER make this tower?” and “No matter what you do, it just falls apart!” As the rest of your students watch their probably frustrated peers fail again and again, they will likely think it’s funny that their peers cannot complete the task.

ASK

- Was there *anything* these teams could have done to accomplish their task better, given the rules?
- How did the teams do at meeting my standard?
- Let’s read Romans 3:23. What do you think God’s standard is?

TRANSITION

EXPLAIN

No matter what best laid plans or carefully thought-out tactics the teams had, they really had no way of accomplishing the goal, right? There was not even a possibility they were going to meet my standard. My standard was essentially perfection—the unachievable.

Isn’t it like that with life? Sometimes we think that we can “do good”; that our “good works”—you know, helping the old lady across the street, doing extra chores for your mom—will somehow get us on God’s “good side.” As if somehow He can be won over or persuaded by the things we do. We already established that all have sinned, right? Romans 3:23 tells that everyone, every single person has sinned. The Bible actually addresses this issue of us always wanting to “do good for God” and somehow prove ourselves. Let’s take a look at Isaiah 64:6. Here we read that: *“We are all infected and impure with sin. When we display our righteous deeds, they are nothing but filthy rags. Like autumn leaves, we wither and fall, and our sins sweep us away like the wind.”*

ASK

- What is God telling us here in this passage of Isaiah?
- How does that make you feel to know that God looks at your good deeds as “filthy”?