

SO NOBODY'S PERFECT



1. What do you think are common sins of people your age?

2. What do you think?

- | | Definitely | Sometimes | Nope |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. If I sin, God will punish me. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. When I sin, I feel guilty. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. I can't stop sinning. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. I enjoy seeing how much I can get away with. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. I enjoy doing things I know I shouldn't do. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f. If I knew I could do something wrong without getting caught, I would do it. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

3. True or False—

- a. Some sins are worse than others. _____
- b. Christians don't sin on purpose. _____
- c. If a sin isn't harmful to anyone, then it's not really a sin. _____
- d. If you sin accidentally, then it's not really a sin. _____
- e. If you ask God to forgive your sins, then it's okay to sin again. _____

4. Check out **Romans 3:23**—what does it say in your own words?

SO NOBODY'S PERFECT [s i n]

THIS WEEK

What is sin? It can be a hard concept for some teenagers to understand, especially when they aren't familiar with the Bible. Society today teaches ideas about sin that are contrary to God's word and argues that there's no such thing as a sin, some sins really aren't sins, or teaching about sin just makes people feel guilty. This TalkSheet will help explain what sin is and open a discussion about sin and what Christians can do about it.

OPENER

Since it's hard for some to understand sin (besides doing something wrong), ask your group to answer the following questions—

- What does sin look like (in your imagination)?
- How would you describe sin?
- What causes you to sin?
- How much sin is too much?

They'll probably have a bunch of different answers. Take some time to make a master list of these answers. Why did they pick the answers they did? What helps them understand sin better?

Or collect and pass out newspapers or magazines to the kids and ask them to find a few examples of sin. Go around and have them share one or two examples that they found. What was the sin? Why is it considered a sin? How would the sin rate on a scale of 1-10?

THE DISCUSSION, BY THE NUMBERS

1. Make a list of all the sins they wrote down. Ask the kids to circle which ones they think are the worst and what sins they think are the most common. After some discussion, challenge them to reach a definition of what sin is.
2. Approach this discussion with general statements—not personal. Don't force your kids to reveal their individual answers. Ask the question with something like, "Do you believe God punishes people for sinning? If so, how?"
3. As your kids share their answers, encourage them to think of biblical support for their opinions. It'll take some time for them to find some verses, but that's okay. You may want to focus on the last statement and talk about this—many junior high and middle schoolers don't understand repentance. You may have to explain that it means being truly sorry for their sin and being willing to change.

4. These verses focus on God's grace and forgiveness. Some of your kids won't understand the concept of grace, so be prepared to explain this and give examples. You may want to discuss 1 John 1:9 and have some of them share their paraphrases.

THE CLOSE

Everyone—parents, pastors, teachers, and friends—sins. It's a fact. They are all human and they all fall short of the glory of God. The good news is that although sin distances us from God, it never separates us completely from his love. God is faithful and forgives us our sins (1 John 1:9). They get a fresh start whenever they ask for God's forgiveness.

Are there one or two sins that each group member is struggling with or feeling guilty about? You may want to ask group members to write down their sins on a piece of paper. Then demonstrate God's refining fire—his forgiveness—by burning the papers in a fire outside (just be careful!). Or (the safer option) have your kids rip them into tiny pieces. Either activity shows what Christ does with our sins—forgives and forgets. You may want to give them a moment of silent prayer or reflection time. And remind them that they need to forgive themselves too.

MORE

- The Bible is chock full of examples of God's grace and forgiveness. There are several examples in the miracles and life of Christ, who showed love and mercy to sinners. In fact, Jesus hung out with unclean sinners (like Mary, a former prostitute). Have the group find some of these examples and list them on a whiteboard or poster board.
- Discuss with your group the importance of forgiving others like God forgives them. What makes it hard to forgive and forget with your friends or family? What sins are easier to forgive than others? How can they deal with these sins and get over the hurt caused by others? Challenge your kids to confront and forgive one person this week.