Lesson 1

Choose the Right Way

Scope and Sequence | Core Essentials: Salvation
---|---
Lesson Objective | Students will understand that Jesus died on the cross for sin and rose from the grave and they will be confronted with a choice to place their faith in Jesus Christ for salvation.
Sticky Statement | Only one way is the right way.
Key Verse | John 14:6
Definitions | Sin: the lack of conformity to, or transgression of, the law of God

Checklist

1. A PowerPoint is available for this lesson.
2. “Top 10 Funny Epic Own Goals”
3. “Top 5 Worst Own Goals of All Time I NHL”
4. “NBA Own Baskets Compilation”
5. “Touchdown Fail. Guy runs the wrong way!”
   https://teachersource.wol.org/resource/SBS18/1-4/ (0:29).

Lesson Overview

I. The **Wrong** Way
   A. The Wrong **Direction** – Romans 3:9-12 & 23
      - We are all “under sin.”
        Sin is *the lack of conformity to, or transgression of, the law of God*.
      - We have chosen to go our own way.
- We are all headed the wrong direction.
- We are all seeking our own way.
- There is no one who does good, not even one of us! Our way is not the right way.

Running in the wrong direction always leads to the wrong destination.

B. The Wrong Destination – Genesis 3:1-6, Romans 5:12
- Running in the wrong direction always leads to the wrong destination and arriving at the wrong destination pays out the wrong dividends.

C. The Wrong Dividends – Romans 6:23

II. The Right Way

A. The Right Person
- The gift of God is eternal life and it comes through Jesus Christ!

B. The Right Payment
- The payment for sin is death and Jesus chose to make that payment for you by dying in your place.

Only one way is the right way.

Hook

How many of you enjoy sports? [Allow the students to raise their hands.] One of the most basic principles in any sport is the idea of scoring. It is pretty simple: players attempt to score for their team and stop the other team from scoring. If you want to win, scoring is a must. If you don’t want the other team to win, stopping them from scoring is a must. You don’t have to like sports to know that, do you? It doesn’t get much more basic than that: score and stop the other team from scoring.

Occasionally, during the heat of the moment, a player will do the unthinkable: he will score on his own team. When this happens, it can be pretty embarrassing. Take a look at this video showing several athletes scoring on their own team.

Teacher’s Note: If your group relates to soccer, show the following soccer video: “Top 10 Funny Epic Own Goals” https://teachersource.wol.org/resource/SBS18/1-1/ (2:48). If your group relates to hockey, show the following hockey video: “Top 5 Worst Own Goals of All Time I NHL” https://teachersource.wol.org/resource/SBS18/1-2/ (3:01). If your group relates to basketball, show the following basketball video: “NBA Own Baskets Compilation” https://teachersource.wol.org/resource/SBS18/1-3/ (3:10).
While these were hard to watch, you can tell that the player certainly did not score against his own team on purpose. While the player had no intention of scoring against his own team, it did happen. Maybe he did it completely by accident or maybe he thought he was scoring on the right goal, but despite the circumstance it was the wrong way. It was wrong because when it comes to scoring, only one way is the right way. In soccer and hockey, it is called an “own goal,” but in football, well, in football it could be called, “pulling a Jim Marshall.”

One of the most famous “wrong way” scores came in 1964. The Minnesota Vikings were playing the San Francisco 49ers on October 25, 1964. Late in the fourth quarter of the game, after making a catch, San Francisco's Billy Kilmer fumbled the ball. The Viking’s defensive end, Jim Marshall, picked up the ball on the 34-yard line and ran 66 yards to the end zone. Marshall thought he had scored a touchdown. As he threw the ball out of bounds to celebrate, he turned around to be congratulated by a thankful player from the 49ers. He had run 66 yards and was standing in the wrong end zone. He had not scored a touchdown for the Vikings, but a safety for San Francisco! Check out this clip of Jim Marshall's infamous run.

Teacher's Note: Show the clip of Jim Marshalls’ wrong-way run: “Touchdown Fail. Guy runs the wrong way!” https://teachersource.wol.org/resource/SBS18/1-4/ (0:29).

Jim thought he was headed the right way. He thought he was helping his team by scoring a touchdown, but he didn’t realize, until it was too late, that he had been running the wrong way.

Jim Marshall's run is a lot like all of us in our attempt to have a relationship with God. Most of us think we are headed in the right direction. Most of us think that what we are doing is helping us win the game of life, but the truth is, on our own, we are all headed the wrong way.

I. The Wrong Way

Listen to this commentary on the human race. [Read Romans 3:9-12.]

That is a pretty negative passage! Did you notice all the negative ways we are described? Listen again to how we are headed in the wrong direction.

A. The Wrong Direction – Romans 3:9-12 & 23

Romans 3:9 says that we are all “under sin.” Sin is the lack of conformity to, or transgression of, the law of God. Every one of us has broken God’s law. Instead of doing what is right, we have chosen not to conform to God’s law. We have chosen to go our own way.

Romans 3:10 reminds us that as a result of our sin we can be described as unrighteous. If fact, there is no one who is righteous. No one is right in the eyes of God. We are all headed the wrong direction. According to Romans 3:11, none of us seek after God. We are all seeking our own way.
Much like Jim Marshall, we are all running in the wrong direction! We are on the wrong path. Romans 3:12 says that we have all "gone out of the way" or "turned aside" from the right direction. Instead of going God’s way, we have chosen to go our own way, but only one way is the right way. The fact is: there is no one who does good, not even one of us! Our way is not the right way.

We try to do what is right. We try to follow the rules, but no matter how good we live, no matter how closely we follow the rules, we always come up short. It doesn’t matter how many good deeds we do, those good deeds will never take away our sin. No matter how closely we follow the rules, we are already a rule breaker. We have all fallen short of God’s standard. Romans 3:23 says that we all have sinned and have fallen short of the glory of God. We have missed the mark. We are headed in the wrong direction and running in the wrong direction always leads to the wrong destination.

B. The Wrong Destination – Genesis 3:1-6, Romans 5:12

Because Jim Marshall ran in the wrong direction, he ended up in the wrong end zone. He ran to the wrong end zone because he thought he was headed the right way. In his mind, he was going the right way. He was doing what he thought would benefit his team the most.

The very first human beings started all of mankind down the wrong path when they chose to do what they thought was best. They made a choice that they thought would benefit them the most. Listen to how the Bible describes the beginning of our trek down the wrong path.

Teacher’s Note: Either read Genesis 3:1-6 directly from the Bible or give a detailed account of how sin entered the world through Adam’s sin.

In the Bible, the author of the Book of Romans describes the impact of this choice by Adam and Eve. Listen to what he wrote in relation to that original sin. [Ask a student to read Romans 5:12.]

As a result of the sin of one man (meaning Adam), all are sinners. We all sin and that sin nature we inherited from Adam pointed the whole human race in the wrong direction. Running in the wrong direction always leads to the wrong destination and arriving at the wrong destination pays out the wrong dividends.

C. The Wrong Dividends – Romans 6:23

For Jim Marshall the destination was the wrong end zone. As a result of running the wrong direction and arriving at the wrong destination, it cost his team two points. Instead of heading toward his own end zone and a touchdown worth six points, he ended up scoring for the other team. His “wrong way run” had consequences.

Sin always has consequences. The same author who wrote about the impact of Adam’s original sin, wrote about the consequences of sin. [Read Romans 6:23a.] The original sin was passed on to all humans. As a result, all humans are sinners and the payment for sin is death.
Remember how the author of this book described Adam’s original sin? [Re-read Romans 5:12.] Death spread to all men because all have sinned. Sin brings death and death always brings separation. Physical death causes the body to be separated from the soul. Spiritual death causes the soul to be separated from God.

Eternal death causes the soul to be separated from God for all of eternity. As a result of our sin, we will not inherit eternal life, but eternal death which is eternal separation from God. The wages of sin is always death.

What an awful thought! Everyone sins and as a result, everyone has to be separated from God. God is holy. He is totally separate from, even hostile toward, sin and evil. No sin can ever be in His presence. To allow someone who is sinful into His presence would totally violate His character. Since God is holy, He cannot tolerate sin. Fortunately for all of us sinners, God is also love and has made a way for our sin to be removed from our account. By believing in Jesus Christ, we can come to God the right way; the only way.

II. The **Right** Way

The same author who wrote about Adam’s sin and how we all are sinners, also wrote about a gift so gracious it could only be given by God. Remember what Romans 6:23 revealed about us? [Re-read Romans 6:23a.] Listen to the rest of that verse. [Read Romans 6:23b.]

A. The Right **Person**

There is hope! The gift of God is eternal life and it comes through Jesus Christ! This gift is not just given to the church people. It is not just given to the super spiritual people. Listen to what the Bible says about those who can receive this gift. [Read Romans 5:6.] Did you hear that? Christ died for the ungodly. [Read Romans 5:8.] Did you catch that? While we were still sinners, Christ died for us!

B. The Right **Payment**

When we were headed in the wrong direction, Jesus Christ died in our place! The payment for sin is death (Romans 6:23) and Jesus chose to make that payment for you by dying in your place.

But if Jesus died in your place, what good is a dead man, even if that man lived a perfect life? If death on a cross is where it ended for Jesus, it would only be a story of a really good man who gave his life for what he believed. We might be inspired to live better. It might make a good movie and encourage people to stand firm on their beliefs, but the death of Jesus is not the end of the story.

After Jesus died, His body was taken off of the cross and placed in a tomb. For three days, His body lay in the cold, dark tomb, but, on the third day, Jesus rose from the dead! Not only did Jesus make the payment for the sin of all mankind, He conquered death when He rose from the dead.

Listen to what Matthew, both the writer of the Book of Matthew and an eye witness to the life of Jesus, wrote in his account of the resurrection of Jesus. [Read Matthew 28:5-6.]
The Apostle Paul, the same writer who wrote about the sin of Adam and our personal sin, wrote about the resurrection of Jesus as well. [Read 1 Corinthians 15:3-4.]

So, the payment for all sin was made by Jesus Christ when He died on the cross. Death was defeated when He rose from the dead. With His death and resurrection, Jesus made a way for everyone to be saved from sin and death. What a great gift! The gift of God is eternal life and it comes through Jesus Christ. This great gift is received by faith. [Read Romans 10:9-10.] Salvation is that simple. Confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead and you will be saved.

Listen to how Jesus describes the way to the Father. [Read John 14:6.] The only way to have a relationship with God is through Jesus. He is the way, the truth, and the life. Jesus is the only way and only one way is the right way.

What do you think Jim Marshall would have done if, in the middle of his run, time stopped, everyone else froze, and someone was able to quickly explain that he was headed in the wrong direction? [Allow the students a chance to answer.]

What would you think if someone was able to stop Jim in the middle of his wrong-way run and, after understanding that he was running in the wrong direction, he chose to keep running the wrong way? [Allow the students a chance to answer.] That would be crazy, wouldn’t it?

Tonight, you have been given a chance to know that truth. You have been stopped in the middle of your “wrong-way run” and you now know that without Jesus Christ you will never have a relationship with God. This room is your football field. This message is your “time stands still” moment and you have just found out that you are running the wrong way. What will you do? Only one way is the right way.

So, here is what you now know. You are a sinner. The payment for your sin is death; separation from God for all eternity. God loved you so much that He did not want you to be separated from Him for all eternity. Because of His great love, He sent Jesus to make the payment for all sin. Jesus died on the cross, was buried, and on the third day rose from the dead. If you will confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

The choice is yours. Only by believing in Jesus Christ will your wrong-way run stop. Will you stop running the wrong way? Will you run to Him?

If you have never trusted Christ as Savior, you can make that choice right now. Only one way is the right way. Right now, I am going to ask everyone to take a moment to quietly bow your head and close your eyes so each person can focus on themselves for a minute.
Do you believe that you are a sinner in need of a Savior? If so, will you tell God that right now? Just simply talk to Him right now and tell Him that you have been running the wrong way but right now you are turning from your sin and trusting Jesus Christ as your Savior.

Do you believe that Jesus died to make the payment for your sin and then rose from the dead on the third day? If so, will you tell God that right now? Just tell God that you believe that Jesus died for you and rose again so you can have eternal life. Tell Him that you believe that Jesus is your only way for salvation and ask Him to forgive you of your sin. Ask Him to save you.

If you trusted Christ as Savior just now, when we dismiss for small groups in just a minute, let the small group leader know about your decision to follow Christ.

**Teacher’s Note:** If you would like to, ask the students to raise their hands to indicate that they have trusted Christ. You could simply say something like this: “If you chose to stop running the wrong way and begin to follow Christ tonight, I would like to pray for you and thank God for your decision. If you put your faith in Jesus Christ tonight, will you please raise your hand so I can thank God for your decision?” Be sure to pray out loud thanking God for those who trusted Christ.

If you trusted Christ as Savior tonight, I am going to ask you to take a bold step by telling someone that you trusted Christ. If you have a cell phone, take it out right now and send a text to a friend that says this: “Tonight, I decided to follow Jesus.” If you don’t have a cell phone, don’t forget, when we go to small groups in a minute, tell the small group leader that you have trusted Christ tonight.

If you had already trusted Christ before tonight, I am going to ask you to take a bold step as well. If you have a cell phone, take it out right now and send a text to a friend who needs to trust Christ as Savior and say, “Check out the video at www.lifein6words.com.”

If you don’t have a cell phone, when you get home tonight, get on your favorite social media site and connect with a friend and say, “Check out the video at www.lifein6words.com.”

**Sticky Statement**

Only one way is the right way.
Small Group Discussion Questions

1. **When did you trust Christ as your Savior?** (Allow the students who have trusted Christ in the past to share when they trusted Christ as Savior. Use this as an opportunity to see if any one trusted Christ during the message. If you have a student who trusted Christ that night, give that student an opportunity to ask questions or share. This is a good time for the other students to rejoice with this student.)

2. **Who do you know who needs to trust Christ as Savior?** (If the students list names, be sure to write those names down and begin praying for them. Many times it is easy for “church kids” to say that they don’t know anyone who is unsaved. Challenge their thinking a little bit and encourage them to think deeper than their immediate friends. Help them to remember that if they are on social media, they potentially have a lot of opportunities to share Jesus Christ with “friends” or “followers.”)

3. **Who is going to get the “Life in 6 Words” link from you?** (Make sure that each student knows the correct link to the video. Ask each student to send you a text when they have shared the link with a friend. Be sure to continue to pray for the students who receive the link.)