

Cursed and Cured

The Dawning, Devastation, and Death of Sin



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STRONG

curriculum

A world weak on truth needs a strong, trustworthy message. STRONG Curriculum builds stronger churches by teaching all Scripture to produce spiritually mature believers who measure up to the stature of Christ.

A Plan You Can Trust

We believe the Bible has the answers to what students need most. No other book or philosophy contains God's power to save and transform lives. Because of this, we've made it our unwavering commitment to build Strong Students upon the sure foundation of God's Word. With this curriculum, your church can develop teens who will be strong defenders of the faith.

The Strong Students scope and sequence is designed around the seven teaching aims Jesus modeled in His ministry. Since these are Jesus' aims, teachers can be confident in the aims' effectiveness and purpose. Every lesson in the Strong Students scope and sequence addresses at least one of Jesus' teaching aims.

Every lesson also addresses students' needs. We understand the challenge of teaching the Bible to today's teens because of four barriers culture has pushed on them:

- Struggles with identity
- Subjective view of truth
- Hope in a social utopia
- Belief that a career and wealth guarantee happiness

Strong Students takes care of the tough part for you by striking at the foundation of these barriers and providing a Biblical response to each one. With Strong Students, you can concentrate on communicating to your teens and helping them grow into strong believers in Christ without worrying whether you are effectively addressing the philosophies competing for their minds.

Look for the **BuildUP** icons in the table of contents and on the first page of each lesson.

JESUS' TEACHING AIMS

 **BELIEVE THE GOSPEL.** Jesus taught His students to trust in Him alone for salvation and to share the gospel with others. This aim is obviously fundamental to all the rest.

 **UNDERSTAND BIBLICAL ETHICS.** Jesus instructed His students to live according to moral values. These values provided them with the tools to make wise decisions.

 **INTERNALIZE GODLINESS.** Jesus taught His followers to be godly on the inside. He warned them not to become like the Pharisees, with a mere outward appearance of godliness.

 **LEARN DOCTRINE.** Jesus knew the importance of teaching His students the truth, and He identified doctrine as one of the means for spiritual growth. Wishy-washy doctrine leads to faulty practice.

 **DEVELOP LIFE SKILLS.** Jesus taught His followers to meet life's challenges in a way that honored and glorified God. He gave them the skills to navigate those challenges successfully.

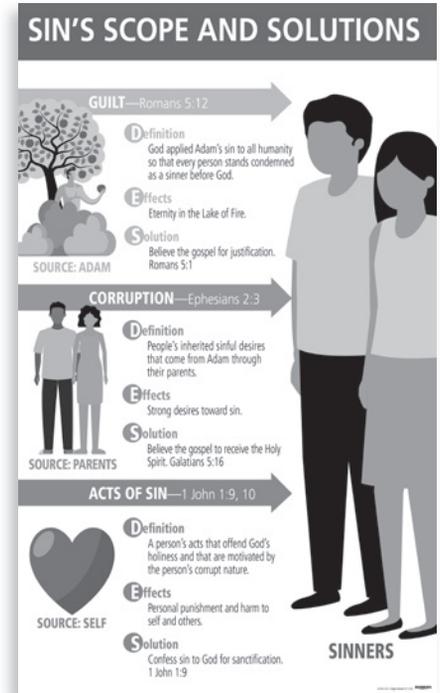
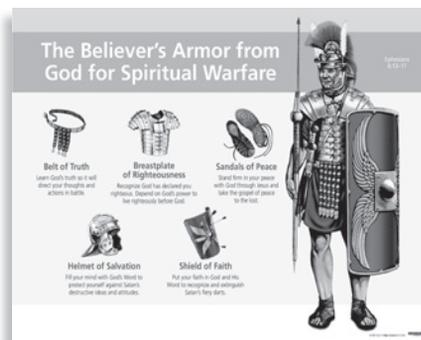
 **UPLIFT OTHERS.** Jesus' life was all about others. Leading by example, He taught His followers to be all about others too.

 **PREPARE TO SERVE.** Jesus prepared His followers to serve in the context of local churches that were established soon after His ascension. He emphasized sacrifice and dedication.

STRONG[®] curriculum

High School Kit Contents

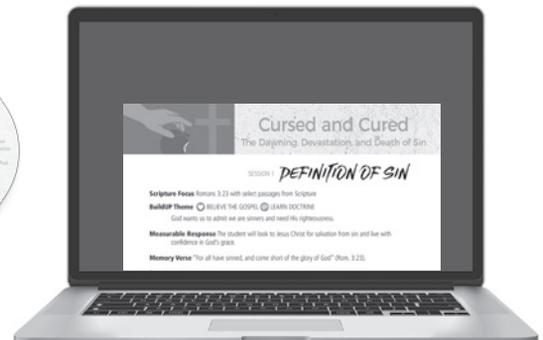
- Teacher Guide
- Student Book
Order one book for each student
- Resource CD with
online download code
*Includes PowerPoint,
Home Connection Tool, and
additional teacher resources.*
- Supplemental DVD
- Posters



Ordering Information

All materials are available from
Regular Baptist Press.

- Web: www.StrongCurriculum.com
- Email: orders@rbpstore.org
- Toll-free orders in the United States:
1-800-727-4440
- Fax: 1-847-843-3757
- Canada: Contact your distributor.



The Doctrinal Basis of Our Curriculum

A more detailed statement with references is available upon request.

- The verbal, plenary inspiration of the Scriptures
- Only one true God
- The Trinity of the Godhead
- The Holy Spirit and His ministry
- The personality of Satan
- The Genesis account of creation
- Original sin and the fall of man
- The virgin birth of Christ
- Salvation through faith in the shed blood of Christ
- The bodily resurrection and priesthood of Christ
- Grace and the new birth
- Justification by faith
- Sanctification of the believer
- The security of the believer
- The church
- The ordinances of the local church: baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper
- Biblical separation—ecclesiastical and personal
- Obedience to civil government
- The place of Israel
- The pretribulation rapture of the church
- The premillennial return of Christ
- The millennial reign of Christ
- Eternal glory in Heaven for the righteous
- Eternal torment in Hell for the wicked

How to Teach STRONG STUDENTS Lessons

Leading a Student to Christ

STRONG STUDENTS has been designed to help you clearly present God's Word to your students. Each lesson will guide students through the Bible, encouraging them to interact with the material and apply it to their lives.

Familiarize yourself with the resources included in the kit so that you can maximize your effectiveness in the classroom. The key resources you need are Student Books, the Resource CD, and the Home Connection Tool.

Encourage students to use their Student Books during each lesson so they can follow the PowerPoint presentation by taking notes. The words to fill in the blanks are either part of the outline or highlighted included in orange in the sentences.

Some of the PowerPoint presentations contain additional slides that obviously tie into the teacher guide lessons. Make sure you review the PowerPoint presentations before teaching.

The student books include a daily devotional. Encourage your students to complete them either before or after coming to class.

The Home Connection Tool gives the parents of your students an idea of what you are teaching in class. Consider emailing those to each family represented in your class. You can find them on the CD or online using the download code.

Before Each Lesson

- Read the Scripture Focus passage several times.
- Do the Time with God section of the Student Book to know what your students are studying.
- Memorize the key verses.
- Prepare the materials you will need for each activity.
- Work through the Bible Study section and carefully plan the lesson.
- Plan how you will apply the Bible lesson to your students' lives. Make sure what you say is clear and shows students how they can use the lesson.
- Pray for yourself, your students, and your lesson.

AS A TEACHER, your most important concern is the personal salvation of your students. Find out whether your students know Jesus Christ as their Savior in a way that doesn't introduce doubt in their minds. An easy and gentle way to find this out is to give your students several minutes to write out an answer to a question like, How can a person get to Heaven? Collect their answers and read them during the following week. If any of your students seem confused about salvation, you can present the gospel to them and provide the opportunity for them to receive Christ. If possible, deal with students individually.

The Plan of Salvation

- Everyone is a sinner. No one can live up to God's perfect standard (Romans 3:23).
- Sin's penalty is death (Romans 6:23).
- God loves us and sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to pay for our sin. Christ died in our place (John 3:16; Romans 5:8).
- When a person places his trust in Jesus' payment for sins, Christ becomes his Savior. His sins are forgiven, and he receives God's gift of eternal life (John 1:12; 5:24).
- Everlasting life begins the moment we trust in Jesus (John 3:36).
- After that, nothing we ever do will take us out of God's hand; we are secure (John 10:27–29).
- The experience of the new birth (being born into God's family) is not based on a feeling, but on confidence in God's Word (1 John 5:11, 12).

Encourage students to pray, but explain that prayer does not save a person. Prayer is how we communicate our inward thoughts to God. Ask new believers to explain what they have done and what has happened to them.

Discipleship

Encourage new believers to read the Bible, and explain the importance of prayer. Also explain 1 John 1:9 to them so they can deal with sin in their new Christian life. Make it a priority to follow up with new believers.

Knowing Your High School Students

Description of Physical, Social, and Emotional Development

- I MAY feel developmentally out of step with my peers—behind or ahead in physical changes—as I experience puberty.
- I MAY be sensitive about my weight and body shape and worry about whether I am normal.
- I AM developing my own sense of identity.
- I AM more interested in and influenced by my peer group than by the adults in my life.
- I MAY be moody, depressed, or anxious about academic or social issues in my life.
- I AM very focused on myself and may feel both high expectations and lack of confidence.
- I AM better able to express feelings through talking, but I tend to respond dramatically, feeling that no one else has ever experienced the same feelings and emotions.
- I DO NOT always exhibit the emotional maturity that matches my more adult-like appearance. I have trouble thinking before acting; sometimes I seem silly and unfocused on the task at hand.

Effective Responses

- Provide emotional and spiritual support and encourage students to develop a strong sense of self as a valuable person created by God.
- Accept students as they are and avoid comparing them to others. Resist stereotyping. Not every tall boy is a basketball player.
- Generate an atmosphere of acceptance and love for all, demonstrating interest and care for each student.
- Create an atmosphere of mutual respect so youth feel they are part of a community.
- Help build genuine relationships by honestly sharing mistakes and life experiences.
- Help students talk through the ramifications of their choices without asking, How could you? What were you thinking?

- Avoid arguments by remaining calm and not engaging in banter over an issue.
- Be patient with the tendency of some youth toward constant personal grooming.

Cognitive (Learning) Development

- I MAY be hesitant to try new things for fear of embarrassing myself in front of my peer group.
- I AM developing new thinking skills and am able to think about multiple options and possibilities.
- I CAN think more deeply and significantly about abstract ideas such as faith.
- I AM developing a stronger sense of right and wrong.
- I MAY be ready to take significant steps in areas of faith and Christian growth.

Effective Instructional Methods

- Create an open and stress-free environment where youth can learn and share concerns in a confidence-building atmosphere.
- Provide background information, a purpose to the lesson, and understanding of the text.
- Combine love, high energy, enthusiasm, and seriousness with engaging ways to present the lesson.
- Use personal stories that illustrate Biblical principles to keep students engaged in learning.
- Provide honest answers to questions.
- Stimulate thinking in areas of salvation and Christian growth.
- Help Christians work through issues of assurance of salvation and to begin studying the Bible for daily decision making.
- Encourage students to articulate Biblical principles of right and wrong that they are learning from God's Word.
- Invite volunteers to look up and read aloud Bible passages. But don't put students on the spot or ask them to do things that make them feel foolish.

SESSION 1

WHAT IS SIN?

Scripture Focus

Genesis 2:15–17; Isaiah 6:1–3;
Matthew 22:36–40; Romans
3:10–25; 1 John 3:4; 1 Peter
1:15, 16

BuildUP Theme



BELIEVE THE GOSPEL

God defines sin and provides the only means of victory over it.

Measurable Response

Students will look to Jesus for salvation from sin and will have confidence in His saving grace.

Memory Verse

“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”
(Rom. 3:23). NKJV

“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”
(Rom. 3:23). NEV

Teacher Preparation

- Consider the context of Romans 3. In the preceding chapters, the apostle Paul demonstrated that Gentiles have rejected the testimony of God’s greatness in creation and in the conscience. Likewise, the Jews have rejected God even though they were the recipients of His law. This session picks up with Paul’s conclusion that all have sinned and are under God’s wrath.
- Read Romans 3. Personalize verses 10 through 18 by inserting your name as if the passage was written specifically about you. Then think of an unbeliever and do the same with his or her name. Consider how that unbeliever will hear about his or her lostness. What role do you think God wants you to play?
- Pray for your students. Don’t assume they are saved. Ask God to convict any unbelieving students and to challenge your believing students to share the gospel with the lost.

Focus

This quarter focuses on the BuildUP aim Learn Doctrine. The concept of sin is a heavy topic that affects every aspect of our lives. It’s important for students to learn what sin is, how it affects their lives, and how God has rescued them from sin.

Cultural Barrier

This session counters the idea that truth is subjective. The world increasingly looks at morality through a subjective lens. Those who do think right and wrong are matters of their own determination. Such a view not only contradicts the clear teachings of Scripture, but it also leads to serious social conflict and turmoil now and eternal consequences later. The Bible is the standard for truth and morality.

Session Starters

Option 1—Most Popular Names

Gather

- Paper and pencils.

Steps

1. Students write the U.S. names they think were the most popular in the following decades or years.
 - Most common boy's name and girl's name in the 1920s. *Robert and Mary.*
 - Most common boy's name and girl's name in the 1940s. *James and Mary.*
 - Most common boy's name and girl's name in the 1960s. *Michael and Lisa.*
 - Most common boy's name and girl's name in the 1990s. *Michael and Jessica.*
 - Most common boy's name and girl's name in the 2010s. *Jacob and Emma.*
 - Most common boy's name and girl's name in 2020. *Liam and Olivia.*
2. Share the answers and note who got the most right.
3. Transition to the Bible lesson.

The Bible gives us the all-time most popular “name.” It calls everyone “sinner.” In this session, we will learn the definition of sin, what it means to be a sinner, and what we can do about it.

Option 2—Still Life Drawings

Gather

- Paper.
- Colored pencils.
- Fruit or flowers.
- Bowl or vase.

Steps

1. Arrange fruit in a bowl or flowers in a vase. Set the still life up at the front of the room.
2. Students draw the still life as accurately as possible in six minutes.

3. When time is up, students display their works of art.

ASK: Whose still life drawing is the most admirable?

ASK: Whose drawing is the most unlike the still life?

ASK: Whose drawing would be considered an exact depiction of the still life? *None of them.*

4. Transition to the Bible lesson.

Falling short in drawing isn't a big deal, but falling short in meeting God's standard of holiness is a huge deal. We will look at God's standard, why we don't meet it, and what God did to fix the problem.

Bible Study

Gather

- Trash can.
- Paper wads.

I. God's Standard for Humanity (Gen. 2:15–17; Isa. 6:1–3)

No one can understand sin without first understanding God, His authority over humanity, and His character. God defined our moral standard for life. He based His standard on His character, or what He is like.

A. God set the standard (Gen. 2:15–17)

God created humanity and therefore has the authority to set the moral standard for our lives. Most people reject God and seek to set their own standard of right and wrong.

ASK: On what basis might unbelievers determine a standard of right and wrong? *They might base their standard on what feels good or right, what makes other people feel accepted and included, what most people think is right, misinterpretations of Scripture, or what "experts" or politicians say is right and good.*

ASK: Why are none of these methods for establishing morality adequate? *The methods all rely on flawed people to set the standard. The methods ignore God, humanity's creator and highest authority.*

READ: Genesis 2:15–17. **ASK:** What did God expect of Adam? *God expected Adam to obey His command and honor Him.*

From the beginning, God set the moral standard for humanity. He told Adam what to do and what not to do. He is our creator too. He will always have the authority to set the standard for our lives.

B. God's standard reflects His character (Isa. 6:1–3)

God based His standard for humanity on His character, or what He is like morally. The Bible sums up God's character in the word "holy." To be holy is to be absolutely pure and free of sin. There is no evil in God. Everything He does, says, and thinks aligns with His holiness. He could never violate His holy character.

God allowed the prophet Isaiah to have a vision of the heavenly throne room. As God sat on His throne, the angels around Him loudly and compulsively proclaimed His holiness.

READ: Isaiah 6:1–3. **ASK:** Why do you think the seraphim repeated the word "holy" three times as they compulsively cried out to one another? *To communicate the completeness of the Lord's holiness. The Lord is the holiest of all beings because He is absolutely holy.*

ASK: What might you say is blue, blue, blue, or absolutely blue?

God is so holy that the seraphim could not stop talking about Him. They felt compelled to focus on and verbalize the truth of God's absolutely pure character. He has never and could never do, say, or think something evil because He is completely pure and separated from evil.

The seraphim went on to say the whole earth is full of God's "glory." God's glory is the revelation of His holiness. Everything God does in relation to His creation, including humanity, is aligned with His holiness. *How* God relates to His creation, including humanity, is His glory. God's glory is His holy character in action. The Bible reveals God's glory, His character in action.

ASK: Name some of God's actions in relation to people, the pinnacle of His creation. *He showed His grace by sparing Noah and His justice by judging the world with a flood (Gen. 6:8). He showed His mercy and faithfulness to the Israelites (Lam. 3:22, 23). He showed His love to all humanity by sending His Son to die for them, offering them eternity in Heaven, and warning them about rejecting Him (John 3:16).*

God's creation in general also reveals God's glory.

ASK: How does God reveal His glory through His creation? *God's provision of nutritious food and replenishing rains show His grace. The rising sun shows His faithfulness. The rainbow shows His mercy.*

We will learn in coming lessons about the curse on God's creation. The curse affects creation in negative ways, yet God's glory still shines through, helping us understand and appreciate His character (Ps. 19:1–6).

II. God's Definition of Sin (Matt. 22:36–40; Rom. 3:23; 1 John 3:4; 1 Pet. 1:15, 16)

ASK: Define "sin." What would you say makes an act sinful?

We started this session by establishing God's holiness so we might understand sin. Sin is a violation of both God's righteous standard and His holy character on which His standard is based.

A. A violation of God's character (Rom. 3:23; 1 Pet. 1:15, 16)

READ: Romans 3:23.

To sin is to fall short of, or not measure up to, God's glory. Remember that God's glory is His character, His absolute holiness, in action. Sin is failing to be holy as God is holy.

READ: Leviticus 19:1, 2; 1 Peter 1:15, 16.

Peter quoted Leviticus to teach the early Christians that God still expects people to match His holiness. His holiness is His standard for all humanity.

ACTIVITY: Set up a trashcan across the room. Give students paper wads to throw at the trashcan. Give each person three tries. Note anyone who makes all three shots. Explain that falling short of the glory of God is not like missing one or two shots in our basket. We would have to move the trashcan to the other side of the universe to illustrate falling short of God's glory. No one comes close to God's glory.

Living up to God's holiness is not just unlikely, it is impossible. No one can hit the mark of God's holiness by living a completely holy life. We all violate God's holy character. Such violations are sin.

B. A violation of God's standard (Matt. 22:36–40; 1 John 3:4)

In the Old Testament times, God gave Israel His law so they might know His standard for their lives. The Ten Commandments are part of God's law. They along with many other of God's commandments reflect God's character. For instance, God commanded His People not to steal because He is loving and giving (Exod. 20:15). He commanded Israel not to bear false witness against their neighbors because He is truth (20:16). To steal or to lie is to violate God's character-based standard.

With God's character and His standard for humanity in mind, the apostle John called sin "lawlessness" (1 John 3:4).

READ: 1 John 3:4.

The "law" in this context is God's general standard for humanity. Not conforming to God's standard is sin.

ASK: How do we know God's standard, His general "law," for today? *By reading the Bible to understand both God's character and His commands.*

The Mosaic law was for Israel, but God repeated many of those commands, including nine of the Ten Commandments, for us in the New Testament. God's commands in the New Testament reveal His expectations for us.

Jesus summarized God's general "law" for us today. He said we are to love God with all our hearts, souls, and minds and our neighbors as ourselves (Matt. 22:36–40). To fail to love God and our neighbors in any way is to offend God and violate His standard for our lives.

READ: James 2:10. **ASK:** How many violations does it take to be guilty of breaking God's standard for our lives? *Just one.*

Those who think of themselves as mostly good and therefore acceptable to God are mistaken. James makes clear that we are guilty of all of God's law as soon as we break one command. That's because just one violation reveals we are sinners by nature. We are born sinners with no ability to reform ourselves or eradicate our sin. It's like sin is part of our DNA. It is part of the fabric of our identity.

III. Humanity's Sinfulness (Rom. 3:10–20)

A. Universal guilt (Rom. 3:10–18)

The apostle Paul made abundantly clear in Romans 3 that all people are guilty of sin with no hope of becoming holy on their own.

READ: Romans 3:10–12. **ASK:** What is true of everyone's character? *No one possesses righteousness, understands spiritual things, nor seeks after God. Everyone has strayed from the right way and become unprofitable to God.*

READ: Romans 3:13, 14. **ASK:** What is true of everyone's speech? *Their mouths are as offensive as an open tomb filled with rotting flesh. They deceive and curse others with their speech. Their words are as destructive as a snake's venom.*

READ: Romans 3:15–17. **ASK:** What is true of everyone's conduct? *Everyone is quick to hate and murder, or at least wish someone would die. Their actions destroy and cause misery. Their attempts to find peace are futile.*

Romans 3:10–12 is a quote of King David's writings in Psalms 14:1–3 and 53:1–3. David wrote hundreds of years before Paul. Humanity's condition didn't change in all those years, and it hasn't changed today. There is still no one who does good. Even a sinner's good deeds, like serving in a homeless shelter or holding the door for someone, are tainted by sinful motives and result in glorification of self rather than God.

READ: Romans 3:18.

To fear God is to respect Him and believe what He reveals about Himself. No one naturally fears God. Everyone violates God's standard.

B. Universal helplessness (Rom. 3:19, 20; 6:23)

READ: Romans 3:19, 20.

The law God gave to Israel as representative of His standard for the rest of humanity could never save a person. God's law, His standard, tells us we are sinners, but it cannot save us from our sins. The law proves we are guilty but offers no hope of reform.

To be "justified" means to be declared righteous or made acceptable to God. No self-motivated, self-empowered, fleshly deed can make us righteous and acceptable to God. We need a Savior to rescue us from our helpless estate.

ASK: Would you say most people know they are sinners and are responsible to God for their sins? Explain your answer.

Our culture teaches people are all basically good and that putting them into the right environment and giving them the right resources and advantages will make them better people. That message is wrong. It excuses people's sinfulness and their responsibility for their actions.

READ: Romans 6:23.

The people who die in their sins will experience eternal death in a place called the Lake of Fire (Rev. 21:8). There people will feel pain, thirst, and torment for all eternity with no hope of escape or rescue. Obviously, the truth that all are sinners in need of a Savior must be told to everyone.

ASK: When, if ever, have you told someone he or she is a sinner in need of a Savior? What happened?

IV. Humanity's Savior (Rom. 3:21–25)

To escape God's wrath on our sin, we need to meet God's standard. We can't do that on our own. We need to be made righteous by God.

READ: Romans 3:21.

Righteousness from God was not foreign in the Old Testament. The offerings and sacrifices spoke of God's righteousness given to others. Abraham knew of God's righteousness transferred to humanity. He believed God, and God made Him righteous (Gen. 15:6). God even said Israel's righteousness was of Him (Isa. 54:17).

READ: Romans 3:22–25

In this current age, God makes us righteous when we put our faith specifically in Jesus for salvation. Jesus died on the cross to take the

penalty for our sins. He is the acceptable sacrifice (propitiation) to satisfy God's wrath on our sin and cancel our sin. God found Jesus' death satisfactory because Jesus is the perfect Son of God (2 Cor. 5:21).

If you have not trusted in Christ as Savior, ask Him to forgive your sin today, and talk with me or another believer so we might rejoice and pray with you.

If you have trusted Christ as Savior, rejoice in your salvation and take advantage of your opportunity to love and serve God.

Memory Builder

Gather

- Paper.
- Colored pencils or markers.

Steps

1. Review the meaning of Romans 3:23 and key lesson points.

God's glory is His character in action. All He does, says, and thinks is holy. We must attain to God's holiness to become acceptable to Him and to escape His wrath. We all, however, fall short of God's glory. We violate His standard for us and fail to match His holy character. Jesus satisfied God's wrath on our sin. When we trust in Him for salvation, God declares us righteous and promises us eternity in His presence.

2. Students write the memory verse out on a piece of paper, substituting "I" for "all."
3. Students illustrate coming short of God's glory. For example, they could show themselves trying to jump to the moon or throw a ball to Mars.
4. Students share their illustrations and express their gratitude for Jesus' death in their place.

Session Application

Gather

- Paper.
- Pencils.
- Video 1 from the DVD—"Bullseye: Becoming Righteous through Christ."

Steps

1. Review the lesson.

Sin is a violation of God's righteous standard and His holy character. We all have sinned against God and deserve His wrath on our sin. But we can't gain freedom from sin on our own. Only Jesus Christ, Who died to pay for our sin, can set us free from sin.

VIDEO: Show video 1 ("Bullseye: Becoming Righteous through Christ") from the DVD. It reviews key truths from the lesson and challenges students to take the gospel to the lost.

2. Write the word "all" in big block letters on the board. Students write their names inside one of the letters and add names of those who need to hear about sin and salvation.

As believers, sometimes we forget that God has called us to carry His Word on sin and salvation to an ignorant world. We were once as lost as our friends and family members. We became righteous through faith in Christ. They could too.

3. Have students pray for each other, asking God to help them be bold to witness and to convict their friends and family members of their sin and need for the Savior.

Session Takeaways

Before dismissing the students, draw their attention to the Time with God page of their student books. Remind them that sin is violating God's standard and His character but that we have hope in Jesus Christ.