

The Ishbane Conspiracy

Dealing with Sin pt. 2

Ice Breaker/Game:

Book Study:

Darkness into Light

Time: about 60-90 minutes

Students will learn about the themes of "The Ishbane Conspiracy" by Randy Alcorn, more specifically how we can deal with sin by confessing it to each other and bring it into the light.

Supplies: Bibles, *The Ishbane Conspiracy* by Randy Alcorn, index cards, pens.

Start the lesson out with a review of the weeks' chapters in two large groups. **(15 min)**

Ask: **What did you think about the last 5 chapters?**

Was there something that you read that you want to talk about?

Say: **Last week we talked about how, in order to deal with sin, we need to first have a repentant heart and how that is different from just being sorry. Tonight we are going to talk about the next step in dealing with sin: confessing our sins to God and others.**

Ask: **Do you think it's easy to go to God and ask for forgiveness?**

How about going to someone we have hurt and ask for their forgiveness?

What about confessing to someone we know and respect, like a mentor?

Say: **In order to stay free from sin, it needs to be brought into the light. When we try and deal with sin ourselves, and do not confess it to others, we are much more likely to fall back into the same fleshly patterns.**

Prodigal Dramas

(30min)

(Activity based on Innovative Tools by Group Publishing)

Form three groups and have each group read *Luke 15:11-24*.

¹¹ Jesus went on to say, “There was once a man who had two sons. ¹² The younger one said to him, ‘Father, give me my share of the property now.’ So the man divided his property between his two sons. ¹³ After a few days the younger son sold his part of the property and left home with the money. He went to a country far away, where he wasted his money in reckless living. ¹⁴ He spent everything he had. Then a severe famine spread over that country, and he was left without a thing. ¹⁵ So he went to work for one of the citizens of that country, who sent him out to his farm to take care of the pigs. ¹⁶ He wished he could fill himself with the bean pods the pigs ate, but no one gave him anything to eat. ¹⁷ At last he came to his senses and said, ‘All my father’s hired workers have more than they can eat, and here I am about to starve! ¹⁸ I will get up and go to my father and say, “Father, I have sinned against God and against you. ¹⁹ I am no longer fit to be called your son; treat me as one of your hired workers.”’ ²⁰ So he got up and started back to his father.

“He was still a long way from home when his father saw him; his heart was filled with pity, and he ran, threw his arms around his son, and kissed him. ²¹ ‘Father,’ the son said, ‘I have sinned against God and against you. I am no longer fit to be called your son.’ ²² But the father called to his servants. ‘Hurry!’ he said. ‘Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and shoes on his feet. ²³ Then go and get the prize calf and kill it, and let us celebrate with a feast! ²⁴ For this son of mine was dead, but now he is alive; he was lost, but now he has been found.’ And so the feasting began.

Say: This is a story some of us may have heard before, but let’s see how the story might change if we create a “remake” using modern circumstances.

Assign each group one of these three scenarios:

- (1) Instead of leaving home, the younger son gets addicted to drugs.
- (2) Change the younger son into a teenage girl who gets pregnant out of wedlock.
- (3) Instead of leaving home, the younger son gets suspended from school for cheating on his exams.

Say: As much as possible, leave the storyline intact—change only what is necessary to update the story with your new character. Work as a group to design your “remake,” then prepare to present it to the whole group.

Have them take turns presenting their “remakes.” Give each person an index card and a pen.

Say: These dramas illustrate some of the sins lots of young people get caught up in. But those aren’t the only sins we struggle with. On your index card, write a symbol or word that represents a sin you struggle with in your own life.

Have students return to their three groups, and give each group one of these mini-assignments:

Group 1—Read *Luke 15:17*. When it says the son “came to his senses,” what do you think that means?

¹⁷ At last he came to his senses and said, ‘All my father's hired workers have more than they can eat, and here I am about to starve!’

Group 2—Read *Luke 15:20*. When it says the son “got up and went to his father,” how might that apply to the way we deal with sin in our own lives?

²⁰ So he got up and started back to his father. “He was still a long way from home when his father saw him; his heart was filled with pity, and he ran, threw his arms around his son, and kissed him.”

Group 3—Read *Luke 15:21*. In the story, the son confessed his sin to his father. What might that “confession” look like in our own lives?

²¹ ‘Father,’ the son said, ‘I have sinned against God and against you. I am no longer fit to be called your son.’

Say: True confession is more than just admitting we’ve done something we shouldn’t. It involves a change of heart, a change of mind, and a change of direction: repentance. Confession is an important spiritual discipline because it helps us fight against the power sin can gain over our lives.

Break into gender specific groups.

(30min)

Discuss the example from *Ishbane Conspiracy* (Pages 136-137), Jillian’s confession to Kelly.

Ask: What was your first reaction to Jillian’s confession to Kelly in the book?

Did she need to confess, I mean, no one knew what had happened between them?

Why did she feel like she needed to ask for Kelly forgiveness?

Say: Jillian needed to come clean with Kelly. God did forgive her, but her sin wasn’t just against God it was also against Kelly. Jillian did the right thing, a very hard thing, by going to Kelly and admitting what she did. However, Kelly wasn’t exactly thrilled with her confession.

Ask: What did you think about Kelly’s reaction?

What about what Jillian did after her confession didn’t go the way she pictured it?

Why do you think that Jillian went back to food to make her feel better rather than trusting in God?

Say: **Jillian’s confession didn’t go the way she wanted it to, but she did what was right. Just because something doesn’t go right, doesn’t mean it’s not what God wants you to do. Often there are still consequences for sin, even if we have been forgiven by God.**

Have students pull out their index cards.

Read the example from The Ishbane Conspiracy on pg. 103, Paragraph 3.

Say: **We all struggle with sin—no one is exempt. But when we confess our sins to each other, honestly and with humility, God will always forgive us—just like the father in the story. Jesus died on the cross to make that wonderful gift of forgiveness possible. We just need to “come to our senses” and receive it. Let’s take some time right now to share some of the sin that we struggle with, confessing that sin to each other.**

Have students share their index cards, if they are comfortable. End with prayer and a time of ministry for the students.