

# SMALL GROUP

## SESSION 1 INTRO

So, you've recently been introduced to an overview of this concept of *"Exchange."* By now, you've probably heard that an *Exchange* is a swapping of "this" for "that." It's me giving you something I have that you want for something you have that I want. Exchanging what's mine for what's better. A better fit. A better model. A better deal.

When most people make an *Exchange*, very rarely (if ever) do they give away something valuable for something worthless. Think about it; who in their right mind would willingly give up something valuable or desirable for something that isn't, right?

*"I'll tell you what; you give me your old, dirty soccer socks, and I'll give you my new iPhone®."*

It just doesn't work that way, does it?

But here's the interesting thing: Jesus made an *Exchange* that would fall into this category. Jesus exchanged Heaven for Earth. He exchanged worship for ridicule. Why? So He could make **the ultimate Exchange.**

Jesus, perfect, sinless Jesus, willingly exchanged His spot-free, sinless life for your soiled, sinful one. He exchanged His innocence for your guilt. And in doing so, He made possible the greatest *Exchange* of all . . .

## DEATH FOR LIFE.

Jesus made possible an *Exchange* that, once embraced and accepted, leads to dozens more exchanges in the lives of His followers. This study is about this **one big Exchange** and several of the **other exchanges** that are made possible as a result. These are exchanges that appear over and over again in the Bible. These exchanges are the filters to viewing the amazing, exchanged life Jesus has made possible for you. And they are exchanges that can serve as pathways for you to live a life that has a true impact on the world and the people around you for the sake of Christ.

In this first *Exchange*, you'll actually dig a little deeper into this idea of exchanging death for life. It's a powerful *Exchange* that has a ton of meaningful, relevant implications for your life.

Are you ready? Because when you learn how this *Exchange* sets the state for the many exchanges to follow, you might not ever think about your relationship with Jesus, or your own life, the same again. **Let's get started. . .**

# SESSION 1

## GETTING STARTED

*Listen and follow along with this incredible story about Kyle MacDonald and what he was able to do with a single red paperclip. Then, have a short discussion with your group using the questions below as a guide.*

Kyle MacDonald is an interesting guy. During one Canadian summer in the early 2000s, Kyle (26 at the time) was in between jobs and sitting at his desk in Montreal when he noticed a red paperclip. According to Kyle, staring at the red paperclip made him think back to a bartering game he used to play as a child called “bigger, better.” That’s when Kyle had a crazy idea and kicked off a plan that would result in an amazing (and now infamous) experience. It all started when he took a picture of a red paperclip on his desk. Kyle posted that picture on his blog and on Craigslist with the following message:

**“This red paperclip is currently sitting on my desk next to my computer. I want to trade this paperclip with you for something bigger or better, maybe a pen, a spoon, or perhaps a boot.”**

Funny, right? But would it work? Well, it worked better than Kyle could have ever dreamed. Within a year and through a series of fourteen trades, Kyle had managed to trade his way from that single red paperclip all the way up to a house! The first trade was the red paper clip for a fish-shaped pen. He then traded the pen for a hand-sculpted doorknob from Seattle, the doorknob for a Coleman camp stove, the camp stove for a Honda generator, and so on, until in July of the following summer, he traded a snow globe for a role in an upcoming movie and then traded that movie role for a two-story house in Canada. (What do you think is more impressive? Trading up for the house, or that he was able to get a role in a movie from a snow globe?)



When asked why people have made such a fuss over Kyle and his story, he responds, “I have no idea.” But Kyle’s story has gone on to become a pop-culture legend, a popular blog (oneredpaperclip.com), a Ted talk with over 12 million views, a 15-foot-long statue in Saskatchewan, and a book that has been translated into 14 different languages! It also created a wave of copycats. And it’s still happening! As recently as 2020, Demi Skipper followed Kyle’s idea using email and social media to trade a bobby pin all the way up to an \$80,000 home in Tennessee, picking up celebrity followers and 5.1 million TikTok followers along the way.<sup>1</sup> – Kyle MacDonald’s post on Craigslist

## QUESTIONS:

- What do you think about this incredible true story? What makes this story and others like it so amazing?
- Why do you think the other people participated in Kyle’s adventure? Why do others copy ideas like Kyle’s sill today? **ANSWERS WILL VARY**
- One of the wildest exchanges Kyle made was a snow globe for a role in an upcoming movie. What do you currently have that you would be willing to exchange for a movie role? **ANSWERS WILL VARY**
- Think of the last thing you exchanged for something else. What was it, and why did you do it? **ANSWERS WILL VARY**
- Has anyone ever asked you to exchange something with them? What did you do? How did it work out? **ANSWERS WILL VARY**
- What would you never be willing to trade away, no matter what? Why? **ANSWERS WILL VARY**

<sup>1</sup> Kyle MacDonald’s story is sourced from Wikipedia.com ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kyle\\_MacDonald](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kyle_MacDonald)) and MacDonald’s own site (oneredpaperclip.com). Demi Skipper’s story is sourced from Tennessean.com (<https://www.tennessean.com/story/news/2022/01/07/tiktok-trades-bobby-pin-for-house-tennessee-trademeproject/9114440002/>).

# DIGGING IN

Work together with your group to dig in to these passages and discuss the questions.

## DEATH

STUDENTS WILL WRITE HERE ANYTHING THAT COMES TO MIND WHEN THEY READ THE WORD "DEATH."

### WHY DO WE NEED EXCHANGE?

READ ROMANS 6:23 WITH YOUR GROUP. THEN, WALK THROUGH THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS WITH YOUR GROUP.

- Rephrase the first part of this verse in your own words. What does the phrase "wages of sin" mean?

ANSWERS WILL VARY

- Why is death the right result of sin? Why didn't Paul say something like, "The wages of sin is punishment?"

Help students reach the point of understanding that death is the right punishment for sin because A) God is the giver of life (Genesis 1:26-27) and B) all sin is rebellion against God (Psalm 51:4). God is perfectly holy, perfectly good (1 John 1:5). Because of this, God literally cannot tolerate evil and sin and demands the life of sinner in Exchange for their life of sin, wickedness, and rebellion (Psalm 37:38).

- What kind of death is Paul talking about here? If we sin, do we drop dead? What does Paul mean?

Guide students to realize that sin can and does lead to physical death, But Paul is referring to a spiritual death as well. The death Paul is talking about is the ultimate death that those apart from Jesus experience. It's the death of spending all eternity separated from God. And complete separation from God is something that none of us (no matter how sinful) have ever experienced.

### WHAT DOES THIS EXCHANGE LOOK LIKE?

READ 1 CORINTHIANS 15:20-22 WITH YOUR GROUP. THEN, WALK THROUGH THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS WITH YOUR GROUP.

- What do you think the phrase "fallen asleep" refers to? What about "firstfruits"?

ANSWERS WILL VARY

- What does it mean that Jesus is the "firstfruits" among those who have "fallen asleep"?

Help guide students to see that Paul is presenting Jesus as the "firstfruits" of those who have "fallen asleep." Jesus died a real and actual death like the untold numbers of people before Him had died. But He was the first to rise from the dead as He did. As firstfruits among those who have fallen asleep, Paul was saying that Jesus was the first, but there would be more to come as those who call Him Lord (those who belong to Jesus) will also rise again.

- Look at verse 22. Paul said, "For as in Adam, all die." What does Paul mean?

Try to get students to see that Adam and Eve brought sin into the world when they disobeyed God. Their sin earned them and all who were born of them death. So, in essence, death and sin came to all people through Adam.

- What does Paul say is the biggest difference between Adam and Jesus?

Death came through Adam, but life came through Jesus!

# LIFE

**JESUS SAID TO HER, "I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE. WHOEVER BELIEVES IN ME, THOUGH HE DIE, YET SHALL HE LIVE, AND EVERYONE WHO LIVES AND BELIEVES IN ME SHALL NEVER DIE. DO YOU BELIEVE THIS?"**

**JOHN 11:25-26**

***Take a moment and read these verses quietly to yourself. Underline any reference to death and circle and reference to life. Then, take a few moments to reflect on the verses and answer the questions.***

Summarize what these verses say about Jesus' overall role in the *Exchange* from death to life.

*Answers will vary. Help students to see that Jesus is the means (the Way) by which this Exchange happens. He is the "life." And this Exchange is only made possible through our belief and faith in Him.*

How does someone take part in this *Exchange*? In other words, how can a person accept Jesus' offering of exchanging life for death?

*Believing that Jesus is who He is and that His death on the Cross can accomplish what He said it could accomplish.*

## HOW DOES THIS EXCHANGE IMPACT ME?

**READ 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17 WITH YOUR GROUP. THEN, WALK THROUGH THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS WITH YOUR GROUP.**

- You're "in Christ" if you've admitted your sin problem, believed in Him, confessed your need for Him to save you, and, through faith, have accepted the death for life *Exchange* He offers. What does it mean to you that you've become a "new creation"?

**ANSWERS WILL VARY**

- What does Paul say happened to the "old" you?

*It died (passed away).*

- In what areas of your life do you most vividly see evidence of the "new you"?

**ANSWERS WILL VARY**

**READ JOHN 10:10 WITH YOUR GROUP. THEN, WALK THROUGH THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS WITH YOUR GROUP.**

- What did Jesus say was His purpose for coming to this earth?

*So that His children would have life. So that He could save His people from destruction and death. Unlike a thief, Jesus doesn't come for selfish reasons. He comes to give, not to take.*

- How does Jesus describe this life?

*This word "abundant" in the Koine Greek means "exceedingly, very highly, beyond measure, more, so much as to be considerably more than what one would expect or ever anticipate." Jesus offers us a life that is eternal. A life protected by the very hands of our Savior Himself. Abundant life!*

- How has knowing Jesus made life abundant for you? If you can't answer this, what's keeping you from experiencing this abundantly rich life Jesus promised?

**ANSWERS WILL VARY**

# WRAPPING SESSION 1

# UP

## THE EXCHANGE OF DEATH FOR LIFE

**DEATH**  **LIFE**

SIN → WAGES =  
PHYSICAL & SPIRITUAL DEATH

ROMANS 6:23

OLD US DIES → NEW CREATION =  
ABUNDANT ETERNAL LIFE

2 CORINTHIANS 5:17  
JOHN 10:10

ADMIT YOUR SIN  
PROBLEM & NEED OF  
A SAVIOR



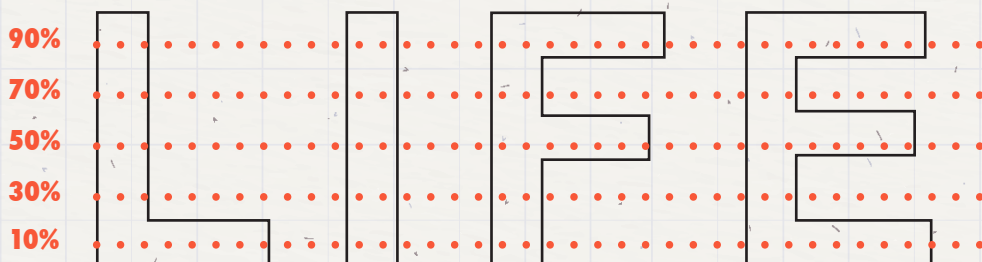
ACCEPT JESUS' DEATH  
FOR LIFE EXCHANGE THROUGH FAITH

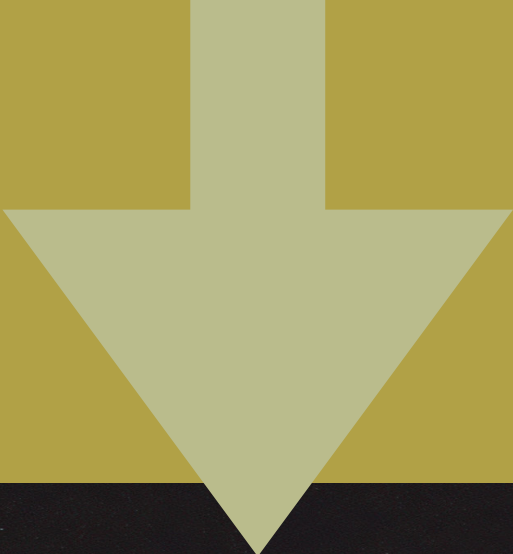
1 CORINTHIANS 15:20-22  
JOHN 11:25-25



BELIEVE & CONFESS  
JESUS IS LORD

## AN ABUNDANT AND FULL LIFE?





**"FOR THE WAGES OF SIN IS  
DEATH,  
BUT THE FREE GIFT OF GOD IS  
ETERNAL LIFE  
IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD."**

**ROMANS 6:23**

