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## bigIdea small group discussion

What Would Jesus Say to Walter White? Walter White is a fictional character off of the hit TV series *Breaking Bad*. The show received numerous awards, including ten Primetime Emmy Awards, eight Satellite Awards, two Golden Globe Awards, and a People's Choice Award.

The main character *Breaking Bad* is Walter White, a struggling high school chemistry teacher who is diagnosed with inoperable lung cancer. Wanting to secure his family's financial future before he dies, he turns to a life of crime—producing and selling meth. Walter has good intentions—he's wanting to provide for his family before he dies. Walter has good intentions. But he makes a bad choice. And that choice destroys him and his family.



**BIG IDEA:** Sin always leads to death, and it never stops with us.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever done something wrong, but for the right reasons? How did that turn out?
2. In your own words, what is temptation?
3. *With your Bible or YouVersion, read 1 Corinthians 10:12-13.* What promise is given in this verse?
4. Is it surprising to read that you are never tempted beyond your ability to resist? Is it comforting? Why or why not?
5. Think of “common” temptations that people frequently give into. What are some ways out that God provides us in dealing with these sins?
6. What are some reasons you might ignore the “way out” God provides when you are tempted? Share a time you saw the exit strategy, didn't take it, and wish you had.
7. How can we prepare ourselves for temptation before it comes?
8. *Read James 1:13-15.* Where does temptation come from? Is temptation and sin the same thing?
9. Where does temptation lead? Where does sin lead? Do you think there are any exceptions to this rule?
10. Do you agree with James, that all temptation can lead to “death?” Why or why not?
11. How does knowing that our evil desires and the world we live in are responsible for our temptations affect your understanding of them? Does it make temptation seem more or less escapable?
12. Chris said there is a cycle to sin. Do you agree or disagree? Chris said, “

Let's look at the life of Lot, Abraham's nephew.

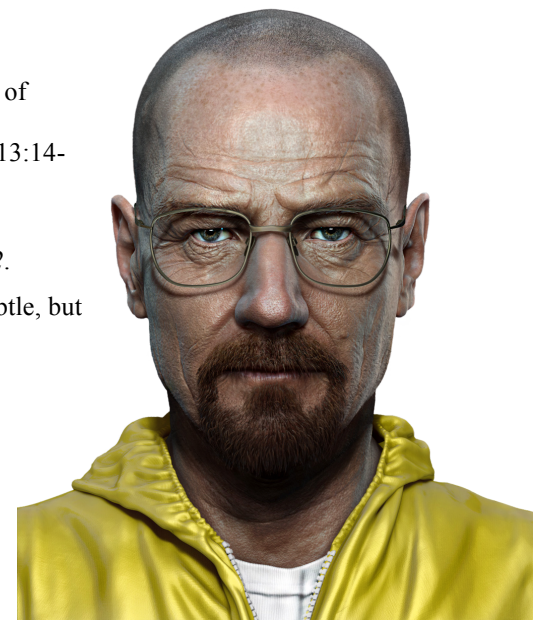
13. *With your Bible or YouVersion, read Genesis 13:1-18.* Why did Abraham and Lot have to separate? What basis did Lot base his decision of land choice on? (Physical? Spiritual? Financial?) What In forsaking rich cities and choosing less fertile land, what does that reveal about Abraham's character? (see also Hebrews 11:8-16)

Look at the progression of the **flirtation** phase of the sin cycle in *Genesis 13:10-13*.

14. List the action verbs that describe Lot's actions. How is the city of Sodom described? What U.S. city would be a parallel to Sodom?
15. Be honest—if faced with a similar choice, would you have followed the example of Abraham or Lot? Why? How is Lot flirting with sin here?
16. Because of Abraham's decisions and actions, what is God's response in Genesis 13:14-18?
17. *With your Bible or YouVersion, read Genesis 14:8-16.*

Look at the progression of the **rationalization** phase of the sin cycle in *Genesis 14:12*.

18. In Genesis 13:12, Lot is *near* Sodom. In Genesis 14:12, he is *in* Sodom. What subtle, but slipper slope of sin do you see in the lifestyle of Lot?



19. What do you see in this movement from (a) to (e):
  - (a) moving about with Abraham (13:5)
  - (b) quarreling with Abraham (13:8)
  - (c) looking towards Sodom (13:10)
  - (d) pitching his tents near Sodom (13:12)
  - (e) living in Sodom (14:12)
20. How does this progressive movement towards Sodom dangerously affect Lot's life?
21. What *rational lies* do you think Lot and his family told themselves to make that transition *in* Sodom?
22. What *rational lies* are you telling yourself to excuse poor choices in your life?
23. Given the different way that Abraham treats the King of Sodom and the King of Salem, what does that tell you about the faith and character of each? Are your influential friends more like the King of Sodom or the King of Salem?
24. *With your Bible or YouVersion, read Genesis 19:1-9.* Chris said that Lot had been living for 13 years in the city of Sodom.

Look at the progression of **transformation** phase of the sin cycle.

25. Where is Lot at when the angels find him? Why is it significant where Lot was sitting in the city? (*see Proverbs 31:23, 1 Kings 22:10, Jeremiah 26:10, 38:7, 39:3, Lamentations 5:14*) What does this tell you about Lot's influence and position in Sodom?
26. How has Lot been transformed? How has his values changed? Is he thinking clearly? How does he respond to the sinfulness of the people wanting to gang rape the angels? How should he have responded to the gang? How would you have felt if Lot was your father?
27. Lot's choice in Sodom is a terrible choice, yet he is still called a righteous man in 2 Peter 2:7. Why is that? What does that say about you and me when we make terrible decisions? Is our relationship with God and our *righteousness* based upon our day to day decisions, or something else?
28. *With your Bible or YouVersion, read Genesis 19:10-38.* Here we see the results of Lot's sin.
29. *In Genesis 19:14-17,* what is the command that the angels give Lot, his wife, and the daughters? Why do you think Lot hesitates to leave the condemned world of Sodom?

Look at the progression of **destruction** phase of the sin cycle.

30. Why do you think Lot's wife looks back? What happens to her?
31. Lot based his move towards Sodom on financial reasons. What happens to his finances? His possessions? His House? His city? His lifestyle?
32. Does Lot's sin only affect Lot? If it's no, then who else was affected by his poor choices?
33. How was Lot's family—and the entire nation of Israel—affected by Lot and his daughters sin? (See 1 Samuel 11:2, Amos 1:13, Numbers 22:2-6)

## THINK ABOUT IT

In Genesis 18, God has a conversation with Abraham about destroying Sodom. God shares his intention to destroy Sodom to Abraham, and Abraham bartered God down in Genesis 18:32 to 10 people. If God found 10 righteous people in the city of Sodom, then Sodom would be spared. Abraham knew Lot lived in Sodom and that Lot was righteous.

The reason why Sodom was destroyed was because God couldn't find 10 righteous people living in that city. If Lot would have just lead his family towards God, how many righteous people would have lived in Sodom? (Genesis 19:14-15)

## MOVING FORWARD

Chris said to break the cycle of sin, you have to confess to God (1 John 1:9) and confess to other people (James 5:16). Find someone in your small group that you trust and risk the relationship by getting real and confessing your mess. Creating some accountability may be a difficult decision, but if something's got to change, then you may find that confessing your stuff might be one of the best decisions you ever made.

***Confession is not doing something about your sin. Confession is admitting you can't do anything about your sin.***

Confession is not you going to God with a plan on how to fix your life. Confession is you getting to the place where you're honest and say, "God, I can't do this! Here is who I am. Here is what I am struggling with. And I need your help." That's confession.

## CHANGING YOUR MIND

*When tempted no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.* James 1:13-15