

09 THE GREAT CONFUSION

KEY TEXT: **GENESIS 11:1-9**

CENTRAL truth

Imagine a big group of people who are all speaking the same language and working together on a group project—only for everyone to suddenly begin speaking different languages. The group project would become impossible, right? Today we'll look at a group project that was motivated by sin and disobedience. Since the end goal was evil, God scrambled their speech. It reminds us once again that **God limits sin's power so that His will prevails.**

key question

Based on what Noah and his family had endured, why might the idea of a tower be appealing to people?

The design of the tower helps us see why this tower was such a bad idea. The builders were disobeying God's command to fill the earth, and they were also likely doubting God's promise. The height of the tower and the tower's waterproof bricks could theoretically help them endure through another big flood. They probably didn't believe God's promise that He would never again destroy the earth by flood! They weren't trusting Him—they were trusting in themselves by trying to save themselves.

keep in mind

- Students may not immediately understand the idea of exalting our name versus exalting God's name, but two things will help. First, explain that “exalt” means to lift up. When we exalt ourselves, we are trying to lift up our names in the minds of others. When we exalt God, we are trying to lift up His name. Second, examples will help. For instance, when we pray to impress others, whose name are we trying to lift up—ours or God's? When we sit with someone who's an outcast, whose name are we trying to lift up—ours or God's?
- The tower of Babylon—often called the tower of Babel—is a bit of a strange story. Relate this narrative back to the common themes of Genesis (for instance, sin is dangerous, God often limits sin's power to protect us, and God's words need to be trusted). When you can, point to Pentecost (see Acts 2:1-12), when the Holy Spirit came into believers and people from many different countries could understand one another. At Babylon, people were trying to lift up their own name, so God confused their languages. At Pentecost, God gave clarity to people's languages, and through this, they lifted up His name.

application

How can we respond when we are tempted to “build” something ourselves instead of relying on God?

the win

FOR THE STUDENT: Students can continue to press into two core ideas from Genesis: sin is bad for us, and God is our true Savior. They can continue to seek to apply these truths to their lives.

FOR THE LEADER: Leaders can keep their eyes open for specific ways to help students apply these core truths of Genesis to their lives.