



March 2017

Bracket Bible Challenge

With the NCAA March Madness upon us, we'll be hearing a lot about key numbers like "Sweet 16" and "Final Four." So, to mash the disciplines of Bible study and March Madness, here's a fun exercise featuring some numbers you'll hear a lot about over the next few days. Maybe this can serve as brain candy for personal exploration of the Bible points and scenes you'll see referenced.

Use this icebreaker as a warm up to a youth gathering, a Bible study, intro to a talk, or Sunday school class. Feel free to use this info to create your own application, such as a PowerPoint game. While this is certainly light-hearted, it is worth noting that we have an entire book of the Bible titled "Numbers."

We're including the "Last Four" play-in games for a total field of 68 teams. Here's the plan: state the number and its description, read all responses, let students choose their answer (the correct response is noted).



The number of teams to start the tournament (including the "Last Four" play-in games). But in the Bible, 68 is:

- A. Number of oxen in Job's herd. (500, Job 1:3)
- B. Number of helpers of Obed-Edom to minister to the Ark of the Covenant. (**Correct: 1 Chronicles 16:38**)
- C. Number of men God picked to go into battle with Gideon. (300, Judges 7:7)
- D. Number of ministry colleagues Paul mentions throughout his New Testament letters. (Actually, this has not been tabulated; bonus points to anyone who tabulates, especially if you find it to be 68.)



The "Sweet 16" is the moniker given to the 16 teams left after the first weekend of play (first 2 rounds). But in the Bible, 16 is:

- A. Number of Noah's great-grandchildren. (no, but it is the number of his grandchildren, Genesis 10:1-22)
- B. The age of Uzziah when he became king of Judah. (**Correct: 2 Chronicles 26:3**)
- C. The age of Josiah when he became king of Judah. (off by half; he was 8)
- D. The number of "spies" Moses sent to scout the land of Canaan. (12, Numbers 13)



The "Elite Eight" is the moniker given to the eight teams left in the middle of the second weekend which culminates in the Final Four. But in the Bible, eight is:

- A. Number of days to wait before circumcising newborn Jewish boys. (**Correct: using Jesus as an example, Luke 2:21**)
- B. Number of the day that God rested from creation. (seventh day, Genesis 2:2)
- C. Number of Jesus' disciples known to be fishermen. (likely four: Andrew, James, John, Peter)
- D. Number of books in the New Testament written by the apostle John. (five: gospel of John, 1, 2, 3 John, Revelation)



The "Final Four," is the moniker given to the last four teams, the winners of each region's bracket, that play on the third weekend. But in the Bible four is:

- A. The day that God created the sun, moon, and stars. (**Correct: Day 4, Genesis 1:14-19**)
- B. The number of times that Moses smote the rock for water. (two, Genesis 20:11)
- C. The number of times the Israelites were to walk around Jericho on the seventh day. (seven, Joshua 6:16)
- D. The number of days that Jesus fasted in the wilderness. (4x10, 40 days, Matthew 4:1-2)