

FAMILY WORSHIP HELPS

WEEK 13

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

QUESTION 13: *Did our first parents continue in the estate wherein they were created?*

ANSWER: Our first parents, being left to the freedom of their own will, fell from the estate wherein they were created, by sinning against God.



MONDAY



Praise: Sing Psalm 51A

Scripture: Read Genesis 3:1-13

Key Thought: *Adam and Eve are our first parents.*

Questions:

- ☪ Is the story of Adam and Eve true?
- ☪ Why is it important that the whole human race are the real descendants of Adam and Eve?
- ☪ Why do some people deny that the story of Adam and Eve is a true part of human history?
- ☪ If Adam and Eve were not really our first parents, how would the message of the Bible be affected?

Prayer

Notes: This week's question from the *Shorter Catechism* introduces the Fall of Adam and Eve from their original state of righteousness. The implications of their Fall for us will be explored in later lessons. We begin today by affirming the historicity of Adam and Eve, who were truly the "first parents" of the whole human race. There are many who deny that the story of Adam and Eve is actual historical fact. Those who believe the theory of evolution refuse to accept the fact that the whole human race descended from a single set of parents. Instead, they presume that humans slowly evolved from lower life forms. Even some Christians, wishing to compromise with evolutionary thinking, believe that the account of Adam and Eve in Genesis is only a "story" designed to teach us spiritual truths, but not necessarily a factual historical account. Explain to your children why it is necessary to accept the Bible's presentation of Adam and Eve as our literal, historical first parents. If this account is not literally true, then the whole message of the Bible is undermined. If we are not all literally descended from Adam, then we are not all necessarily sinful. Further, the Bible everywhere assumes the historicity of Adam. He is listed at the head of genealogies, and Jesus Himself speaks of him as a literal,

historical person. If the account of Adam and Eve is merely a story, then the reliability of the Bible, as well as the character of Christ, is called into question.



TUESDAY



Praise: Sing Psalm 51A

Scripture: Read Genesis 3:1-13

Key Thought: *Adam and Eve were able to choose obedience.*

Questions:

- ☞ What does it mean to have “freedom of the will”?
- ☞ Were Adam and Eve free to choose good or evil? Did anyone force them to do what they did?
- ☞ Did Adam and Eve have the ability to do what was right?
- ☞ Do we have “free will” in the same way that Adam did? Why?

Prayer

Notes: The catechism affirms that Adam and Eve were left to the “freedom of their will.” Explain to your children what it means to have free will. Because they were created in original righteousness, Adam and Eve had both the liberty and the ability to do good or evil. Their liberty meant that no one forced them to do what they did. Their ability meant that they could actively choose to obey God. We do not have “free will” today in the same way that Adam did. We still have liberty, in the sense that no one forces us against our will to do what we do. But we do not have the ability to choose to obey God, because our will has been corrupted by Adam’s sin. Our will is free to act according to its own desires, but since our will is depraved and sinful, it always desires to do what is evil. We are not free to choose to do good. Apart from God’s grace, even the so-called “good deeds” people do are done for the wrong reasons and are therefore not pleasing to God. Because of Adam’s free choice to disobey God, man’s ability to choose good over evil was lost. It is only by God’s work in man’s heart that the will to serve God is restored within us.



WEDNESDAY



Praise: Sing Psalm 51A

Scripture: Read Genesis 3:1-13

Key Thought: *Adam and Eve fell from their original estate.*

Questions:

- ☞ What advantages did Adam and Eve have before they sinned?
- ☞ What did they lose when they fell?
- ☞ What did they think they would gain? Did they?
- ☞ What was Adam and Eve’s greatest loss?

Prayer

Notes: Today's emphasis is on the fact that Adam and Eve "fell from the estate wherein they were created." Explore with your family the implications of the Fall of our first parents. In many ways, we cannot understand how profoundly they were affected by their fall into sin. They were created in original righteousness, which included many blessings we have never known. They knew the wondrous beauty of an earth unspoiled by the effects of sin. They had great abundance of blessings without being affected by greed or selfishness. The world was a place filled with goodness, and the beasts of the field were all submissive to Adam and Eve. They had no fear, sickness, sadness, or pain. Best of all, they had unbroken fellowship with God Himself, who "walked with them in the Garden in the cool of the day." Yet all of these blessings were lost when our first parents decided to obey their own desires rather than walk in faithfulness to their Creator. Satan had convinced them that they had everything to gain by this decision, but instead they lost everything. Teach your children about the deceitfulness of sin, which promises great happiness, but delivers only bitterness and death. Show them that the greatest loss suffered by our first parents was their separation from God. Show them also the grace of God in not allowing them to fall out of His grace altogether, but providing a way for them (and their children) to be restored.



THURSDAY



Praise: Sing Psalm 51A

Scripture: Read Genesis 3:1-13

Key Thought: *Adam and Eve sinned against God.*

Questions:

- ☪ What did the serpent want Eve to think about God's word?
- ☪ What did the serpent want Eve to think about God's goodness?
- ☪ What did the serpent want Eve to think about God's character?
- ☪ When Adam and Eve ate the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, what were they saying about God?
- ☪ When you sin against God, what do your actions say?

Prayer

Notes: We will discuss the specific nature of sin in a future lesson. For today, focus your attention on how all sin is a direct attack upon God. Show your children how Satan sought to lead Eve to think of God's word as unreliable ("you shall not surely die"), His goodness as restrictive ("Did God really say you could not eat of any tree in the garden?"), and His character as harsh and evil ("God knows that you will be like him"). Explain how Adam and Eve's sin revealed that they accepted the devil's distorted picture of God. By their sin, they accused God of lying, depriving them of good, and deceiving them. Explain further how we do the very same thing whenever we sin. Every act of sin

is an direct attack on God's nature and character and the reliability of His word. Exhort your children to repent of their sins and seek the grace of God through Christ.



FRIDAY



Praise: Sing Psalm 51A

Scripture: Read Matthew 4:1-11

Key Thought: *Christ reclaimed what our first parents lost.*

Questions:

- ☪ Did the devil try to make Jesus question God's word? How?
- ☪ Did the devil try to make Jesus question God's goodness? How?
- ☪ Did the devil try to make Jesus question God's character? How?
- ☪ How were the circumstances of Adam's temptation and Jesus' temptation different? How were they similar?
- ☪ Why was this experience in Jesus' life important for us?

Prayer

Notes: Today we will look at the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness, which stands in close relationship with the temptation of our first parents. The victory of Jesus over temptation was a signal of the fact that He was restoring what Adam and Eve had lost. He was standing where they had fallen. Begin by showing your children how the devil used the same subtle tactics against Jesus as he did with Eve. The voice of God had just been heard affirming that Jesus was His beloved Son, but Satan sought to plant doubt in the mind of Christ ("If you are the son of God..."). He also called God's goodness into question, by tempting Jesus to provide bread for Himself, as if God had not given Him all that He needed. Next, Satan called God's character into question, seeking to convince Jesus that He stood to gain much by bowing to him, while serving God would only lead to suffering and crucifixion. What made Jesus' victory over Satan even more encouraging is the fact that He lacked all of the advantages that Adam had, but still stood firm. Adam was in a Garden—Jesus was in a desert. Adam was filled—Jesus was hungry. Adam had a partner to support him—Jesus was alone. Explain to your children how significant the victory of Jesus over Satan's temptations is, and help them to understand that it is only through His triumph over sin that we can be restored to God's favor.



Note: Only five lessons per week are included. You are encouraged to lead your family in worship seven days a week. On weekends, you may want to review or build upon the lessons from the previous week, discuss the sermon from Sunday morning, or work on questions from the Catechism or memory verses. These lesson suggestions are intended to provide a simple framework for parents to build upon. You are not limited to this content. The habit of morning and evening family worship is the biblical ideal. We hope you can use these lessons as a starting point for the development of a blessed practice of family worship in your home.