

FAMILY WORSHIP HELPS WEEK 14

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

QUESTION 14: *What is sin?*

ANSWER: Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God.



MONDAY



Praise: Sing Psalm 51E

Scripture: Read Deuteronomy 30:15-20; Romans 7:7

Key Thought: *Good and evil are defined by God alone.*

Questions:

- ☪ How long is an inch? How do you know?
- ☪ How do we know what is "good" and what is "evil"?
- ☪ Where has God defined good and evil for us?

Prayer

Notes: Question 14 of the *Shorter Catechism* provides a summary definition of sin. In order to understand what sin is, we must have a standard. Just as an inch, or any unit of measure, is defined against an unchanging standard, so good and evil are defined by God's standard of perfect holiness. It is only God's goodness that allows us to comprehend what "good" is. Likewise, we can only understand what is "evil" in contrast to God's perfect holiness. This is why Jesus challenged the understanding of the rich young ruler, who called Him "good teacher" by saying, "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone." Jesus was seeking to correct this man's false understanding, that "good" could be defined by man. Show your children that God has graciously revealed to us His perfect standard of good and evil in the pages of His inspired word. Urge them to read the Scriptures, with prayer that God will open their hearts to comprehend His truth, so that they can do what is good, and avoid what is evil. Explain to them that obedience to God's word is only possible through the grace of Christ working in the heart. It is only through His perfect obedience that we are able to do good and shun evil.



TUESDAY



Praise: Sing Psalm 51E

Scripture: Read Luke 10:25-37; James 4:17

Key Thought: *We sin when we fail to conform to God's law.*

Questions:

- ☪ Is it possible to sin by not doing anything at all?
- ☪ How did the priest and the Levite sin against the man who was attacked by robbers?
- ☪ What is a sin of omission? Is it any less serious before God?
- ☪ Did the sin of Adam and Eve involve failing to do something that God had commanded?
- ☪ Can you think of other examples of sins of omission?

Prayer

Notes: The *Catechism* explains that sin is of two kinds. The first include sins of omission, or “want [lack] of conformity to the law of God.” Most often, we think of sin as an act of disobedience, but it is possible to sin by not acting according to God’s law. Show your children that the priest and Levite in the parable of the Good Samaritan sinned by failing to show kindness to the man attacked by robbers. Explain also that Adam and Eve’s sin involved failing to exercise dominion over the creatures (the serpent was a creature) as God had commanded. Instead, they allowed the serpent to exercise dominion over them. Have your children think of other examples of sins of omission, encouraging them to consider their own failures to conform to the law of God. Pray together, confessing particular sins of omission and asking God for grace and strength to actively obey all of His commands.



WEDNESDAY



Praise: Sing Psalm 51E

Scripture: Read Psalm 19:7-14

Key Thought: *We sin when we actively transgress God’s law.*

Questions:

- ☪ What does it mean to “transgress” God’s law?
- ☪ What is a sin of commission?
- ☪ How was Adam and Eve’s sin a transgression of the law of God?
- ☪ Can you think of other examples of sins of commission?

Prayer

Notes: The second kind of sin described in the *Catechism* is “transgression of the law of God.” This is also called the sin of commission. Explain that transgressing God’s law means doing the opposite of what God commands. Adam and Eve transgressed God’s law because they directly disobeyed His commandment not to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Show your children how important it is for us to study to know God’s law so that we will not transgress against His commands. Challenge

them to think of other examples of sins of commission, especially as they see them in their own lives. Help them to see the many ways that they sin against God's law, not only in their deeds, but in their words and thoughts. Pray together, confessing particular sins and asking God for grace and strength to repent of transgression and resolve to walk in obedience to His perfect law.



THURSDAY



Praise: Sing Psalm 51E

Scripture: Read Psalm 51

Key Thought: *All sin is a direct offense to God.*

Questions:

- ☞ When we sin, what are we saying about God's law?
- ☞ When we sin, what are we saying about God's wisdom?
- ☞ When we sin, what are we saying about God's power?
- ☞ When we sin, what are we saying about God's goodness?
- ☞ When we sin, what are we saying about Christ's sacrifice?
- ☞ Can you think of other ways that sin is an offense to God?

Prayer

Notes: Understanding the nature of sin in light of the perfect law of God will help us to understand that every sin, whether of omission or commission, is a direct attack upon God Himself. Help your children to see that all sin involves the rising up of man's heart against God. When we sin, we declare that God's law is not worthy to be obeyed. Sin challenges the wisdom of God, as if we are able to discover a better way than that which He has prescribed. Sin challenges the power of God, as if He were unable to call us to account. Sin declares that God has not been perfectly good to us, since we must seek fulfillment apart from His provision. Sin undermines the sacrifice of Christ, as if His blood was shed for nothing. Challenge your children to think of other ways that sin is an offense to God. Pray together, repenting of the many ways that you have rebelled against God and offended His perfect character. Ask the Lord to help you to remember the nature of sin as a direct assault on God, and to supply abundant grace through Christ to enable you to keep His commandments with joy and thanksgiving.



FRIDAY



Praise: Sing Psalm 51E

Scripture: Read Nehemiah 9:1-38

Key Thought: *God's grace is more powerful than sin.*

Questions:

- ☞ How many examples of rebellion are given in Nehemiah 9?
- ☞ How did God respond to each of these rebellions?
- ☞ What are some of the blessings that God gave to His people, despite their rebellion against him?
- ☞ When Adam sinned, was God's grace able to overcome his rebellion? How?
- ☞ Is God's grace powerful enough to overcome your rebellion?

Prayer

Notes: Although sin is a powerful enemy, deeply rooted in our rebellious hearts, God's mercy is far more powerful. Nehemiah 9 summarizes the experience of the people of God, outlining their many acts of rebellion against Him. Yet each rebellion is followed by an outpouring of grace and mercy from the Lord. The people suffered many consequences for their sins, but the Lord did not utterly forsake them. He continued to show them mercy, even though they had done nothing to deserve His favor. The power of God's grace to overcome sin is seen also in the account of the Fall of our first parents. In the aftermath of their rebellion, the Lord promised deliverance and restoration through the "Seed of the woman" who would crush the head of the serpent. This was a promise of salvation through Christ, who would be revealed in the fullness of time. He would succeed where Adam had failed. Through His perfect obedience, sacrificial death, and glorious resurrection He would triumph over sin and its consequences. That victory over sin, accomplished by Christ, is able to overcome sin in our lives as God applies the work of Christ to our hearts by faith. Show your children the powerful grace and mercy of God through Christ, and explain the gospel to them in light of their own sin. Pray together that the power of God's grace would prevail over your wicked rebellion, and thank God for His incredible mercy.



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.