

The Only Solution



Topic

The Fall

Theme

God is the only solution for humanity's universal sin problem.

Desired Learner Response

The learner will trust Christ as his Savior if he has not done so already, and he will recognize the importance of Bible intake in combatting temptation.

Materials

- Resources 1 and 4
- Pictures of learners' families

Scripture Focus

Genesis 3–5

Summary

The perfect state of creation did not last very long. Adam and Eve succumbed to the first temptation—handing their authority over to Satan, losing their right to live in their beautiful Garden, and passing on their sin nature to everyone born after them. The evidence of sin began to appear immediately in their own family and in their descendants.

Outline

I. God's Promise Offers the Solution to Sin (3)

- A. Satan tempts man (3:1–5)
- B. Man follows the temptation (3:6–8)
- C. God seeks man (3:9–24)

II. Man Rejects God's Solution to Sin (4; 5)

- A. Sin bears fruit in murder (4:1–15)
- B. Sin bears fruit in broken relationships (4:16–32)
- C. Sin bears fruit in death (5)

Memory Verse

"Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life" (Romans 5:18).

GETTING STARTED

Family Resemblances

Secure pictures of some of the families represented in your class. With their permission, project their pictures for the class to see.

ASK: Which of the parents' physical characteristics do you see in their kids?

Have the learners who are pictured elaborate on any talents or abilities their children inherited from them.

ASK: What one thing did each child in all these pictures inherit perfectly from his or her parents? *Their sin nature.*

Today's Bible passage is perhaps the saddest in all of Scripture. It describes the beginning of sin. But the passage is also the most hopeful in that it includes the first reference to the only solution for sin.

Most Embarrassing Fall

ASK: What was your most embarrassing fall? (Q1)

ASK: Why do we get so embarrassed when we fall?

None of us likes to fall in public. Our egos become bruised and we look foolish.

ASK: How long did you go before you were able to live down your embarrassing fall? (Q2)

The fall we are going to talk is the Fall of humanity. That fall cost much more than a temporarily bruised ego; it cost a bruised heel. We will learn more about that bruised heel in our lesson for today. It is far more serious than it sounds.

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

I. God's Promise Offers the Solution to Sin (3)

A. Satan tempts Eve (3:1–5)

In simple, straightforward language Genesis reports our first parents' willful plunge into sin. And the New Testament confirms the Genesis account.

Satan the tempter used a serpent, described as *more subtil than any beast of the field*, to deceive Eve. The serpent asked a seemingly innocent but intensely sinister question that insinuated God could not be trusted.

READ: Genesis 3:1. **ASK:** What was Satan trying to do with his sinister question? (Q3) *He was trying to raise doubt in Eve's mind about God's goodness.*

See Romans 5:12–14;
1 Corinthians 15:21, 22;
and 1 Timothy 2:13, 14 for
New Testament passages
that address the Fall.

Satan knew, of course, that God had forbidden the fruit of only one tree, but he was raising in Eve's mind a **doubt** about God's fairness. Why should God have made any restrictions at all? Satan was making one tree more important to Eve than all the other trees in the Garden. Satan never focuses on the privileges we have, all the beauties we behold, all the joys that we experience. He focuses on the **restrictions**, the forbidden things—and exaggerates them—to suggest that God is mean and holding out on us.

Satan essentially divorced the restriction from God's holy character. Eating of the forbidden tree was not only wrong because God said it was wrong, but it was also wrong because it violated God's holiness. Satan minimized the restriction and made it seem trivial. When we see what God forbids as a list of restrictions rather than as violations of His holiness, we open ourselves to temptation.

Eve confessed that one restriction existed, but she misrepresented it. She said the restriction included not touching the tree and that doing so would bring death (3:3). For whatever reason, she was stating the restriction as stronger than God stated it (2:16, 17). The elevated restriction played right into Satan's hand. He got Eve to focus on what was restricted.

Immediately Satan progressed in his methodical temptation by boldly stating that Eve would not die if she ate the fruit (3:4). Obviously Satan was lying. We can plainly see that. But Eve bought into the lie. She believed that the serpent must be her ally. He was, after all, letting her in on a secret.

Satan always denies the consequences of **disobedience** (3:5). *The trouble with you, Eve, Satan was basically saying, is that you take God too seriously. You believe that He means everything He says. Actually, Eve, God is cheating you. He knows that you can become as a god, knowing good and evil.*

Eve had listened too long to the serpent. The fruit was appetizing, eating it would be a pleasant experience, and it would make her wise (3:6). Satan had appealed to her **self-interest**. Sensuality and pride! The five senses and pride! How powerfully they make bad things look good to us.

B. Adam and Eve yield to temptation (3:6–7)

Intrigued with the unknown, Eve was tempted by the appetizing and visual appeal of the food as well as the prospect of becoming wise through eating it. Her response to the temptation formed a pattern.

READ: Genesis 3:6 and 1 John 2:16. **ASK:** What parallels do you see between these two verses? (Q4) *The avenues of temptation spelled out in 1 John (the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life) are the same ones through which Satan tempted Eve in Genesis 3.*

Satan tempted Christ through the same three avenues. Christ, of course, was victorious over each temptation (Matt. 4:1–11).

ASK: What does the repetition of the avenues of temptation tell you about temptation? (Q5) *It has been basically the same since the beginning. Satan still appeals to use through the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.*

Eve ate the fruit, then gave it to Adam, who also ate. Humanity's problems thus began with disobedience to God's command. The process of death was now underway.

READ: Hebrews 9:27; Ephesians 2:1; Revelation 20:11–15. **ASK:** Describe the three deaths brought on humanity through Adam's sin? (Q6) *There is a physical, spiritual, and eternal death.*

According to Romans 5:12, the entire human race participated in Adam's original sin (cf. Heb. 7:9, 10). Thus his sin is imputed to each person's account.

READ: Romans 5:21; 2 Corinthians 5:21. **ASK:** What is the only way to escape the death sentence associated with sin? (Q7) *Through Jesus Christ, Who gives eternal life by His grace. He was made to be sin for us so we might have His righteousness accredited to our account instead.*

Adam and Eve immediately knew the effects of sin in their consciences and felt guilt and shame from their sin (Gen. 3:7). Convicted by their sin, Adam and Eve attempted the impossible—hiding from God (cf. Ps. 139:7–12). They sewed leaves together for clothing to cover themselves, but the leaves were not the solution to their sin problem. They could hide their nakedness from each other, but their hearts were laid open before God.

C. God seeks Adam and Eve (3:8–24)

God pursued Adam and Eve. They heard Him walking in the Garden but their guilt drove them to attempt to hide from His presence (3:8). God asked where Adam was rather than why he was hiding. Adam's response revealed the depth of his guilt. Adam said he was *afraid* when he heard God calling out for him (3:10). What a sad commentary on sin. It crushed the perfect fellowship Adam enjoyed with God and replaced it with fear. It is hard to imagine how Adam must have felt as the gravity of what he had done continued to sink in. No doubt it continued to sink in for the rest of his life.

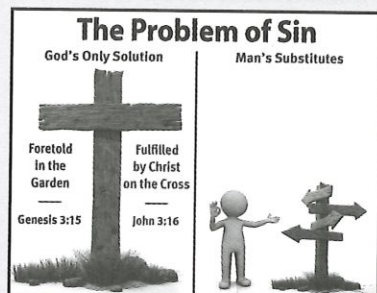
ASK: What thoughts cross your mind when you consider the repercussions of Adam's sin? (Q8)

When God questioned Adam about being naked, Adam immediately turned to blaming Eve (3:11, 12), who blamed the serpent (3:13). Adam was also implicitly blaming God, Eve's Creator.

God picked up where Eve left off and cursed the serpent (3:14). He said the serpent was cursed more than every beast of the field and that it would move on its belly and eat dust. Some have inferred from these statements that the serpent previously had legs. That is a possibility. Either way, the statements are meant to humiliate the serpent.

Following the horror of the first sin, we find a sparkling jewel commonly referred to as the protoevangelium, or *first gospel*. Genesis 3:15 reveals that conflict will exist between Satan and the woman and between Satan's seed (his children; see John 8:44)

According to 1 Tim. 2:13, 14: *Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.* This implies that Adam sinned knowingly—not out of deception, which was the case for Eve (cf. 2 Cor. 11:3). That made Adam's sin far worse. The Bible seems to place the guilt on Adam for the sin that actually brought about the fall (cf. Hos. 6:7; Rom. 5:12–21; 1 Cor. 15:22). We can only conjecture what may have happened had Adam refrained from sinning after Eve had taken the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.



and the woman's seed (her children). It also reveals that the climax would come with Satan's bruising the heel of the woman's Seed (one born of a woman, the incarnate Son of God) and with the Seed of the woman crushing the head of the serpent. The incarnate Son of God would defeat Satan by dying on the cross for our sins.

RESOURCE: Display resource 4 with the right half covered. Emphasize that the cross is the only solution for the problem of sin.

But despite the victory promised through a Savior, sin would still have very real, immediate, and lasting consequences. For Eve, the effects of sin would include difficulty in the process of bearing children and strife with her husband (3:16). For Adam, it would focus on difficulty in cultivating the now-cursed earth (3:17, 18). Life would be characterized by hard effort and toil until one dies and returns to the ground (3:19).

God graciously clothed Adam and Eve, presumably to hide their guilt and also to protect them as they left the perfect garden to face the elements of a cursed world. Nevertheless, they must have cringed as they witnessed God kill at least one animal to make the *coats of skins* (3:21). This would have been Adam and Eve's introduction to death. It would have also been their introduction to substitutionary atonement. They associated their guilt with the death of the innocent animal.

The fact that God made the coverings for Adam and Eve communicated their need of salvation from outside themselves. They could not solve their sin problem on their own.

READ: Genesis 3:21. **ASK:** What do you think it would have been like for Adam and Eve to put on the skins of a dead animal? (Q9) *They most likely would have sensed the seriousness of their sin. Perhaps they would have even felt remorse for the animal(s) who died to provide them with adequate clothing.*

Man now knew evil experientially and had to leave the Garden and the proximity to the tree of life. God sent him out to work the cursed ground outside the Garden. He placed cherubim at the entrance to the Garden with a swirling, flaming sword to guard the way to the tree of life (3:22–24).

READ: Genesis 3:24. **ASK:** What would the cherubim and the flaming sword have communicated to Adam and Eve about their future? (Q10) *That life was different now. They were no longer in perfect fellowship with God. Sin was in their lives to stay. They could not go back to the way it was.*

This history of man living in perfection in a garden paradise was short-lived. The account of its ending may seem to leave us with as many questions as it does answers. What is necessary, however, is that we understand the foundational truths that are presented in this chapter and their relationship to the rest of Scripture. If we do not understand the Fall, we cannot understand the gospel message that is given to solve the problem revealed in Genesis 3.

Ever since the Garden, man has ignored the reality of sin and has come up with ways to explain it away. But none of man's *solutions* to sin actually solve the problem.

RESOURCE: Display resource 4. **ASK:** What are some of man's substitute solutions to sin? (Record or reveal answers.) (Q11) *To call it a sickness; to legalize it; to say it is harmless; to call it a product of one's environment; to call it self-expression; to outweigh it with good works.*

II. Man Rejects God's Solution to Sin (4; 5)

Humanity's problems continued to multiply in unbelieving hearts in the early days of the earth's history.

A. Sin bears fruit in murder (4:1–15)

The first child to be born into the world was born with an inherited sin nature. Nevertheless, it must have been a happy day when Eve delivered a baby boy. She named him *Cain* (4:1), meaning *acquisition*, or *gotten*. Obviously she believed he was a gift from God. She may have even hoped that he would fulfill God's promise that the seed of the woman would bruise the serpent's head (3:15).

Adam and Eve's second baby was also a boy, but he would become a far different man than his older brother. His name, *Abel*, means *breath* or *vanity*. The name suggests that Adam and Eve often pondered the tragic consequences of the sin in the Garden. Life had become temporal; it was passing as quickly as a breath of air.

Cain was totally different from his younger brother, Abel, although both grew up in the same environment at home and received the same spiritual guidance. Both brothers were born with a sin nature, but Cain became a hateful, jealous, resentful murderer, while Abel became a God-fearing worshiper.

Cain became a farmer, apparently a very productive one. Knowing that he should worship God, he harvested some vegetables and presented them to the Lord as an offering (4:3). Apparently, he should have understood that only a blood sacrifice would be acceptable to God. After all, his parents had learned this truth in Eden and had surely taught it to him. Nevertheless, Cain wanted God to accept him on his terms. His pride kept him from going to God on God's terms. Cain was the first to reject the truth that *without shedding of blood is no remission* (Heb. 9:22).

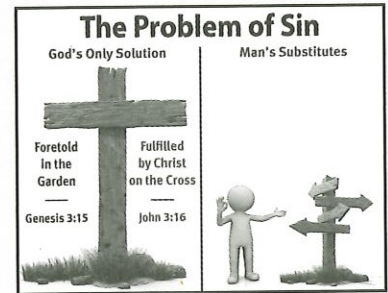
ASK: Why does pride keep a person from going to God on God's terms?

(Q12) *The prideful person wants to set his own terms for approaching God. God's way demands a humble admittance that we are helpless and in need of Him.*

Abel became a shepherd. When he approached God in worship, he offered an animal sacrifice of *the firstlings of his flock* (Gen. 4:4). He must have believed this to be the only way to God. He offered his sacrifice *by faith* (Heb. 11:4).

The Lord accepted Abel and his offering, but He rejected Cain's offering (Gen. 4:4, 5). All who approach God receive either His approval or His disapproval. If sinners accept the blood sacrifice Jesus provided on the cross, God accepts them. If they insist instead on offering Him the labor of their hands, He rejects them. The sting of rejection enraged Cain and etched a scowl on his face (4:5).

The Lord excels in grace. He gave Cain an opportunity to repent and bring an acceptable offering, and He warned that Cain's failure to do well would make him



highly vulnerable to sin (4:7). Like a vicious animal, sin was ready to pounce on Cain and consume him.

Cain showed neither remorse nor the slightest desire to repent. His heart was totally occupied with premeditated murder.

It seems Cain lured Abel into a death trap. Cain must have concocted some reason to talk with his brother privately, so the two went to a field to converse. Suddenly Cain ambushed and killed Abel (4:8). It was a clear case of evil rising up against good.

When God asked Cain where Abel was, he replied, *I know not* (4:9). He had become like Satan, a murderer and a liar. Cain hypocritically asked, *Am I my brother's keeper?* Cain's conscience told him that he was responsible for his brother's welfare, but he would not admit that truth.

God thundered, *The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground* (4:10). God is not deaf to the voices that call for justice. The time for mercy for Cain had passed. He had been a farmer, but he would become a wanderer who would struggle to get fruit from the soil. He would build a city, but he would never feel at home. He would always be the restless stranger.

My punishment is greater than I can bear, Cain cried to the Lord (4:13). He was far more disturbed about his punishment than about his sin.

God did not exact the penalty of capital punishment on Cain but assured him by a sign that his life would be preserved. Cut off from God, Cain dwelt in Nod (4:15, 16).

B. Sin bears fruit in broken relationships (4:16–32)

The account goes on to give the details of the life of Cain and his descendants. Lamech, for example, married two women, Adah and Zillah. Later he killed a man and boasted about it to his two wives (4:23, 24). He blasphemously claimed that he would outdo God in punishment if anyone tried to hurt him. He said that God promised a sevenfold vengeance on anyone who killed Cain but that he would avenge himself seventy-sevenfold. He represented the majority of people on earth, who were going in the way of Cain.

Meanwhile, history's first family continued to grow with the birth of Seth and, later, his son Enos. Seth's appearance was a consolation to Eve following the death of Abel. In spite of the presence of great wickedness, the true worship of God also began to develop at this time. There is little doubt that calling on God's name included prayer and offering sacrifices (4:25, 26).

C. Sin bears fruit in death (5)

Genesis 5 reminds us clearly that sin brings death. The words *and he died* are applied to everyone listed in the genealogy except for one. Enoch walked with God for over three hundred years before God took him to Heaven.

The genealogy of Genesis 5 also makes it clear that God was preserving a line of Seth, through whom the Promised Seed would eventually come.

ASK: How does your perspective on the genealogy of Seth change when you realize that it is a record of the line through which the Savior would eventually come? (Q13)

The genealogy ends with the foreshadowing of amazing events to come. Realizing the desperate condition of the world and all humanity under the curse, Lamech prayed for comfort to come through his son and named him accordingly. Six hundred years later, the world would change forever with Noah at the center of God's plan.

MAKING IT PERSONAL

Trusting Christ

The history of the world is one of disease, death, war, murder, and pain. But not all of history. God's plan from the beginning has been to provide redemption to fallen humanity. He did that through Jesus Christ. What a wonderful hope Christ is in this fallen world!

ASK: Have you recognized Christ as the only solution for your sin? If not, what is keeping you from making that decision? (Q14)

Encourage learners who have not trusted in Christ as their Savior to do so. Make yourself available to talk with them after class.

Victory over Temptation

Review Satan's tactics in tempting us to sin. He (1) raises doubt about God's goodness, (2) causes us to focus on restrictions rather than God's blessings, (3) denies that our sins have consequences, and (4) appeals to our self-interest.

ASK: Which of Satan's tactics in temptation are particularly effective in your life? (Q15)

We have the advantage of having the complete Bible. By it we can resist temptation and grow in the Lord. The Bible is effective because the Holy Spirit uses it in our hearts to help us resist temptations we face (Eph. 6:17). It also tells us the truth so we can spot Satan's lies (6:14; John 17:17).

ASK: How might you need to adjust your Bible intake in order to be equipped to combat Satan? (Q16)

Summary and Memory Verse

RESOURCE: Display resource 1. Add a summary statement for lesson 2 or use the following: Recognize Christ as the only solution for sin.

Encourage learners to memorize Romans 5:18. Give them an opportunity to say the verse in class next week.

Responding to God & His Plan	8.
1. Understand and enjoy God's revelation of Himself through creation.	9.
2. Recognize Christ as the only solution to sin.	10.
3.	11.
4.	12.
5.	13.
6.	
7.	

Genesis
GOD'S PLAN BEGINS

God's Deep Grace



Topic

God's grace and justice

Theme

God showed His graciousness and justice in the events of the Flood.

Desired Learner Response

The learner will take his sin seriously and will endeavor to witness to those who need to hear of God's grace and justice.

Materials

- Resources 1 and 5
- Video of tsunami
- Visual 1 from resource CD

Scripture Focus

Genesis 6–9

Summary

Because of the incredible expanse of sin in the centuries following the fall, God grew weary of the evil conditions upon the earth. He determined to judge the world in a manner that would bring cleansing and also relief from some of the effects of the curse. Thus He sent a worldwide Flood that destroyed all living things except those that were hid safely with Noah and his family inside the ark. The Flood event consumed more than a year and brought great changes to the world.

Outline

- I. The Days of Noah (6:1–12)
- II. Preparation for the Flood (6:13–7:9)
- III. Salvation and Destruction (7:10–24)
- IV. Promise Fulfillment (8)
- V. God's Covenant with Noah (9:1–17)
- VI. Noah's Foolish Sin (9:18–29)

Memory Verse

"The LORD sitteth upon the flood; yea, the LORD sitteth King for ever"
(Psalm 29:10).