

THE FALL AND A PROMISE

Fall into Sin
Genesis 3
Sometime after
creation

BIBLE TRUTH

God promises to help sinners.

LEARNER GOAL

I can summarize the story of mankind's fall into sin and God's initial plan to restore creation.

BIBLE VERSE

The Father has sent His Son to be the Savior of the world.
1 John 4:14

LAW & GOSPEL

We are self-centered and blame others; for these and many other sins, we deserve temporal and eternal death. **God sent His Son, Jesus, to crush sin, death, and the devil, and through Him, God forgives our sins and gives us eternal life.**

SCRIPTURE SNAPSHOT

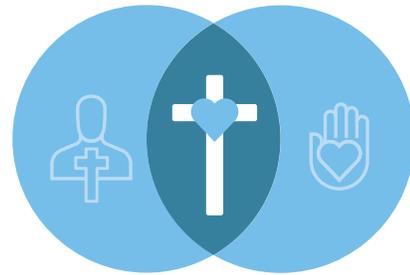
The slithery serpent causes Eve to doubt God's Word with one simple question, "Did God actually say . . .?" (v. 1). Seeking to gain wisdom, Eve—and Adam with her—rebel against their Creator. Suddenly aware of their condition before God, they vainly attempt to hide their sinful exposure. With sin comes punishment that is just; yet our heavenly Father does not leave humankind without hope. Instead, He promises One who will come to rescue them from the jaws of death and Satan.

LESSON PREP

BASIC Read the narrative and study notes in *The Lutheran Study Bible (TLSB)*.

MORE TIME Read "Feasting and Fellowship with God in Eden" and "The History of Humanity" (*TLSB*, p. 19).

IN DEPTH Read through the Third Petition of the Lord's Prayer in the Small Catechism, connecting it to the fall and the first Gospel promise.



CONNECTING IDENTITY & CALLING

IDENTITY: WHO AM I?

God has redeemed me, a sinful human, through the Promised One, Jesus Christ.

CALLING: WHY AM I HERE?

I can forgive others their sins against me because in Christ, God has forgiven me.

GROWING IN FAITH FOR LIFE

See how this lesson builds on learning for each age.

ADULT

I can summarize the story of mankind's fall into sin and God's initial plan to restore creation.

YOUTH

I can explain that humans are God's special creation, born into sin and in need of a Savior.

ELEMENTARY

I understand that I am a child of God but also a sinner in need of a Savior.

EARLY CHILDHOOD

I know God sent Jesus to save me from sin.



LEADER NOTE

For the opening question, it will be important to be sensitive to your group's context, given that some may have experienced trauma. It may be best to do this in small groups so that people who don't want to share can just listen. The point is that God is our one true help at all times.



BONUS ACTIVITY

Look up the article "How Does the Old Testament Look Forward to Jesus?" on pages 6–7 of *Concordia's Complete Bible Handbook*. Draw out the diagram for the learners to see, and have them look up relevant Scripture passages that trace the promise in Genesis 3 to Jesus and beyond.

LAUNCH

WELCOME

Welcome the group, and open in prayer. It may be a good time to take prayer requests; pray for those requests either now or at the conclusion.

REVIEW

Review the Bible Truth, Learner Goal, and Bible Verse. Then, begin with the opening reflection question on the lesson handout.

OPENING REFLECTION

In your experience, where do people go for help when they're in trouble? Rank your top five places from most to least helpful. Tell why you chose that order.

LEARN & LIVE

GENESIS 3:1–7

BIBLE COMMENTARY

God had created all things good, but Satan enters (either in or as a serpent) and tempts Eve, along with Adam, to distrust and disobey God. Satan tempts Adam and Eve by saying that what was good was evil and vice versa. When Adam and Eve eat the fruit and disobey God, their eyes are opened to their sin, their relationship with God is permanently broken, and they run away in despair. Since then, all mankind is born in the same state of brokenness. Satan still tempts us to doubt God's Word and faithfulness.

REFLECTION QUESTION

How did Satan go about tempting Eve? Trace the different steps and arguments. Then, consider in what ways this temptation is similar to and different from the temptations we face.

REFLECTION HELPS

Satan first questions God's Word and intent, tempting Eve to doubt God's goodness. Satan then tempts Eve to believe that God doesn't want the best for her and that His Law is actually holding humanity back. Our temptations are similar. Satan tempts us to doubt God's intentions toward us, to believe that His commands are not to help us but to hold us back.

GENESIS 3:8–13

BIBLE COMMENTARY

God approaches Adam and Eve, knowing full well their sin. God first calls to Adam, the one whom He set as primary steward of creation, to bear witness to what happened. In shame, Adam defensively passes the blame to Eve (noting that God made Eve and may have been to blame), and Eve passes the blame onto the serpent. It's a mess. What was once a loving and open relationship between God and humankind is now fractured; already, man and woman are blaming each other. Yet, despite Adam and Eve's sin, God still comes to them. He is holy and just but also shows great love.

REFLECTION QUESTION

List in order the actions and words Adam and Eve took to try to hide or justify their sins. How is this similar to the way we humans today often respond to our guilt?

REFLECTION HELPS

Adam and Eve run from God, hide from God, try to cover their shame, pass blame, and break their relationship with God and each other in response to guilt. We run from God by not listening to His Word; we hide from God by not calling upon Him in prayer and praise; we try to cover our shame by passing blame to God and others; and we hurt our relationships in the process.

GENESIS 3:14–15

BIBLE COMMENTARY

After God curses Satan, He indicates that the rest of human history will be a struggle between God’s chosen people and Satan’s followers, and will conclude in a final showdown, when an Offspring of Eve will crush Satan. This is the first Gospel promise of the cross, where Jesus, the Second Adam, crushes Satan’s power. The rest of the narrative of Scripture traces, and waits for, the fulfillment of this Gospel promise (see Galatians 4:4).

REFLECTION QUESTION

God curses Satan here for the great evil he helped bring into creation. In this curse, God also includes the first great Gospel promise. Look over verse 15, and try to connect how this promise not only summarizes the rest of the narrative of Scripture but, more important, points us to Jesus’ saving work.

REFLECTION HELPS

The promise is that there will be strife between God’s chosen people and Satan. In the midst of the struggle, though, it’s always God who is faithful to His promise to crush Satan’s power. In the narrative of Scripture, God generally uses the lowly and weak to defeat the strong (e.g., Moses, David, Daniel). Nowhere is this seen more clearly than in the cross, where God did His greatest saving work in forgiving humanity.

GENESIS 3:16–24

BIBLE COMMENTARY

God does not abandon His human creatures at their sin but informs them that they will suffer and struggle for survival as stewards of His creation. Childbearing will be painful, relationships strained, and work toilsome. All sinful lives will end in death. Yet God will be faithful to His promise as humanity awaits its fulfillment. Next, Adam and Eve are separated from God because of their sin, a consequence of being separated from the tree of life. In the new creation, not only will we be restored fully to God but we will be restored to the tree of life as well.

REFLECTION QUESTION

How does the rest of this curse, to the woman and to the man, describe our struggle for survival in this sinful world? How does God work through the Church to take care of us today as we go about living our vocations in this fallen creation?

REFLECTION HELPS

Work is hard, and we’re surrounded by danger in the fallen creation. Through the Church, God continually provides His people with forgiveness, life, and salvation as, together, we gather around and receive the gifts of His Word.

LEAVE

FINAL REFLECTION

What does it mean to you that God has a plan to redeem you from sin, death, and Satan? How should this change even the most insignificant tasks in your day?

TAKE HOME

Equip your learners with ideas for taking the lesson into their households by giving them access to the Enduring Faith Page.

CLOSE WITH PRAYER

If you haven’t yet, take prayer requests, or encourage a volunteer from the class to pray before you leave.



BONUS ACTIVITY

Do a quick study from the Central Thought section of the Second Article (Part 2) in *Luther’s Small Catechism with Explanation* (2017). Use the questions and discussion prompts to connect the story of the fall to the fulfillment of that promise in Christ.



CHRIST CONNECTION

God promised to send a Savior to crush Satan’s power over us. Jesus is the promised Offspring of Eve who fulfilled this promise and defeated Satan by His work on the cross.



LEADER NOTE

Answers will vary but could include observations like these: God gives my life value and purpose. I know I’m loved, and God has given me a new identity in Christ. All these have an impact on our perspectives and actions in daily life.

