

# Week 9: The Fall and Its Effects

**Memory Verse:** “Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, so death spread to all men because all sinned.” (Romans 5:12)

## Day 1: Into What Estate Did the Fall Bring Mankind?

**Weekly Memory Verse:** “Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, so death spread to all men because all sinned.” (Romans 5:12)

**Question:** Into what estate did the fall bring mankind? **Answer:** The fall brought mankind into an estate of sin and misery.

Imagine a beautiful kingdom where everyone lived in perfect happiness and peace. The king was wise and good, the gardens were always blooming, and no one ever got sick or sad. But then something terrible happened - the people chose to rebel against their loving king. Suddenly, everything changed. The beautiful kingdom became broken, people started hurting each other, and sadness entered where there had only been joy.

This is what happened to the human race when Adam and Eve chose to disobey God in the Garden of Eden. Before they sinned, they lived in perfect happiness with God. They never felt guilty, never got sick, and never died. But when they chose to eat the forbidden fruit, everything changed for them and for all of us who came after them.

Our catechism teaches us that the fall brought mankind into “an estate of sin and misery.” An estate is like a condition or state that someone lives in. Before the fall, Adam and Eve lived in an estate of innocence and blessing. After the fall, they and all their children live in an estate of sin and misery.

What does this mean for us? It means that every person born into this world has a heart that naturally wants to disobey God. We don’t have to teach children to be selfish or to tell lies - they do these things naturally because we all inherited Adam’s sinful nature. It also means that we experience misery - sadness, sickness, death, and separation from God.

But our memory verse gives us hope even in this sad truth. It tells us that sin came “through one man” - Adam. Later in the Bible, we learn that salvation also comes through one man - Jesus Christ! Just as Adam’s disobedience affected everyone connected to him, Jesus’

perfect obedience can save everyone who trusts in Him. Even though we're born into sin and misery, God provides a way out through His Son.

**Hymn:** Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed

**Prayer Points:** • Thank God for helping us understand our need for salvation • Ask God to show us how sin affects our hearts and lives • Praise Jesus for providing a way out of sin and misery

## Day 2: Repentance

**Weekly Memory Verse:** "Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, so death spread to all men because all sinned." (Romans 5:12)

**Lesson Verse:** "Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy." (Proverbs 28:13)

There once was a little girl who accidentally broke her mother's favorite vase while playing ball in the house. When her mother asked what happened, the girl was tempted to blame the cat or make up a story. But something inside her heart told her to tell the truth. So she took a deep breath and said, "Mommy, I'm sorry. I broke your vase, and I know I shouldn't have been playing ball inside." Instead of being angry, her mother hugged her and said, "Thank you for telling me the truth. I forgive you."

This is a picture of what repentance looks like. Repentance means admitting that we've done something wrong, feeling truly sorry about it, and deciding to change our behavior. Our lesson verse teaches us that "whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper" - in other words, trying to hide our sins doesn't work out well. But "he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy."

The word "confess" means to agree with God that what we did was wrong. It's not just saying "I'm sorry I got caught" but truly understanding that our sin hurt God, hurt others, or hurt ourselves. The word "forsake" means to turn away from the sin and choose to do what's right instead. True repentance always includes both confession and a change of heart.

Repentance is different from just feeling bad about getting in trouble. Sometimes people feel sorry only because they got caught or because they have to face consequences. But real repentance happens when we understand that our sin grieves God's heart because He loves us so much. When we truly repent, we don't just feel bad - we want to change and live in a way that pleases God.

The beautiful promise in our verse is that those who confess and forsake their sins “will obtain mercy.” God doesn’t want to punish us when we come to Him with repentant hearts. Instead, He wants to forgive us and help us grow in righteousness. This is part of His wonderful plan to rescue us from the estate of sin and misery.

**Hymn:** Just As I Am

**Prayer Points:** • Ask God to show us when we need to repent of our sins • Thank God for His promise of mercy when we confess our wrongdoing • Pray for humble hearts that are quick to admit when we’re wrong

## Day 3: Wherein Consists the Sinfulness of That Estate?

**Weekly Memory Verse:** “Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, so death spread to all men because all sinned.” (Romans 5:12)

**Question:** Wherein consists the sinfulness of that estate? **Answer:** The sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell, consists in the guilt of Adam’s first sin, the want of original righteousness, and the corruption of his whole nature, which is commonly called Original Sin; together with all actual transgressions which proceed from it.

When a factory makes cars, every car that comes off the assembly line has the same basic design. If there’s a problem with the design, every car will have that same problem. In a similar way, when Adam sinned, it affected not just him but everyone who would be born after him, like cars coming off a broken assembly line.

Our catechism explains that the sinfulness we inherited from Adam consists of several parts. First, there’s “the guilt of Adam’s first sin.” This means that because Adam was our representative, his disobedience affects all of us. Second, there’s “the want of original righteousness.” This means we’re missing the perfect goodness that Adam and Eve had before they sinned. Think of it like a beautiful painting that has been damaged - it’s not just that something bad was added, but something good was lost.

Third, there’s “the corruption of his whole nature.” This means that sin didn’t just affect one part of Adam - it affected his mind, his heart, his will, and his desires. And this corruption has been passed down to all of us. This is what the catechism calls “Original Sin” - the sinful nature we’re born with that makes us naturally want to disobey God.

Finally, there are “all actual transgressions which proceed from it.” These are the specific sins we commit because of our sinful nature - like when we’re selfish, tell lies, or disobey our parents. These sins happen because our hearts are already corrupted by sin.

This might sound very sad, but understanding our condition helps us appreciate how wonderful God’s salvation really is. Just as a doctor needs to understand what’s wrong before he can help heal someone, we need to understand how deeply sin affects us before we can fully appreciate what Jesus did to save us. The gospel is such good news precisely because our condition without Christ is so hopeless.

**Hymn:** Nothing but the Blood

**Prayer Points:** • Thank God for helping us understand how sin affects every part of us • Ask God to show us our need for Jesus’ salvation • Praise God that Jesus can cleanse us from all unrighteousness

## Day 4: Holy

**Weekly Memory Verse:** “Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, so death spread to all men because all sinned.” (Romans 5:12)

**Lesson Verse:** “And one called to another and said: ‘Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!’” (Isaiah 6:3)

Picture the cleanest, most beautiful place you can imagine - perhaps fresh snow covering a mountain peak that sparkles in the sunlight, or a crystal-clear lake that perfectly reflects the sky. Now try to imagine something infinitely more pure and beautiful than that. This begins to give us a tiny glimpse of what God’s holiness is like.

Our lesson verse comes from a vision the prophet Isaiah had of heaven. He saw angels surrounding God’s throne, and they kept calling out “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts!” In Hebrew, when something is repeated three times, it means it’s the most important thing possible. These angels were declaring that God’s holiness is the most important thing about Him.

But what does it mean that God is holy? Holiness means being completely separate from sin and perfectly pure in every way. God has never done anything wrong, never had a bad thought, and never failed to do what is right. He is perfect in His love, perfect in His justice, perfect in His wisdom, and perfect in His goodness. There is absolutely nothing impure or sinful about God.

This is why our memory verse is so significant. It tells us that sin has spread to all people, but God remains completely holy and untouched by sin. When Isaiah saw God's holiness, he immediately realized how sinful he was. He cried out, "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips." God's perfect holiness showed Isaiah just how impure he really was.

But here's the amazing part of Isaiah's story: God didn't leave him feeling hopeless about his sin. An angel touched Isaiah's lips with a burning coal from the altar and declared that his guilt was taken away and his sin forgiven. This points us to Jesus, who would one day take the punishment for sin so that sinful people could be made clean and holy. God's holiness doesn't just show us our problem - it also shows us how wonderful it is that He provides a solution.

**Hymn:** Holy God, We Praise Thy Name

**Prayer Points:** • Worship God for His perfect holiness and purity • Ask God to help us understand how different we are from His perfect holiness • Thank Jesus for making it possible for sinful people to come near our holy God

## Day 5: Augustine of Hippo

**Weekly Memory Verse:** "Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, so death spread to all men because all sinned." (Romans 5:12)

Long ago in North Africa, there lived a young man named Augustine who seemed to have everything going for him. He was incredibly smart, a gifted speaker, and came from a loving family. His mother, Monica, was a devoted Christian who prayed for him every day. But Augustine didn't want anything to do with God. Instead, he chose to live a very sinful life, chasing after pleasure and worldly success.

Augustine was what we might call a brilliant rebel. He studied philosophy and rhetoric, becoming one of the best speakers of his time. He moved to the great city of Milan in Italy to teach, and people came from far and wide to hear his eloquent speeches. But despite all his success and intelligence, Augustine felt empty inside. He had everything the world could offer, but he wasn't truly happy.

For years, Augustine's heart was torn between two desires. Part of him wanted to keep living for pleasure and worldly success, but another part of him longed for something deeper and more meaningful. He studied different religions and philosophies, searching for truth, but nothing satisfied the hunger in his soul. All this time, his faithful mother Monica never stopped praying for him.

Then one day, when Augustine was thirty-two years old, everything changed. He was sitting in a garden, feeling miserable about his sinful life, when he heard a child's voice singing, "Take up and read! Take up and read!" Augustine picked up a copy of Paul's letter to the Romans and read these words: "Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh." At that moment, God opened Augustine's heart, and he finally understood the gospel. He gave his life to Jesus and was completely transformed.

Augustine became one of the greatest teachers in the history of the Christian church. He wrote many important books that helped people understand the Bible better, including works about how sin affects every person and how God's grace saves us. He understood from his own experience just how deeply sin had corrupted his heart, and just how wonderful God's grace really is. Augustine's life shows us that no one is too sinful for God to save, and no one is too smart to need Jesus.

**Hymn:** Come, Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy

**Prayer Points:** • Thank God for people like Monica who never stopped praying for their loved ones • Praise God that He can change even the most rebellious hearts • Ask God to help us understand both our sinfulness and His amazing grace