

# THE THREAD

DISCOVERING THE THREAD OF THE GOSPEL THROUGH THE BIG-PICTURE STORY OF THE BIBLE

## PART 1: BEGINNINGS

### LESSON 3 || SIN AND THE FALL

#### SESSION SNAPSHOT

**NARRATIVE PASSAGE:** Genesis 2:15-17, Genesis 3:1-24

**GOSPEL FOCUS:** Romans 5:18-21

#### STUDENT TAKEAWAYS:

- Understand at what point in the story humans rebelled against the Creator.
- Grasp that Jesus (grace) represents the opposite of Adam (condemnation).
- Consider what it means to practically live out grace and righteousness in their world.

#### OVERVIEW:

Up to this point, everything has gone really well in the Garden. There's reason to believe that Adam and Eve have been living a peaceful existence with each other and with God. After all, sin had not entered into the world yet. But that would all change with a word from the serpent. This lesson is all about helping your students understand where sin entered the big-picture story of Scripture. But they will also see the different roles that Jesus and Adam represent in the narrative of the Bible and God's mission to redeem the effects of sin.

#### TEACHER PREP VIDEO:

Each *Thread* lesson comes with a Teacher Prep Video. These short videos are designed to help you grasp the lesson's main point as you prepare to teach.



#### BIBLE BACKGROUND

*The Bible Background* is designed to help you provide the basic context for the passages you'll be studying.

- **WHAT DO WE MEAN BY "CONTEXT"?** In every YM360 Bible study lesson, we encourage teachers to help students know *who* wrote a particular book, *when* it was written, and *why* it was written.
- **WHY TEACH CONTEXT?** Grasping the big-picture view of God's story of redemption is difficult for teenagers without understanding the context of the books and passages they're studying.

## GENESIS

- *Author:* While there's no specific author named within the text, Moses is the accepted author for Genesis, with some editing and additions done after his death (such as the account of his death!).

- *Time frame:* It's difficult to establish with any certainty a date for the completion of the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Bible). Most of the material originated from Moses himself, and depending on the date of the Exodus (which is also not known for sure), the date for the writing of Genesis is estimated to be sometime in the 1400s or 1200s BC.
- *Purpose:* Genesis details the earliest history of our world, including creation and Adam and Eve's fall. It also focuses on the emergence of Israel, not only as God's people but as the group that God would work through to bring redemption to the world.

## ROMANS

- *Author:* Paul is the author of Romans.
- *Time frame:* Romans was probably written from Corinth in the winter of 56-57 AD.
- *Purpose:* Since the church in Rome had not received comprehensive theological teaching on salvation and other implications of following Christ, Paul wrote Romans to ensure a good understanding of such things. In addition, since many Jewish Christians were rejecting some of the new Gentile converts, a level playing field needed to be given to all believers. This is what Paul was advocating for in Romans.

# LESSON PLAN

*The Lesson Plan contains four elements:*

- **GETTING STARTED**— An introductory activity designed to prepare teenagers to engage with God and the truth of His Word.
- **THE STORY**— A section featuring a narrative from Scripture that helps teenagers know God better through learning the story of the Bible.
- **THE THREAD**— A special emphasis where teenagers discover the Gospel thread coursing throughout the story of the Bible.
- **WRAPPING UP**— An application-focused segment helping teenagers ask the question, “How am I impacted by what I learned today”?

## GETTING STARTED

- *Goal:* To get students thinking about how one choice can have far more significant consequences than we imagine.
- *Set-Up:* You’ll retell the story of a man—Skip Bayless—whose tweet made him infamous in a very short time and made many others call for him to be fired.

**IF YOU HAVE INTERNET ACCESS, YOU CAN READ THIS CNN ARTICLE:**

o <https://www.cnn.com/2023/01/03/media/skip-bayless-damar-hamlin-tweet/index.html>

FIRST, explain that your group will hear the story of a man who posted what he thought was a harmless tweet yet caused many people to be angry with him and call for him to be fired from his job. Feel free to read directly from the article or simply summarize the story.

THEN, have your students respond. **Ask questions similar to the following:**

- What do you think Skip felt when he realized that this one tweet caused such an uproar?
- Do you think people’s responses were fair? I mean, we’ve all said some ill-advised things from time to time without realizing how people would take it. Should other people have reacted this harshly?

NEXT, get your students thinking about how bad decisions can often have a far greater impact, especially negatively, than we realize when we make them. **Ask:**

- Have you ever done something wrong that ended up having far more significant consequences than you thought it would, such as getting in huge trouble or hurting someone?
  - o *As students respond, thank them for sharing, and make sure your group is a judgment-free zone.*
- Have you ever been on the other end of one of those choices? Maybe a time when someone did something and didn’t realize how much it would hurt you? Do you remember how you felt in that situation?

FINALLY, set the table for your Bible study by showing how sin can hurt relationships; this is where your group will see that our rebellion has impacted our relationship with God. **Say something like:**

- Some of the stories you shared show that our actions can have a negative impact on a relationship. Today we’re going to look at some actions that have negatively impacted our relationship with God.

**TRANSITION TO THE STORY.**

## THE STORY

- *Goal:* To understand how sin—rebellion against our Creator—has infected our world and impacted our relationship with God.
- *Set-Up:* Students will need a Bible or a Bible app. You may find that a dry-erase board is helpful for jotting down some notes, but it's not essential.

FIRST, explain that in the past couple of lessons, you've seen how God created the Universe, our planet, and human beings and that "it was good" or even "very good." However, we don't even need to open a Bible to see that all is not well in our world today. So how'd we get here? Explain that in the Getting Started opener, you barely scratched the surface about some of the ways life is difficult and even tragic. Say that today, you'll start to connect the dots about why that's our reality and examine God's plan to set things right.

THEN, instruct students to turn to Genesis. While they are finding it in their Bible or Bible app, consider providing the context for the book using the Bible Background. Then read or have a student read Genesis 2:15-17. Lead students in a discussion. **Ask:**

- **According to this passage, how many rules did God give Adam and Eve to follow?**
  - *Answer:* Just one. Some perceptive students might note that Adam was told to tend the garden, which sounds like a lot of work, so this might be thought of as a rule. Let students know that you'll find out in a few minutes from Genesis 3 that no hard work was necessary to tend the Garden of Eden.
- **Let me take a poll: Who will admit that when given a lot of freedom and just one "whatever you do, don't do this one thing" kind of rule, you tend to do that one thing, or at least to get as close to it as you can?**
  - If your group has some enthusiasm about breaking the one rule, ask them for examples when they've had only one rule to follow, yet they broke it. Explain that you're about to find out what happened with Adam and Eve and their one rule.

NEXT, read or have a student read Genesis 3:1-7. Say something like:

- **We know from other places in the Bible that the serpent is Satan and that his goal is to destroy the relationship between God and humans. Take a look at what the serpent tells Eve, as well as Eve's reply in verses 1-3. Is that really what we just heard God say in chapter 2?**
  - *Answer:* Not fully. The command was simply not to eat of it.
- **Why do you think Eve slightly changed God's command?**
  - *Answers will vary.*
- **God said in chapter two that the rule was for Adam and Eve's protection, but what reason does the serpent give for why God created the rule?**
  - *Answer:* God was trying to keep Adam and Eve from being like Him and knowing good and evil.
- **So now Eve believes that God wasn't really trying to help her and Adam but that He was trying to keep them from something good. Have you ever thought that a rule set by someone, whether your parents or a teacher, was made to keep you from something fun rather than for your own good?**
  - *Answers will vary.*

THEN, read or have a student read 3:8-13. Say:

- **Let's talk about how Adam and Eve reacted to breaking God's rule. What did they do when they heard God coming?**
  - *Answer:* They tried to hide from God.

- But God found them anyway because, well, He's God. And God knew exactly what had happened. When God asks Adam about it, who does he blame? And whom did Eve blame?
  - *Answer:* Eve; The serpent.
- Okay, let's pause the story for a second. Does this sound at all like what we tend to do when we get caught doing something wrong?
  - Let students process this in a short discussion, but the landing spot you're looking for on this question is that the typical response to doing something wrong is trying to hide our wrongdoing, and then once we're caught, blaming someone else.

NEXT, explain that we've seen how humans react when we do something wrong, so now it's time to see how God responds. Read or have a student read 3:14-19. Then say,

- God gives three sets of consequences for each of the three parties involved. What are the consequences He gives to Adam, Eve, and the serpent?
  - *Answer:* 3:14-19 is actually expressed in Hebrew poetry, so the language here isn't very straightforward. Adam must now work hard to grow food (as opposed to the abundance of food in the Garden of Eden). For Eve, childbirth will be difficult, and relationships between men and women, especially marriage, can now be dysfunctional. For the serpent, he was destined to crawl on his stomach, like what we think of as common snake behavior (up to this point, there is reason to assume he went upright). God also foreshadows how He will eventually redeem what has now been broken. 3:15 points to how Jesus will reconcile us to God when He dies on the cross and rises again from the dead, foiling Satan's desire to destroy our relationship with God. You don't need to spend much time on this because you'll come back to it in the Thread section.
- At first glance, these seem like straightforward consequences, God coming down hard on Adam and Eve for disobeying Him. But can you see any sign of leniency, mercy, or grace in this passage?
  - *Answer:* The big one is that God foreshadows how He would send His son Jesus to make Adam and Eve (and us!) right with God again, despite our sin. One other sign of grace is the fact that God still was in relationship with Adam and Eve – He didn't just abandon them.

THEN, read or have a student read Genesis 3:20-24. Explain that because God still loved Adam and Eve, He didn't want them to live in this current state of rebellion forever. He had a plan. Say something like:

- Make sure you catch the fact that part of the reality of Adam and Eve's rebellion, and our own as well, is that things were not how God created them to be. But as we'll see in a minute, this isn't the end.

**TRANSITION INTO THE THREAD AND GET READY TO HELP YOUR STUDENTS SEE THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THIS FIRST REBELLION AGAINST GOD AND GOD'S PLAN TO MAKE US RIGHT WITH HIM DESPITE OUR REBELLION.**

## THE THREAD

FIRST, ask your group to turn to Romans 5. While they find it, share a little about the background of Romans from the Bible Background at the beginning of the lesson. To set the stage for the few verses you'll read together, **say something like:**

- **The main thing Paul has been talking about is that while we can point to a time and person when rebellion first entered this world, we can also point to a single person who gives us the gift of grace and righteousness – Jesus.**

THEN, read or have a student read Romans 5:18-21. **Ask:**

- **Who committed the trespass, or sin, that led to condemnation for all people?**
  - *Answer:* Adam did when he rebelled against God in Genesis 3.
- **So whom is Paul referring to when he talks about “one man’s” obedience? How was He obedient?**
  - *Answer:* Paul is talking about Jesus, who was obedient by being without sin and by dying on the cross according to God’s perfect plan.
- **Do you remember when we talked about the serpent’s consequences? What was the consequence that related to Jesus?**
  - *Answer:* God said that one of Eve’s offspring would crush the serpent’s head, destroying him (and his plans). Jesus would eventually make right what was broken when sin entered the world.

FINALLY, ask your students this question before moving on to Wrapping Up.

- **So does it sound like God already had a plan to make us right with Him again, even before human beings ever sinned and rebelled against Him?**
  - *Answer:* Yes, in Genesis 3, God helps us see that He had a plan to make things right even before it all went wrong. As you’ll see throughout the Thread, God gives us glimpses of how He would redeem the world throughout the Old Testament.

**IF YOUR STUDENTS DON’T HAVE ANY MORE QUESTIONS, TRANSITION INTO THE WRAPPING UP SECTION.**

## WRAPPING UP

- *Goal:* To consider what it means to practically live out grace and righteousness in their world.
- *Set-Up:* You may find that a dry-erase board is helpful for jotting down some of your students’ responses.

FIRST, explain that one of the things God communicated to Adam and Eve way back in the beginning was that even though humans rebelled against Him, He had already planned how He would rescue us from sin. **Say something like:**

- **We’ve seen today that even when Adam and Eve sinned against God, His response to them foreshadowed that He already had set a rescue plan in motion – sending His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross. What does that tell us about God’s love?**
  - *Answers will vary,* but make sure to highlight the fact that God’s love means allowing us to experience the consequences of our sins while also giving us eternal life and rescuing us from the ultimate penalty of sin: death.

NEXT, lay the groundwork for how God’s grace should impact our behavior. **Ask:**

- **Can you think of a time when you’ve been in trouble with your parents or a teacher, and while they were disappointed, they also offered you grace and forgiveness?**
  - This is a higher-level question, so help your group as they try to come up with examples.

- When that kind of thing happens, how does it affect what choices you make in the future?
  - *Answers will vary.* Likely, you'll get some students who say that it makes them want to do better in the future, and others will say it doesn't really change anything. Let's connect the dots between God's grace and how it empowers us to live the way God wants us to.
- In the section of Romans we read, Paul says that one of the results of God's grace in our lives is that "as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (5:21). What do you think it means for grace to reign through righteousness?
  - *Answer:* Grace not only saves us, but it also empowers us to live life the way God wants us to.

FINALLY, challenge students to identify one area in life where they have experienced God's grace and to begin to choose God's way in that area. Say:

- Before we finish up, I want us to make what we've learned a reality in our own lives. In a minute, we're going to have a few seconds of silence. I want you to think of two things: first, an area in your life where you have rebelled against God. It could be something you've done at home or school or a sin or addiction you just can't shake. Second, think of how God offers you grace and forgiveness and how God's grace can motivate you to pursue righteousness in that area.

Take about 60 seconds of silence, then close your Bible study in prayer.

- If you've purchased the corresponding devotional journal, remind students they'll be working through Week 1 this week. Encourage them to keep up with the daily devotions and to give memorizing this week's verse their best shot.
- If you're utilizing the digital devotions included in the Thread curriculum, remind students how you'll be making them available, i.e., Instagram, Facebook, etc.

## WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU . . .

- Do you have questions about a lesson?
- Something that worked particularly well that you want to share?
- Something that didn't work that you want to bring up?

We value your feedback! Please do not hesitate to email us with your questions, comments, or concerns at [feedback@youthministry360.com](mailto:feedback@youthministry360.com).