Small Group Guide: The Fall and Our Need for a Savior

Origin Series

Introduction for Group Leaders

This session explores the consequences of Adam and Eve's rebellion against God, what the Bible calls the Fall, and how those consequences reach into every human heart today. The goal is not to leave group members discouraged by the weight of sin, but to help them grasp the depth of what Christ accomplished on their behalf. The greater our understanding of the Fall, the greater our appreciation for the gospel.

Encourage honesty and vulnerability in your group. These topics can be deeply personal.

Key Takeaways

1. Sin is more than bad behavior. Sin is defined as humanity's rebellion against the authority and character of God. It is not merely something we do, but a condition of our fallen nature that affects who we are at our core.

2. The Fall introduced three devastating consequences into the human story.

- Spiritual death: our connection to God was severed
- Bondage to sin: our nature became corrupted and inclined toward rebellion
- God's wrath: a holy God cannot simply overlook humanity's rebellion and its consequences

3. Sin manifests in four distinct ways.

- Lawlessness: rejecting God's authority over our lives
- Falling short of God's glory: failing to reflect who God created us to be
- Knowing what is right and choosing not to do it
- Evil thoughts and desires that originate in the human heart

4. Jesus is the answer to every consequence of the Fall. Where Adam brought spiritual death, Jesus brings life. Where Adam brought condemnation, Jesus brings justification. Where Adam hid from God, Jesus came to us and invites us to draw near.

5. The gospel is not self-improvement. Jesus did not come to help us become better versions of ourselves. He came to bring spiritually dead people back to life, liberate those in bondage, and reconcile sinners to God.

Discussion Questions

Opening Question

Use this question to ease into conversation and help group members connect personally with the topic.

Think about a time you discovered a hidden problem in your life, a relationship, a habit, or a pattern of thinking, that had been there longer than you realized. What was that experience like?

Section 1: Understanding Sin

1. The sermon offered this definition: "Sin is humanity's rebellion against the authority and character of God. It is the failure to live according to his holy standard, resulting in thoughts, desires, attitudes, words, and actions that violate his will." How does this definition compare to how you understood sin before today?

2. The sermon described four ways sin manifests: lawlessness, falling short of God's glory, knowing what is right and not doing it, and evil that originates in the heart. Which of these four do you think is most commonly overlooked or misunderstood? Why?

3. The sermon drew a distinction between sins of commission, doing what God has forbidden, and sins of omission, failing to do what God has called us to do. Which of these do you think is easier to rationalize or ignore in your own life?

4. Jesus taught in Mark 7 that what defiles a person comes from within, from the heart, not from external circumstances or other people. How does this challenge the way we typically explain our own wrongdoing?

Section 2: The Consequences of the Fall

5. The sermon described three consequences that entered humanity's story through the Fall: spiritual death, bondage to sin, and exposure to God's wrath. Before today, how seriously did you take each of these? Were any of them difficult to accept?

6. After Adam and Eve sinned, they hid from God. The sermon pointed out that the very presence they were created to enjoy became something they wanted to avoid. In what ways do people today still hide from God, whether consciously or not?

7. The sermon made this observation: "We don't just live in a world affected by sin. If we're honest with ourselves, we would discover that the same sin that entered the world

through Adam and Eve is also at work within us." How does honest self-reflection confirm or challenge that statement for you personally?

8. The sermon noted that some of the most generous people we know may not know Christ, and yet they are still in desperate need of a savior. How do you hold together the reality that people can do genuine good while still being in a fallen condition?

Section 3: The Gospel as the Answer

9. The sermon described a personal struggle with understanding the gospel before coming to faith: believing that Jesus was essentially a "spiritual Tony Robbins" who would help with self-improvement, without grasping the true condition of the human heart. Can you relate to that? How did your understanding of your own need change over time?

10. The sermon stated: "We cannot fully understand the greatness of our salvation until we understand the seriousness of our fall." Do you agree? How does a deeper understanding of sin change the way you value what Christ did on the cross?

11. Romans 5 compares Adam and Jesus directly. Through Adam came sin, condemnation, and death. Through Jesus comes righteousness, justification, and life. What does it mean to you personally that Jesus addressed every consequence of the Fall?

12. The sermon closed with three questions for personal reflection. Take time as a group to discuss them openly:

- Have you recognized the seriousness of sin and the condition of your heart before God?
- Are you living in the freedom Christ purchased for you, or are you still living under the control of things from which Christ has set you free?
- Are you trusting in your own goodness, or are you placing your confidence entirely in what Jesus did on the cross?

Practical Applications

Choose one or more of the following to practice individually or as a group before your next meeting.

1. Honest Inventory Set aside 15 to 20 minutes this week for quiet reflection. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal areas of sin in your life, both commission and omission. Write them down honestly. Then bring each one before God in prayer, receiving his forgiveness through Christ.

2. Reframe Your View of the Gospel If you tend to think of Christianity primarily as a set of rules or a self-improvement system, spend time this week reading Romans 5 and 6 slowly. Ask yourself: what does Paul say humanity's actual condition is, and what does he say Christ actually accomplished?

3. Stop Hiding Identify one area of your life where you have been avoiding God, whether through distraction, busyness, or outright avoidance of prayer and Scripture. Make a deliberate choice this week to bring that area into the open before God and, if appropriate, before a trusted friend or your small group.

4. Memorize a Key Verse Commit Romans 6:23 to memory this week. Reflect on both halves of the verse: what sin produces and what God freely gives. Let it shape the way you think about your need for Christ and the gift he offers.

5. Share the Gospel Think of one person in your life who may be living with a surface-level understanding of Christianity, or no understanding at all. Pray for an opportunity this week to have a genuine conversation about what the gospel actually is and why it matters.

Closing Prayer Guide

Close your group time by praying together through the following themes, either as a led prayer or by inviting group members to pray aloud:

- Acknowledge God as Creator and the one we were made to know
- Confess honestly the reality of sin in your own hearts and lives
- Thank God for not abandoning humanity after the Fall
- Express gratitude for the cross, where God's justice and mercy met
- Ask the Holy Spirit to continue his work of transformation in each person present

Looking Ahead

Next week the series continues with the story of Cain and Abel, exploring what happens when one offering is accepted and another is not. Come prepared to discuss what it means to approach God on his terms rather than our own.