

Fallen | 1 Corinthians 15:21-22

Are we good enough for Heaven?

"I am fallen, flawed and imperfect. Yet drenched in the grace and mercy that is found in Jesus, there is strength."

-Adam Young

Lesson Overview

The Fall of Adam marks the beginning of humanity's fractured relationship with God. Adam's rebellion brought sin, suffering, and death into the world, leaving all of humanity in need of restoration. Since the Fall, humanity has struggled to live according to God's perfect design, continually choosing our own way over His. Yet God did not abandon His creation. From the very beginning God began His plan to reverse the effects of sin, ultimately culminating in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

In this lesson, students will explore how the fall reveals humanity's need for a Savior and how Jesus, the new Adam, fulfills God's promise to restore creation and make all things new.

Lesson Objectives

What: The Fall of Adam brought brokenness, suffering, and death into the world, separating humanity from God.

Why: We need to understand the consequences of our own fallen nature and recognize our need for a Savior.

How: By receiving the free gift of salvation through faith, Jesus becomes our new Adam and our righteous representative before God.

Primary Scripture

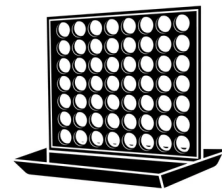
Genesis 3:1-7: "Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?" And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree..."

The Game - Connect 4-Trillion (~20 mins)

- Overview:
 - # of Participants: **Any**
 - Where to Play: **Indoors / Outdoors**
 - Age of Participants: **Elementary / Middle / High School**
 - Materials: [Connect 4 board](#), or a way to display [this website](#)

You've probably played Connect 4 before, where you race to be the first one to place four of your tokens in a row. There are over *4 trillion* possible games of Connect 4 that can be played, but what you might not realize, however, is that Connect 4 is what's known as a *solved game*. This means that computers have looked at every single possible game of Connect 4 that could be played, and we know the optimal move to play from any given position. In fact, if both players play *perfectly*, the player that goes first will always win. If you're interested to know more, [this video](#) by 2swap explains it in great detail.

Set up a Connect 4 board in the front of your space, and have everyone form a line (if you don't have a physical Connect 4 board, you can play on [this website](#)). The group will have 3 tries to beat the leader in a game of Connect 4. If they manage to win, there is a big prize, but if they don't, there will be a light punishment. The leader will make the first move (see details below), and then youth will take turns placing one token at a time.



This game will utilize [this website's Connect 4 Solver](#) in order to help one of your leaders play the perfect game of Connect 4 every time.

Once you've opened this page on your phone, change the *Red* player to "Auto" and you will see that the computer chooses to place their red chip in the middle of the board. In real life, the leader will copy this decision, ensuring that they have made the optimal move. Now the group will decide what spot they would like to play in, and when they do, you will make that same move on the website. This prompts the computer to show you the best move, which you will then copy to your real-life game, and so on. The result is that you play a perfect game of Connect 4, and no matter how good the other team plays, they will never be able to beat you.

<https://connect4.gamesolver.org/>

The Breakdown (~40 mins)

- Overview:
 - # of Participants: **Any**
 - Where to Play: **Indoors**
 - Age of Participants: **Elementary / Middle / High School**
 - Materials: **Some way to watch a video (laptop, tv/projector, speaker, internet connection, etc.)**

Ask the following questions:

- **Who knows what story the phrase “The Fall” refers to in the Bible?**
 - This refers to the Fall of Man, where Adam and Eve ate from the fruit of the tree of good and evil.
- **Who can give a quick summary of that story?**
 - During Creation, Adam and Eve were told that they could eat from any tree in the garden, except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God told them that if they ate from this tree, then they would die. However, the serpent told Eve that the real reason God didn’t want them to eat from that tree was because it would make them be like God. So they ate, and felt shame. God found out, and they were banished from the garden.

Say:

- **Let’s read part of that specific passage:**

3 Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’” **2** And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, **3** but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’” **4** But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. **5** For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” **6** So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree



was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. **7** Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

Genesis 3:1-7

Ask:

- **What was it about the fruit that was so tempting to Adam and Eve?**
 - It was the idea that they could *be like God* (Verse 5).
- **It's easy to look at Adam and Eve and see their faults, but we aren't really any better. What are some modern-day "forbidden fruits" that seem good on the outside, but end up separating us from God?**
 - Most answers will fall into one of the following categories (via ericgeiger.com):
 - **Power:** a longing for influence or recognition
 - **Control:** a longing to have everything go according to *my* plan
 - **Comfort:** a longing for pleasure
 - **Approval:** a longing to be accepted or desired
 - Examples: Social media validation, success and achievement, money, freedom or independence, comfort and entertainment, etc.
- **How about you personally? Can you think of a time when doing what you wanted in the moment led to consequences you didn't expect?**
 - Allow a few people to share.
- **God gave us freedom to make our own choices, good or bad. If God made us so we could only do what is right and never had a choice, would that be real love? Why or why not?**
 - No, real love can't be forced. True love requires a choice. God loves us so much that He gives us the freedom to choose Him, or reject his love.
- **Do you think people are naturally good, or do we tend to make selfish choices?**
 - Because of Adam, all of humanity is fallen and naturally sinful.
 - We often know what is right, but we're easily tempted to choose what feels good instead.



-
- **Who are some examples of people you believe are “good” people?**
 - The youth will likely mention people they know or examples of morally upstanding people from history and today, however, the activity that follows will prove that *no one* is good, except for God alone.

Activity

Setup: Somewhere high up, on the ceiling or high up on the wall, tape a candy bar just out of reach. Make sure that it's high enough so that even the tallest person cannot reach it.

Ask the shortest person in your group to try to get the candy bar by jumping up for it. They won't even be close, but as they try, say...

- **For the purposes of this example, think of [Shortest Person] as someone who doesn't live a very good life. They lie, cheat, steal, and are mean to the people around them. Think of reaching the candy bar as a metaphor for being good enough to get into heaven. No matter how hard [Shortest Person] tries, they aren't good enough to get in. This makes sense to us, since we typically like to think in terms of *justice*. [Shortest Person] doesn't deserve heaven, and they don't get it.**

Next, ask the tallest person to try the same thing. They will be closer, but ultimately won't be able to get to the prize either. Say...

- **Now think of [Tallest Person] as someone who lives an incredibly good life. They are kind, generous, patient, and fun to be around. When [Tallest Person] reaches for the candy bar, they are admittedly a lot closer than [Shortest Person], but they can't reach it either. We might think that someone who lives a “good” life would be good enough to get into heaven, but the truth is, anything short of absolute perfection means that we're not good enough to get to heaven.**



Ask:

- **Think back to the Connect 4 games we played. What key moments made the biggest difference in the outcome of the game?**
 - Students may point to a mistake that allowed the leader to win or a move earlier in the game that seemed important. However, this wasn't necessarily the case.
 - Something suspicious was going on
- **We'll come back to that in a second, but first let's think about another similar game, tic-tac-toe. Is Tic-Tac-Toe a very fun game to play? Why?**
 - Most people will recognize that tic-tac-toe isn't very fun to play. The reason is that, unless someone makes a silly mistake, tic-tac-toe always ends in a draw.

Say:

- Tic-Tac-Toe is what's known as a solved-game, which means that we've figured out every possible game of tic-tac-toe that could be played, and we know the best move to make at any given time. If both players play perfectly, tic-tac-toe will always end in a draw.
- Connect 4 is also a solved game, but there's a difference... in Connect 4, the player that goes first will *always win*, assuming they don't make any mistakes. In fact, this is the reason you lost to the leader every game, they were using a database of moves in order to play perfectly. In other words, it didn't matter how good you played, it was never going to be good enough.
- Similarly, in life, we often divide people into "good" and "bad." We see bad people as those who openly reject God and do what is wrong. But the problem with the "good" group is more subtle.
- They try their hardest to do everything right and make all the "right moves." Yet, just like in our Connect 4 game, no matter how well they play, they can never win on their own. They will always fall short of God's perfect standard.
- So what can we do? How can we win?



Have someone read the following Scripture:

21 For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. **22** For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.

1 Corinthians 15:21-22

Ask:

- **In light of the Fall, what do these verses mean? Why is this good news?**
 - Because Adam brought sin and death into the world, every person falls short of God's perfect standard. But Jesus came as the new Adam, perfectly obeying where Adam failed, so that through Jesus we can receive new life.

Say:

- **Known as *federal headship*: Adam represented humanity in his sin, while Christ represented His people in His righteousness.**
- **The good news is this: Where Adam failed, Christ succeeded. Jesus retraced humanity's path, reversing Adam's (and our own) disobedience and restored what was lost through the Fall.**
- **Now through Jesus and his grace alone we have access into God's kingdom**
- **Before we close today, ask yourself, where have I fallen? Where have I fallen short of God's plan for my life? Where do I need Jesus to meet me with his grace?**

Closing Prayer

Dear Lord, All of us have fallen short of your Glory. There is nothing we can do to earn our place in your kingdom. It is only through Jesus that we can be saved. Thank you Lord that you are the new Adam. That you came and lived the obedient life, that we could not. You have broken the curse of the Fall and redeemed us. Through you we now have eternal life. All honor and glory are yours, forever and ever. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Fallen (adj) - Subject to sin or depravity

per [Oxford Languages](#)

