

Blessed is the Kingdom: An Orthodox Church School Curriculum



Lesson 2 **3rd-5th grades**

The Fall of Adam and Eve

Objective: Through the story of Adam and Eve students learn that man was created in the image and likeness of God. After the fall, we are striving for a renewed communion with God, and Christ is at the center of this.

Lesson Introduction

5 min

Begin by **asking students**:

How was the world created?

Take answers, then **say**:

God made the world. Let's watch a video to review how he made it.

Play the following video to show how God created the earth and all that is in it.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=teu7BCZTgDs>

When finished, **ask** students the following:

What did God make on day 6?

(Animals and Man)



But what did God describe as very good? (Man)

God created man in his own image. We read in Genesis that God said: "Let us make man in Our own image, according to Our likeness". Humanity was made in the image of God. We alone have this special status and reflect God's likeness. God made us the leader and steward of the created order. He gave Adam and Eve the garden temple of Eden. But as you know, we are no longer living in Eden. Today we are going to read from the Bible the story of the fall of Adam and Eve.



Opening Prayer

O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth who art everywhere and fillest all things. Treasury of Blessings, and Giver of Life: Come and abide in us, and cleanse us from every impurity, and save our souls, O Good one.

Icons

Expulsion of Adam from Paradise Icon

<https://images.oca.org/icons/lg/prelent/expulsion.jpg>

Icon of Adam and Eve

<https://www.oca.org/reflections/fr.-john-jillions/march-22-2013>

5 Minute Bonus

Play the following video that goes through what was made each day. Encourage students to get up and do the dance moves.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3-9 IOeaGhs>

Lesson—25 min

Supplies Needed

One per student:

- Orthodox Study Bible

One per class:

- Device or screen to play video
- Dry erase board or large paper to write on
- Icons of the Adam and Eve and their Expulsion from Paradise

A Note to the Teacher:

3rd through 5th grades can have a range of reading ability, so adjust your approach to reflect the needs of your students.

Encourage every student to have a Bible open and attempt to follow along. If students are good readers, have them take turns reading. If emergent readers, have them read only Adam or Eve's lines. Or simply have them follow along as you read to them.

Teacher Resource

OCA Essential Orthodox

Christian Beliefs: A Manual for Adult Instruction

<https://www.oca.org/cdn/PDFs/2023-0609-EOCB.pdf>

Chapter 1 Proskomedia: Blessed is the Kingdom

Liturgy Link

Blessed is the Kingdom of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

<https://www.oca.org/media/video/20th-aac-thursday-morning-divine-liturgy>

Skip to 18:34 for this portion

Hand out Bibles. Have a dry erase board or large piece of blank paper displayed and ready to be written on. **Read** Genesis 2:15-17, then **say**:

Here we see the connection of Adam to God. God is giving Adam the Garden to care for, and giving one command to follow about not eating from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. As we meet God here, let's talk a bit about who God is.

Draw the following shape on the board with the word God above it. Then **ask** for words that describe God, and **place** them under the line as shown in red. **Guide** students to some of the examples given below—the opening prayer may be helpful to guide them.

God

Holy
Perfect
Selfless
King
Loving
Life giving

Now that we know who God is remember that we were made in His image. However, let's read what took place after Adam and Eve were created.

Read Genesis 3: 1-7. Then **ask**:

What did Eve and Adam do that was wrong? (Disobeyed God; ate the fruit when told not to)

Adam and Eve let pride get in their way. They felt they knew better than God and disregarded his commandment. This broke their communion with God. Let's keep reading.

Read Genesis 3:8-19.

What happened to the serpent? (Slither on his belly; Woman and man will dislike the serpent)

What happened to Eve? (Pain in childbirth; Adam rules over her)

What happened to Adam? (He will work the earth)

Draw the second black shape shown on the next page with the word Man above it. **Ask** for character traits of man after the fall. These are the consequence of the fall. Example words are written in red for you.

Lesson Continued

Supplemental Idea

Take a Church Walk

Say: Last week we talked about how the Liturgy Link of Blessed is the Kingdom shows that Christ is at the Center of our life and worship. With the fall Adam and Eve lost sight of keeping God at the center of their lives. The rest of the Bible stories and the birth and death of Christ was an effort to help bring mankind back in communion with God.

Take a walk into the church, pointing out the following connections of the Church to the Garden of Eden.

Faces east—as the Garden was entered by the east.

Golden seven branched lamp stand—symbolizes the Garden of Eden

Look for cherubs guarding the Royal Doors, much like the Cherubim set to guard the gates to the Garden

Palm leaves, grapes, and flowers carved or painted on the walls or iconostasis.

Read more here:

<https://orthochristian.com/7155.html>



Read Genesis 3:21-24. Then **ask:**

What did God do to protect Adam and Eve? (God removed them from the Garden of Eden) In making their choice, they lost communion with God like they had in the Garden. If you look at our drawing, you can see that God and man are separated.

Draw a man on the man side of the drawing as shown in blue above.

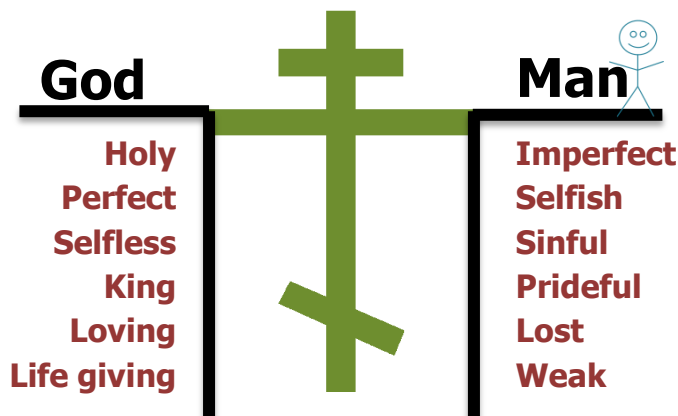
There is a gap between God and man, and no way for man to access God. Since the time of Adam and Eve, God has been guiding us back to communion with Him. He loves us, and wants us to follow His will. What tools do you think God has given us to help guide us back?

Take answers, and **guide** them to some of the following:

- *Praying: help us communicate with God*
- *Fasting: help us overpower our body's desire for things*
- *Attending Church: our church building is set up much like the Garden of Eden was by facing East; Christ's cross is like the tree bringing Salvation and joy, not death. When you enter the narthex of the church, it represents the world beginning its journey to Christ. We then enter the nave, where we stand during services. This is the place that represents our journey from the world to heaven. Finally, the sanctuary is where the altar is located and symbolizes Heaven.*

Throughout the Old Testament God gives ways for humankind to move toward communion with Him. He provides a law for them to follow, a temple for them to worship in. But ultimately it is all leading to Christ. Christ is the one who can restore communion with God. Through His resurrection and example we are provided with a way to restore communion with God.

Draw a cross between the shapes, so the bar of the cross connects the God side to the man side. Example is shown in green below.



Lesson Activities

Mirror Craft—10 min

Supplies needed: small mirror tiles (these can be found on Amazon or oriental trading; acrylic paint pens or permanent markers; printed likeness verse tags; ribbon; glue;

Ask students:

When God created the world, he made one thing in His own image. What was that? (Man; woman; us)

Then **continue:**

To remind you of this, we are going to create a mirror craft. Every time you look in it, you can be reminded that you were created in the image and likeness of God.

Using the acrylic paint pens or permanent markers, have students decorate the outer sides of their mirror, leaving the center clear so they can see themselves. When done, attach a ribbon and a tag with the Bible verse Genesis 1:26. (See last page of lesson for a printable)



Closing Thoughts— 5 min

Show students the icons of Adam and Eve in Paradise, and the Expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise. Point out the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the serpent, the cherubim guarding the Garden.

Good vs. Evil Game (Red light; Green light)—10 min

Supplies needed: space to line students up across from you

Students stand in a line at one end of the room. The teacher stands at the other side of the room facing the students. This game works like red light/green light, except instead of the words red light/green light, the person who is it, will call out good and bad things. For example, when they call out "prayer", all the students start running toward the leader's side of the room. If they call out "lying", all students must freeze. If a student keeps moving, then they have to go back to the starting line. Examples of things to call out:

Good (Green)

Prayer
Attending church
Sharing
Fasting
Listening

Bad (Red)

Lying
Stealing
Anger
Hitting
Fighting

Start by reviewing the list of good and bad things, and why it is important to focus on the good things to become more Christ-like and seek communion with God like Adam and Eve had prior to the fall. Have students brainstorm addition good and bad things that could be used in the game. Give students turns to be the leader and call out words.

Closing Prayer

It is truly meet to bless you, O Theotokos, ever-blessed and most pure, and the Mother of our God. More honorable than the Cherubim, and more glorious beyond compare than the Seraphim, without defilement you gave birth to God the Word. True Theotokos we magnify you!

Craft Printable Tags

Then God said,
"Let Us make
man in Our
image, according
to Our likeness."

Genesis 1:26

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