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The Hearts of Man

Key Themes

- God judges sin.
- God provides salvation from sin through Jesus.

Key Passages

- Genesis 3:6; Romans 5:12; Genesis 6:5; Jeremiah 17:9;
Romans 3:23; John 3:16; 2 Corinthians 5:17

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Recognize that all men are sinners through the sin of Adam.
- Recognize that Jesus Christ paid the penalty for our sins.



Lesson Overview



Come On In

page 5

Students put the Books of the Old Testament cards in order. (There are many songs online that could make this easier and more fun for your students.)



Studying God's Word

page 5

Since the very first sin of Adam in the garden, all people are born into sin. We inherited this sin nature from Adam whom God accounted as the representative of the human race. Our sin deserves death and eternal separation from God. But in His grace and mercy, God has provided forgiveness through Jesus Christ—the perfect sacrifice.



Activity 1: A Bad Heart

page 9

Students will color and cut out a picture representing a bad heart.



Activity 2: A New Heart

page 9

Students will color and cut out a picture representing a new heart.

Lesson Preparation

WHAT YOU WILL DO

WHAT YOU WILL NEED



COME ON IN

- If you haven't already done this, print (on card-stock) and cut out sets of the Books of the Old Testament cards from the Resource DVD-ROM, Lesson 1. Make one set for every 4 or 5 students.

- Books of the Old Testament cards, one set for every 4 or 5 students



STUDYING GOD'S WORD

- Study the Prepare to Share section.
- Go Before the Throne.
- Print one Man's Problem—God's Answer worksheet from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student. Keep keep the answer key for your own use.

- Student Take Home Sheets
- Man's Problem—God's Answer worksheet for each student
- Man's Problem—God's Answer answer key
- Pencils



A BAD HEART

- Print one Bad Heart activity sheet from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student.

- Bad Heart activity sheet for each student
- Crayons
- Scissors



A NEW HEART

- Print one New Heart activity sheet for each student from the Resource DVD-ROM.

- New Heart activity sheet for each student
- Crayons
- Scissors



Memory Verse

Genesis 2:15–17 Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

► **Pace your lesson!** You can use the provided clocks to indicate the time each section should be completed to keep the lesson on schedule. While teaching, you can compare your anticipated times with the actual time and shorten or drop sections as necessary.





Prepare to Share

SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

To prepare your heart and mind for this week's lesson, read Genesis 4:16–26; Jeremiah 17:7–10; Psalm 51:1–6; John 3:16–21.

We saw the effects of sin begin to ravage the world and its culture in the children of Adam and Eve. The first murder occurred when Cain killed his brother Abel out of greed, jealousy, selfishness, and hatred. The Bible tells us that evil company corrupts good habits (1 Corinthians 15:33), and it appears Cain was quick to influence those around him with the evil in his heart.

The Bible tells us of Lamech—the fifth generation from Cain. His heart was corrupted and we know that he took two wives (Genesis 4:19) in rebellion to God's ordinance of marriage (Genesis 2:24). We read how he speaks with seeming pride of another murder—this one he committed (Genesis 4:23). As the moral fiber decayed from generation to generation we can only imagine what the Lord saw as He looked upon the earth. For He was grieved in His heart that He had made people and knew that He must destroy them (Genesis 6:5–7).

And what does the Lord see today? More sin, evil, and corruption. Since Adam and Eve disobeyed God and were sent from the garden, their sin nature has been passed on to all humans. The Bible states that death spread to all men through the sin of Adam (Romans 5:12). In Adam all die—because of sin. But in Christ all shall be made alive (1 Corinthians 15:22).

As descendants of Adam and Eve, we have all inherited a sin nature. David knew that he was conceived in sin—an inheritance from Adam (Psalm 51:5). And Jeremiah reminds us that the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked (Jeremiah 17:9). Our sin demands judgment by a holy God. Jesus tells us that judgment is coming. Speaking of the final judgment, He warns that just like it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man (Luke 17:26). He is coming to judge the world with righteousness and the peoples with His truth (Psalm 96:13).

So what are we to do? We know that our God—our holy, jealous God—is a consuming fire who will not tolerate our loyalty, love, honor, and respect being placed anywhere else (Deuteronomy 4:23–24). He is intolerant of sin, and we are all sinners (Romans 3:23).

“But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 15:57). For God had always known that He would send “His

only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). Through Him alone are we brought from darkness into light and from the power of Satan to God. Through Jesus our Savior we receive forgiveness of our sins and the inheritance of eternity with Him (Acts 26:18).

APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

Man has always suffered from a self-centered arrogance that bristles at the very thought of being sinful at heart. Many truly believe that humans are inherently good and that it is unthinkable that we are born into sin. Couple this thinking with the self-esteem rhetoric that maintains we are great—we better know it, believe it, and be very impressed by it. We can see that we are raising a generation that can't fathom they are deceitful and wicked—that their hearts desire only to rebel against God (Jeremiah 17:9).

We tell our children to follow their hearts. Whatever they imagine they can do, they can. Their dreams are theirs if they only wish for them. Whatever they feel in their heart is OK, and they must pursue their heart's desire. However, this is not what God's Word tells us. We are leading our children astray with this type of teaching. Our feelings cannot lead our decisions. Our hearts are fickle and wicked. Our lives should be directed by Scripture alone. The Word of God will direct us in all righteousness. The righteousness of His testimonies is everlasting—with understanding in these, we shall live (Psalm 119:144).

Without a proper understanding of the depth of the sin in our hearts, how can we properly rejoice at the forgiveness that is ours through Christ? If our sin is minor or inconsequential in our eyes, what would make us turn from it and accept the free gift of forgiveness and salvation from God? If we long for the pleasures of our heart and pursue those desires without considering God's Word, how would we make Him the Lord and King of our lives? With our own needs and comforts so much in view, how would we ever be able to properly humble ourselves before God to plead His mercy and forgiveness? Do you see? The very gospel is at stake when we consider the self-esteem-building philosophy so many are buying into.

The Apostle Paul sums it up well this way: “For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells” (Romans 7:18). We are sinners. Our righteousness is like filthy rags before the Lord (Isaiah 64:6). And it is only through humble repentance and belief

in the gospel of Jesus Christ (Mark 1:15) that we will escape the judgment and condemnation for our sins.

But the good news is that God promises a new heart for those who trust in Christ and thereby become partakers of the New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:33–34; Hebrews 8:6–12). We become new creations in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17), and can walk in newness of life, no longer living as slaves to sin (Romans 6:1–7).

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

It wasn't long after creation that sin entered the world. Adam and Eve coveted what they could not have and in direct disobedience to God went after it. God's judgment came upon them in the form of a curse, and they were expelled from the garden (Genesis 3:24). Their fellowship with God was broken. Now sin would be a part of the human race.

We know that "those who are in the flesh cannot please God" (Romans 8:8) and that in our sin we are lawless, insubordinate, ungodly, unholy, profane, murderers, manslayers, fornicators, sodomites, kidnapers, liars, and perjurers (1 Timothy 1:9–10). With this in mind, it is not surprising that, just 1,600 years after Adam and Eve were sent from the presence of God, He once again had to judge the sin of the world. This time it was a worldwide Flood that would destroy all but Noah and his family (Genesis 6:13, 6:18). Sin continued to pervade the lives of the people.

It was just more than 100 years after God destroyed the world that His judgment fell at Babel. The people were disobedient to God's direct commands and desired to build themselves a city and a tower to the

heavens. They longed to make a great name for themselves (Genesis 11:4). These plans angered the holy God and He judged them by confusing their language and scattering the people across the face of all the earth (Genesis 11:7–8).

And man continues to sin. God is now withholding His full judgment on the unjust—but it will come (2 Peter 2:9–11). He is coming to judge the earth in righteousness (Psalm 98:9). His judgment is real and eternal, and will come by fire. "But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men" (2 Peter 3:7). But thanks be to God that we can escape God's wrath and judgment through faith in Christ (Romans 5:9; 1 Thessalonians 5:9).

For more information on this topic, see the Online Resource Page.



BEFORE THE THRONE

My Redeemer and Savior, I give you praise today as I remember how you have washed my wicked and deceitful heart clean and made me a new creation. You alone are worthy of praise. May you be glorified as I teach this concept to my class this week. Please help these students realize the truth that they are sinners and wicked by nature but you are gracious and merciful and have provided a way of forgiveness and eternal life through Jesus Christ.



COME ON IN

As students arrive . . .

- They will work together in groups of 4–5 to put the Books of the Old Testament cards in order. They can use the Books of the Bible poster and their own Bibles.
- They will read (or sing) aloud all the names of the books of the Old Testament.



After all the students arrive, pray with them before beginning the lesson.



REVIEW

Using the Lesson Theme posters from previous weeks, quickly review the lessons with your students. Take 5 to 10 minutes to reinforce the important truths the students have heard so far in your class.

Ask the children questions about the previous lessons as you review the Lesson Theme posters. Reflect briefly on the passages you read, bringing the objectives and themes back into focus. This will refresh the truths in your students' minds and maintain continuity as you teach through the lessons.



Studying God's Word

READ THE WORD

We've been learning all about the beginning of things, haven't we? The first animals, the first people, the first marriage, and the first children. We also learned about the very first sin that came into the world.

Today we are going to be talking about sin—how sin came into the world, how it affects our hearts, and what God has done to solve the problem of sin. As we read God's Word today, I want you to use these worksheets. *Pass out Man's Problem–God's Answer Scripture worksheets.*

We are going to be looking at the verses on this sheet. Let's start with number one. *Read Genesis 3:6.*

Genesis 3:6

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

- ? This verse tells us about the very first sin in the world. What was the first sin? *Adam and Eve disobeyed God and ate the fruit.*

Right, this is about Adam and Eve in the very beginning. This is the very first sin—they disobeyed God by eating the fruit God had commanded them not to eat. Adam and Eve ate the fruit. Circle the word "ate" in two places on number 1 of your worksheets.

Read Romans 5:12. This verse tells us that sin entered the world through one man.

Romans 5:12

Genesis 6:5

? Who was that man? Who committed the very first sin? *Adam.*

This verse says that death came into the world through sin. Do you remember when we talked about the effects of the Fall? One of the effects of sin was death. And because of sin, everyone must die. *Refer to the Lesson Theme poster from Lesson 10.*

Remember that when Adam sinned, he brought sin into the world. And now all men sin.

Let's circle the word "sin" in this verse. *Reread the verse, emphasizing the words "sin" and "sinned." Have the children circle the words "sin" and "sinned" on number 2 of the worksheet.*

Sin continued to spread through the world. The hearts of men were becoming more and more evil. Follow along as I read Genesis 6:5, number 3 on your worksheet. *Read Genesis 6:5.*

? What did the Lord see on earth? *That man was wicked and evil.*

? Do you know what that means? *Allow for discussion.*

The people were becoming very mean. They were not obeying God's laws. They were evil and hated each other. It was not a good time. They were **wicked and evil!** *Reread the verse, emphasizing the words "wickedness" and "evil." Have the children circle the words "wickedness" and "evil" on the worksheets.*

Discover the Truth

? What are these verses talking about? Look in number 2 at the words you circled. *Sin.*

? Yes. And when did that sin first enter the world? Who committed the very first sin in the Garden of Eden? *Adam.*

That's right. It wasn't long after they were created that Adam and Eve sinned and disobeyed God by eating the fruit. When Adam disobeyed God the very first time, it brought sin into the world. And now all of us are sinners against God.

? Let's fill in the next line, number 4. Who knows what word will complete that sentence? *All. Have the children write "all" on the worksheets.*



READ THE WORD

But some people don't like that message at all! They don't want to hear that they are sinners. They think they are good—that they always do the right thing. But that is not what the Bible says. Let's see what God has to say about it.

Jeremiah 17:9

Our next verse under number 5 is Jeremiah 17:9. Follow along as I read it. *Read Jeremiah 17:9.*

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

- ? What part of the body is this verse talking about? *Reread the verse, emphasizing "heart."*
- ? God's Word says that our hearts are naturally deceitful and wicked. Do you know what that means? *Allow discussion.*

It means lying, cheating, being dishonest, and being mean. God is talking about our hearts when He says this! Circle the words "heart" and "wicked" on number 5 of your worksheets.

Now when I look at all of you, it's hard for me to believe that! I love you all so much. You are all so special to me. But you see, what God is saying is that if we had the choice, we would rather do what we want to do. We don't want to do what we know is right.

Look at number 6, Romans 3:23, while I read it. *Read Romans 3:23, emphasizing "all" and "sinned."*

- ? What is God telling us here? *All have sinned.*
- ? So, according to this verse, is there anyone who has not sinned? *Reread the verse if necessary. No!*

That means I have sinned, all of you have sinned, your parents have sinned, the pastor has sinned, your teachers have sinned, everyone you know sins. Are you surprised at that?

Let's circle the words "all" and "sinned" in this verse. It's number 6 on your worksheet.

Discover the Truth

Wow! The Bible says that we are ALL sinners! We know God's Word is true! This is not good news!

- ? How does God feel about sin? *He hates it.*
- ? And why does He hate it? Look at our Attributes of God poster. *Point out Holy and Just. Read the definitions to them.*

He is holy and just. He must punish all sin. So, if we are ALL sinners, then we ALL should be punished by God! This really IS bad news.

Look at number 7 on your worksheets. Let's put the word "bad" there. This is bad news!



READ THE WORD

Everyone has sinned. And we all deserve God's punishment. This is bad news. But guess what? There is good news! Fill in the blank on number 8 with the word "good." There is good news!

Romans 3:23

HOLY
JUST

(Refer to Attributes poster)

Look at number 9. *Read John 3:16.*

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

Have you heard this verse before? It tells us that God made a way for our sins to be paid for and a way to escape His punishment.

? How did God do that? *He gave His only Son, Jesus.*

? Why did God send His Son? *Because He loved the world.*

God loved the world and gave His Son, Jesus, so that whoever would believe in Him would have everlasting life.

? Where do we go if we have everlasting life with Jesus? *To heaven.*

That's right. And that is GOOD news. Everyone who believes in Jesus will have everlasting life with Him in heaven! Let's circle the words "everlasting life" in this verse on number 9.

Now look at our last verse, number 10. *Read 2 Corinthians 5:17.*

? What do we become if we are in Christ? *New creations.*

That's right. God tells us that if we are in Christ—if we believe in Jesus—we will become new creations! Because of Jesus, our hearts will change. They will no longer be completely evil and wicked. But they will begin to change.

And as new creations, what we want slowly begins to change. God give us a new heart, and with His power we can begin to have victory over sin. We don't really want to sin against God anymore. We want to do what God wants us to do. But we can't begin to change without Jesus Christ, because we are sinners and not able to do good on our own.

Let's circle the words "in Christ" and "new" in this verse.

Discover the Truth

This is truly good news! God's Word says we are all sinners. We don't want to obey God. We deserve His punishment. But God provided us with a way to escape His punishment. He sent Jesus Christ to earth. Jesus never sinned—not ever. Jesus came to suffer and die so that whoever would believe in Him would have everlasting life. We can be saved from God's punishment through Jesus Christ alone.





A Bad Heart

MATERIALS

- Bad Heart activity sheet for each student
- Crayons

INSTRUCTIONS

Hand out the activity sheet to each student. They will color the heart. You might recommend dark colors for the bad heart.

- ? This is a picture of a heart. Is it a sad heart or a happy heart? *A sad heart!*

- ? Why do you think it is sad? Let me read the verse with it. *Read Jeremiah 17:9. Allow discussion.*

It is sad because it is sinful. A heart without God is wicked. It doesn't want to obey God. It wants to do what it wants.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

A heart without God is a bad heart. We all have bad hearts until we trust Jesus and believe in Him. A bad heart will always lead us to sin. We don't want to follow a bad heart!



A New Heart

MATERIALS

- New Heart activity sheet for each student
- Crayons

INSTRUCTIONS

Hand out the activity sheet to each student. They will color the heart. You might recommend bright colors for the new heart.

- ? This is another picture of a heart. Is it a sad heart or a happy heart? *A happy heart!*
- ? Why do you think it is happy? Let me read the verse with it. *Read 2 Corinthians 5:17. Allow discussion.*

It is happy because it is new! It is a heart that Jesus has made new. When we believe in Jesus and ask Him to forgive our sins, we get new hearts.

We no longer want to do what WE want but we want to obey God and the Bible.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

We have seen two hearts. We are born with sinful hearts that do not want to obey God. But everyone who believes in Jesus and trusts Him for forgiveness gets a new heart. We get new hearts from Jesus. He can make all of us new creations. When we are new creations, we will want to do what God wants us to do.





Applying God's Word

WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

Well, we started off with some pretty bad news today. Sin entered the world at the very beginning—in the Garden of Eden with Adam and Eve. Since that first sin, all men have sinned and are disobedient to God. We are born with hearts that are deceitful and wicked.

The fact that we are all sinners seems like very bad news, doesn't it? Yet, there is really good news. God sent His only Son, Jesus, into the world, so that whoever believes in Him can have a relationship with God. Jesus's sacrifice on the Cross satisfied God's anger so that whoever believes in Jesus will not receive His punishment. Without Jesus we are all separated from God. But through true repentance and faith in Jesus, we can have everlasting fellowship with God and eternal life in heaven.

GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

► Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets and remind the children to practice the memory verse this week.

I said earlier that people just don't want to hear that their hearts are wicked. Instead, we hear that we are really good. But this is not what the Bible teaches. The Bible teaches that we are sinners. And we do not want to do what God wants us to do. It is only through becoming new creations in Christ Jesus that our hearts will ever be changed to obey God's Word.



MEMORY VERSE

Genesis 2:15–17 Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."



GROUP PRAYER TIME

Be sure to pray with your class before you dismiss them.

- Praise God for providing salvation from sin through Jesus.
- Pray that God would bring an understanding of our sin and His holiness—an understanding that will bring true repentance to our hearts.