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OCIA Precatechumenate Lesson Plans 1-10



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Becoming Catholic: God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

*“In the name of the Father
and of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”*

Who is God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

The mystery of the Most Holy Trinity is the central mystery of the Christian faith and of Christian life. God alone can make it known to us by revealing himself as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. *Catechism of the Catholic Church 261*

1. God as Father: Gen 1:26-31

Then God said: Let us make human beings in our image, after our likeness. Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, the tame animals, all the wild animals, and all the creatures that crawl on the earth.

*God created mankind in his image;
in the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.*

God blessed them and God said to them: Be fertile and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and all the living things that crawl on the earth. God also said: See, I give you every seed-bearing plant on all the earth and every tree that has seed-bearing fruit on it to be your food; and to all the wild animals, all the birds of the air, and all the living creatures that crawl on the earth, I give all the green plants for food. And so it happened. God looked at everything he had made, and found it very good.

God made you as a gift to the world and sees you as “very good.” He made you, He knows you personally, and He has a loving plan for your life.



2. God as Son: John 10:7-11

So Jesus said again, "Amen, amen, I say to you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who came [before me] are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate. Whoever enters through me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. A thief comes only to steal and slaughter and destroy; I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly. I am the good shepherd. A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep."

We live in an imperfect world

We all see people who have made choices that hurt others around them, and we have all made choices we regret.

God the Son became man to show us how much he loves us by becoming one of us. He became man so that sin may not have authority over us.

3. God the Holy Spirit John 14:15-17

"If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to be with you always, the Spirit of truth, which the world cannot accept, because it neither sees nor knows it. But you know it, because it remains with you, and will be in you."

God gives us grace (supernatural help) in the Holy Spirit that enables us to move toward the good.

God communicates to us through the working of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit inspires us and consoles us.

The Holy Spirit has invited you to begin this journey!

4. God is ONE – this is a mystery we will never fully understand. (Matthew 28:19-20)

"Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age."



One God, three persons

Three persons who share one divine nature

5. God and the Church

- a. God has revealed Himself through the Church. *(DV 5-7)*
- b. Each follower of Jesus Christ receives the Holy Spirit at Baptism, we all work together to carry out God's mission of love and mercy. *(DV 5, LG 5 & 7)*

What does this knowledge of God mean for me?

Prayer is the raising of one's mind and heart to God. Prayer is always the gift of God who comes to encounter man. Christian prayer is the personal and living relationship of the children of God with their Heavenly Father who is infinitely good, with his Son Jesus Christ who has most fully revealed God by taking on flesh, and with the Holy Spirit who dwells in their hearts. *(CCC 2559, 2563-5)*

Beginning your prayer life

Start with taking about 10-15 minutes a day to:

- Read a passage from the Bible
- Thank God for making you and for all the blessings in your life
- Ask God to show you some ways you can grow
- Ask God to make Himself further known to you
- Ask God for the things you need and for the needs of others

Finish with the following prayer:

“Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.”

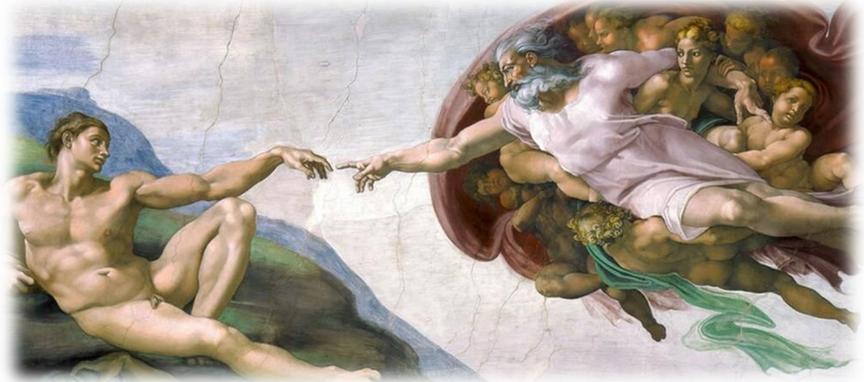


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The Story

God Revealing Himself to
Mankind



1. God reveals Himself through creation (CCC 54)

Five Proofs of God – St. Thomas Aquinas

“For what can be known about God is evident to them, because God made it evident to them. Ever since the creation of the world, his invisible attributes of eternal power and divinity have been able to be understood and perceived in what he has made.” (Romans 1:19-20)



2. God has revealed Himself to individual people through a series of encounters which have been recorded in Sacred Scripture. (CCC56-64)





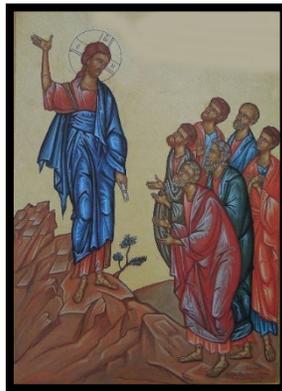
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3. God revealed Himself most fully in the Incarnation, when the second person of the Trinity took on flesh, who we know as the person Jesus Christ. (CCC 65)



4. Jesus Christ chose twelve apostles to hand on the Gospel message when He commissioned them to go to all the nations. (CCC 74-79)



5. These twelve apostles all chose successors who safeguard the deposit of revelation passed down from Jesus and the Apostles. These successors are the Pope and Bishops. (CCC 80-87)



Sacred Scripture

All those involved in the writing of the Sacred Scriptures were inspired by the Holy Spirit. (CCC 105-107)

“All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for refutation, for correction, and for training in righteousness.” (2 Timothy 3:16)

Sacred Scripture is the story of God lovingly creating man, man falling into temptation and rejecting God, and then God’s pursuit of mankind through the Chosen People of the Jewish nation, and then most fully through Jesus Christ, God Incarnate.

Sometimes things in the Bible get pretty low, as we see man descend to his depths of misery, his personal evil, and his need for God. (CCC 121-133)

Jesus Christ is our model, our hope, and our Salvation.

Structure of the Bible: Two Main Parts

1. Old Testament - Preparing for the coming of Jesus Christ	2. New Testament - The coming of Jesus Christ and the living story of the Church
<p><u>Pentateuch</u>: First Five Books (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy)</p> <p><u>Historical Books</u>: Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1-2 Samuel, 1-2 Kings, 1-2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, 1-2 Maccabees, Tobit, Judith and Esther</p> <p><u>Books of Wisdom</u>: Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Wisdom and Sirach</p> <p><u>Prophetic Books</u>: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Baruch, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi</p>	<p><u>Gospel Accounts of Jesus Christ</u> (Historical): Matthew, Mark, Luke, John</p> <p><u>Historical Book</u>: Acts of the Apostles</p> <p><u>Letters from the Apostles</u>: Romans, 1-2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, 1-2 Thessalonians, 1-2 Timothy, Titus and Philemon, The Letter to the Hebrews, James, 1-2 Peter, 1,2 and 3 John and Jude</p> <p><u>Prophetic Book</u>: Book of Revelation</p>



Here are some stories you can read from the Old Testament:

- The Story of Creation (Genesis 1-3)
- Noah and the Flood (Genesis 6-9)
- The Story of Abraham (Genesis 12, 17, 18:1-15, 21:1-8, 22, 24)
- Abraham's Son, Isaac (Genesis 24)
- Isaac's Son, Jacob (Genesis 25:19-34, 27-33)
- Jacob's Son, Joseph (Genesis 37, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46)
- Moses and the Exodus from Egypt (Genesis 1-20)
- Joshua and the Battle of Jericho (Genesis 1-3, 6)
- The Story of Ruth (Ruth 1-4)
- The Story of Samuel (I Samuel 1, 3)
- The Nation of Israel asks for a King (I Samuel 8-9)
- The Anointing of David (I Samuel 15:10-16:13)
- David and Goliath (I Samuel 17)
- The Wisdom of King Solomon (I Samuel 3)
- The Prophet Elijah (1 Kings 18)
- The Prophets Elijah and Elisha (II Kings 2:1-18)
- Elisha Miraculously Feeds the Widow and Her Son (II Kings 4:1-7)



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Becoming Catholic: Who am I? Who is God?

Who am I?

Man's Fall - Genesis 3



The Message

Mankind was made good and harmonious.

Mankind was made free with the capacity for choice.

Man experiences temptation and at times fails to trust God and chooses an inordinate desire in an effort to achieve his happiness.

Our first parents chose to compete with God, so each of us is born with disunity in our members. Part of us is attracted the good, true, and beautiful... and part of us wants to be our own God – I want my own way, even to the point of negation of reason.

Since our first parents lost perfect relationship with God, we were born with the pull in our flesh to seek possessions, pleasure, power, and esteem as our ultimate goods. These things are good, but they are meant to be “accompaniers” of our relationship with God and with other people - not the end goal.

Man is unable to heal himself – He needs divine intervention.

[CCC 385, 391, 396, 401, 404, 2514]

Does this resonate with you?



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Who is Jesus?

The Calling Matthew – Matt 9:9-13



The Message

Jesus sees individuals.

Jesus knows all of our gifts AND all of our shortcomings.

Jesus helps us through relationship and teaching – the merciful Savior.

The humble way of Jesus irks those who value honor, power, and purism for their own security.

The Healing of the Hemorrhaging Woman - Luke 8:40-56

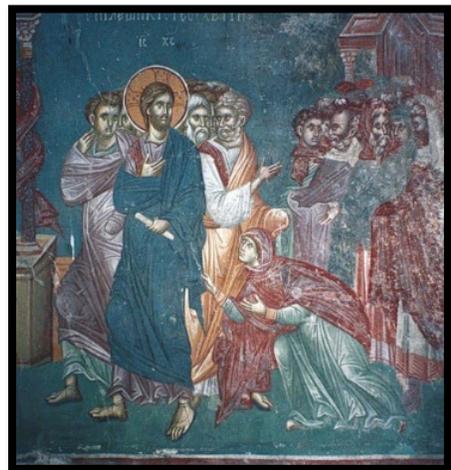
The Message

Jesus contains in Himself all authority, yet is meek.

Jesus is good and always responds to an act of faith.

Jesus was meek to the point of death, taking our sins upon Himself.

In Baptism, Jesus gives us the Holy Spirit to heal our wills, that we may live once again in harmony with God.



Do you want to make an act of faith in Jesus Christ?



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Who is Jesus Christ as Savior?

God created all things out of love to share in His goodness, the way a married couple desires to have a family. God's love is personal, proven, merciful, and offered.



Jeremiah 29:11

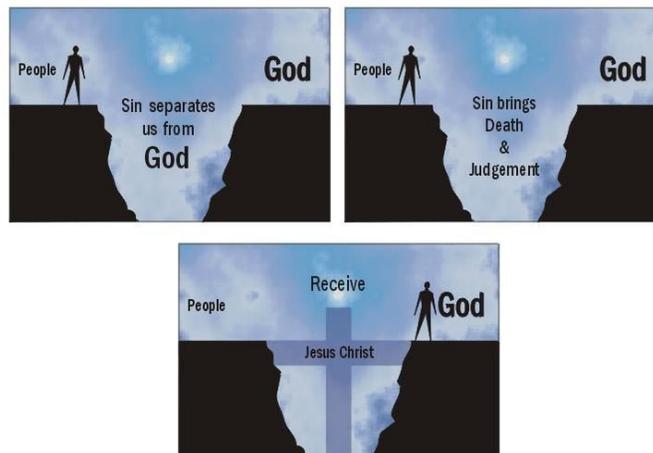
After the fall into temptation by our first parents, Adam and Eve, mankind lives life in a state of confusion. Man knows there is a good he ought to do, but is unsure of how to go about it.

God revealed His law to Moses as the Ten Commandments, and these commandments are at the core of every human heart. They show the good in us and how we are designed to live.

Ten Commandments

1. I am the Lord your God: You shall not have strange Gods before me.
2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.
3. Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.
4. Honor your father and mother.
5. You shall not kill.
6. You shall not commit adultery.
7. You shall not steal.
8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.
10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

Our inability to follow these commandments blamelessly is called Original Sin. Sin, when we choose to do wrong, separates us from God and eternal happiness (CCC 396-412).



Jesus Christ came to take on the penalty of man's sins and to reconcile us with God the Father.

[Luke 22:39-62, 23:1-5, 13-56](#)
[Matthew 28:1-10](#)

What is the good news of God's Solution?

[Romans 3:23](#)
[Romans 6:23](#)
[Romans 5:8](#)
[Romans 10:9-10](#)
[Romans 8:15](#)
[Acts 2:38-39](#)

Would you like to be a follower of Jesus Christ?



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Lord Jesus, I confess that I have done wrong and failed to do right.

I ask you to be my savior, my guide, and my friend.

I invite your Holy Spirit to enlighten my mind and transform my heart.

I ask for your help to be obedient to You and live in communion with your Church.

I here and now answer your call to follow you.

Amen



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Living in Relationship with Jesus Christ **One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church**

The Church's Good News: The Infinite Love of God

God created all things out of love and to share in relationship with Him and with each other. God's love is personal, proven, merciful, and offered.

[Isaiah 49:15-16](#)

Mankind is made for happiness. "We all want to live happily; in the whole human race there is no one who does not assent to this proposition, even before it is fully articulated," (CCC 1718, quoting St. Augustine).

Since all hearts desire happiness, it bears evidence to the existence of happiness.

"The [happiness] we are promised... invites us to purify our hearts of bad instincts and seek the love of God above all else. It teaches us that true happiness is not found in riches or well-being, in human fame or power, in any human achievement - however beneficial it may... but in God alone, the source of every good and of all love" (CCC 1723).

Man's need for a Savior

Man realizes that he must engage in good acts but struggles to do so. Every human being is affected by bad choices from others. All individuals have committed acts they are not proud of.

Instead of obliterating man for the evil in him or demanding repayment from man for all his debts, God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to take on all of the penalty for man's sin and offer new life in friendship with Him.

[John 3:16](#)
[John 15:15-17](#)

Jesus and the Church

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ reveals the new life in the Holy Spirit that God desires to hand on to his children.

[Matt 28:1-10, 18-20](#)



We enter into this new life by:

1. Repent of our sins
2. Receive God's gift of grace (supernatural help)
3. Receive Baptism where our sins are washed away, we become adopted children of God, and receive the indwelling of the Holy Spirit
4. Remain in Communion with the Church

Jesus revealed Himself through the Church for our Salvation. The Second Person of the Trinity took on flesh and developed concrete relationships with the Apostles and disciples, who have passed this relationship and grace down in an unbroken line.

Through our ordained ministers, we are able to "touch God" in the Sacraments, in the same way the disciples did 2000 years ago with universal access.

Jesus touches us through sacramentally ordained ministers:

- In Baptism as He cleanses us from sin and gives us the Holy Spirit
- In Confirmation as He strengthens and matures the gifts of the Holy Spirit in us
- In the Eucharist as He intimately unites Himself to us
- In Reconciliation as He forgives us
- In Anointing of the Sick as He heals us spiritually and physically
- In Matrimony as He reveals His love to us and sanctifies us

Do you want to enter into communion with the Church and journey toward to the Christian moral life?

Lord Jesus, I confess that I have done wrong and failed to do right.

I ask you to be my savior, my guide, and my friend.

I invite your Holy Spirit to enlighten my mind and transform my heart.

I ask for your help to be obedient to You and live in communion with your Church.

I here and now answer your call to follow you.

Amen

Living in Relationship with the Holy Spirit **The Consoler and Animator of the Christian Moral Life**

The Church's Good News: The Infinite Love of God

God created all things out of love and to share in relationship with Him and with each other. God's love is personal, proven, merciful, and offered.

[Psalm 139:1-3](#)

Man's Need for Salvation

Man sees evidence that creation is no longer in conformity with the goodness he knows "ought" to be there. Natural disasters, suffering, and death are all contrary to God's plan the goodness man longs for.

Through his free will, man has the ability to perform good acts or evil ones. Man uses his operation of choice for good and also for selfishness at the expense of others.

No matter how hard man tries to avoid choosing the bad, he can never fully avoid it.

Man's Salvation in Jesus Christ

Someone asks Jesus in the Gospels, "What must I do to be saved?"

[Mat 19:16-26](#)

God gave the law of the Ten Commandments to Moses after God saved the Israelites from bondage in Egypt. This gift of the law kept the Jewish people in relationship with God, who is all holy, after He rescued them.

No matter how much effort man puts in, he can never achieve salvation on his own.

Jesus Christ came to take on the penalty of man's sins and invite him into new life through faith and friendship in Him.

[John 15:12-14](#)
[Eph 2:8-10](#)



We enter into new life in Christ as we

1. Repent of our sins
2. Receive God's gift of grace (supernatural help)
3. Receive Baptism where our sins are washed away, we become adopted children of God, and receive the indwelling of the Holy Spirit
4. Remain in Communion with the Church through obedience to commandments and precepts

Ten Commandments

1. I am the Lord your God: You shall not have strange Gods before me.
2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.
3. Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.
4. Honor your father and mother.
5. You shall not kill.
6. You shall not commit adultery.
7. You shall not steal.
8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.
10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

Five Precepts of the Church

1. You shall attend Mass on Sundays and on holy days of obligation and rest from servile labor.
2. You shall confess your sins at least once a year.
3. You shall receive the sacrament of the Eucharist at least during the Easter time.
4. You shall observe the days of fasting and abstinence established by the Church.
5. You shall help to provide for the needs of the Church. This means giving of our time, talent and treasure to help the Church.

The Good News of Christian Holiness

God not only wants to save us through faith and obedience to Jesus Christ, but with the working of the Holy Spirit, He wants to change us into Christ's likeness.

Jesus Christ revealed the love of the Father as the Son of God, who is both fully human and fully divine.

As we respond to His gift of Salvation and new life in Him, He gives us the Holy Spirit to dwell within us.

[1 Cor 3:16](#)

When Christians are one in the Spirit, they participate in bringing about Christ's mission of love, mercy, reconciliation, and sanctification, that God's Kingdom may come about on earth.

[Do you want to enter into communion with the Church and journey toward to the Christian moral life?](#)

Lord Jesus, I confess that I have done wrong and failed to do right.

I ask you to be my savior, my guide, and my friend.

I invite your Holy Spirit to enlighten my mind and transform my heart.

I ask for your help to be obedient to You and live in communion with your Church.

I here and now answer your call to follow you.

Amen

The Mystery of Creation

The Church's Good News: The Infinite Love of God

God created all things out of love and to share in relationship with Him and with each other. God's love is personal, proven, merciful, and offered.

[Jeremiah 29:11](#)

Read the Story of God's Loving creation

God made all of creation as an overflow of His goodness and love, the way a couple who is in love wants to start a family and have children.

[Genesis 1:1-2:4](#)

Our created world had a beginning when God brought it into existence.

Creation was made in harmony and in goodness.

God's plan for creation is peace and communion.

Jesus Christ and the Church

We know man is capable of great goodness and also of ugly acts of depravity.

Man contains within himself a desire for goodness, truth, beauty, and unity. These are all attributes of God.

Because man has fallen from the state of "what should be," he needs a Savior and example.

God desires to reconcile humanity Himself and bring man back to goodness through Jesus Christ.

Jesus took on human flesh to show us how to live again according to our nature and also to be the remedy for our wrongdoings.

When we live in friendship with Jesus Christ and in communion with His Church, He gives us eternal life.

[John 14:1-11](#)

[Would you like to consider following Jesus Christ as the Way, the Truth, and the Life?](#)

Lord Jesus, I confess that I have done wrong and failed to do right.

I ask you to be my savior, my guide, and my friend.

I invite your Holy Spirit to enlighten my mind and transform my heart.

I ask for your help to be obedient to You and live in communion with your Church.

I here and now answer your call to follow you.

Amen

In His Image...

The Church's Good News: The Infinite Love of God

God created all things out of love and to share in relationship with Him and with each other. God's love is personal, proven, merciful, and offered.

[Psalm 139:1-3](#)

The Story of Creation

God created the world in a state of harmony and with perfect goodness. God's crowning on creation was man who is made in the image of God. Man alone is all of material creation has the capacity to know, to choose, and to love.

God created man to be in relationship with his fellow man. Perfect human love bears witness to God as a communion of persons of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Read the account of God's creation of human relationship.

[Genesis 2:15-24](#)

In this passage, man knows he made for relationship and not just for care for the earth.

Man needs an equal who can understand him, be in relationship with him, and help him. Human beings were made for community.

Man's Need for a Savior

Man has a sense that his relationships are meant to be in perfect communion and without hurt, betrayal, misunderstanding, and tension. No matter how hard man tries, he can never be perfectly selfless in his love of neighbor.

Jesus Christ as Restorer

Read the account Jesus meeting a woman who has suffered in her personal relationships.

[John 4:1-26](#)

Jesus comes into the parts of our life we struggle with most.

Each person has made choices that he or she is not proud of. Often times people have a part of themselves they try to hide from others, like the woman at the well in Samaria.

Jesus comes to accompany us to wholeness in the areas we experience brokenness and offers us relationship in the midst of our struggles and shame.

Jesus is our bridge to come before the holiness of God. Jesus Christ teaches us to worship in spirit and truth in the Catholic Church.

Would you like to enter into relationship with Jesus Christ and worship God in spirit and truth in the Catholic Church?

Lord Jesus, I confess that I have done wrong and failed to do right.

I ask you to be my savior, my guide, and my friend.

I invite your Holy Spirit to enlighten my mind and transform my heart.

I ask for your help to be obedient to You and live in communion with your Church.

I here and now answer your call to follow you.

Amen

The Fall...

The Church's Good News: Creation Comes from a Good God

Belief in a creating and good God is very reasonable.

“By natural reason men can know God with certainty, on the basis of His works.”
CCC 50

See these two arguments for the existence of God from St. Thomas Aquinas:

1. Everything in motion is moved by something else. We observe motion all around us. Whatever is in motion now was at rest until moved by something else, and that by something else, and so on. But if there were an infinite series of movers, all waiting to be moved by something else, then actual motion could never have gotten started, and there would be no motion now. But there is motion now. So there must be a first mover which is itself on moved. This First Mover is God.
2. We all evaluate things and people in terms of there being more or less perfectly true, good, noble and so on. We have certain standards of how things and people should be. But we would have no such standards unless there were some being that is perfect in every way, something that is the truest, noblest, and best. That Most Perfect Being is God.

Original Innocence of Creation

God created the world in a state of harmony and with perfect goodness. God's crowning on creation was man who is made in the image of God. Man alone is all of material creation has the capacity to know, to choose, and to love.

Man's Fall from Original Innocence

Read the account of man's temptation and rejection of God's loving plan.

[Genesis 3](#)

God provided for all of man's needs and everything man needed to be truly happy. Man had perfect harmony in appetites for pleasure, possessions, and power because they were at the service of doing good.

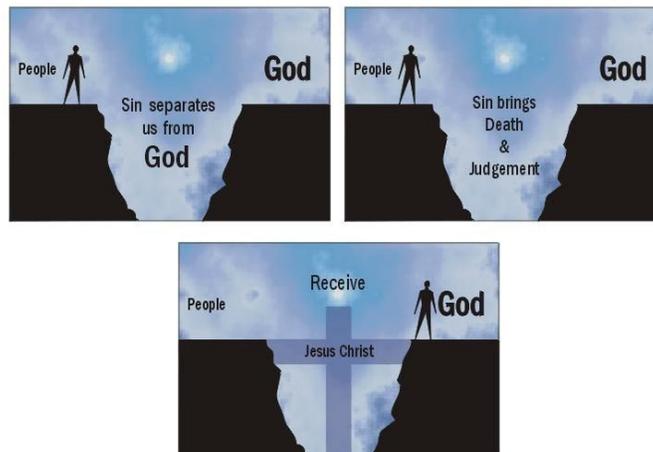


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When man was tempted to doubt God's love and providence, he then took pleasure, possessions, and power to be his ultimate good. These things are good, but only within context of participating in transcendent goods.

Jesus Christ as God's Solution to Man's Sin



[John 3:1-8, 16-21](#)

Instead of God letting us experience the eternal separation from Him that we chose, He decided to send His Son to take on flesh and bear the penalty for our sin.

By believing in Jesus Christ, following Him, and asking Him to wash our sins away in Baptism, we become a new creation and adopted son or daughter of God.

[Would you like to follow Jesus Christ and seek rebirth by Baptism?](#)

*Lord Jesus, I confess that I have done wrong and failed to do right.
I ask you to be my savior, my guide, and my friend.
I invite your Holy Spirit to enlighten my mind and transform my heart.
I ask for your help to be obedient to You and live in communion with your Church.
I here and now answer your call to follow you.
Amen*



The Good News of Creation

God created all things out of love to share in His goodness, and declared all of creation to be “very good.”

God’s love is personal, proven, merciful, and offered.

[Jeremiah 29:11](#)

[Isaiah 49:15-16](#)

[Psalm 139:1-3](#)

[Romans 8:35, 37-39](#)

God is love and created man in His own image, to live in relationship with God and with his neighbor.

[I John 4:7-12](#)

Man’s Current Fallen Condition

Man’s first parents, Adam and Eve, fell into temptation and chose to experience the lure of evil instead of trust in God to bring them happiness.

Due to this sin, man in his flesh feels a pull to seek possessions, power, and pleasure as his ultimate goods, instead of living for relationship with God and for others.

This condition of placing objects and self above God and others is called Original Sin. Personal Sin is when we make choices that are contrary to the goodness we were created for.

Ten Commandments

1. I am the Lord your God: You shall not have strange Gods before me.
2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.
3. Remember to keep holy the Lord’s Day.
4. Honor your father and mother.
5. You shall not kill.
6. You shall not commit adultery.
7. You shall not steal.
8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
9. You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife.
10. You shall not covet your neighbor’s goods.

What is the result of sin and what is God’s solution?



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Noah's Ark and Baptism

Genesis 6:5-8:22



"Prayer of Thanksgiving after Disembarking from Noah's Ark"
by Domenico Morelli



"Baptism of Christ" by Giovanni Bellini

The Good News

God is all-good and has no tolerance of evil or sin.

Since man is helpless to save himself, God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to reconcile man to God through His life, death, resurrection, and ascension into heaven. Through faith in and love of Jesus Christ, God Himself becomes our ark, our salvation.

Jesus is Our Ark

Matthew 3:13-17
Luke 10:25-37



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The Church as Our Ark

Romans 3:23

Romans 6:23

Romans 5:8

Romans 10:9-10

Romans 8:15

Acts 2:38-39

Would you like to seek entrance to the Church and receive God's gift of Salvation?

Lord Jesus, I confess that I have done wrong and failed to do right.

I ask you to be my savior, my guide, and my friend.

I invite your Holy Spirit to enlighten my mind and transform my heart.

I ask for your help to be obedient to You and live in communion with your Church.

I here and now answer your call to follow you.

Amen