

# WEEK 3 - Rebellion & Failure - The Story's Downfall

## Fall Focus 2024 // Canopy Guide

### The Big Story

#### CONVERSATION STARTERS

*Use the questions below to kickstart a community building, all-play conversation that connects to our weekly topic. If your group meets for dinner, these might be great questions to share around a table.*

- If you're willing, share a story about a funny failure. (Maybe it wasn't funny then, but it is now!)
- Have you ever considered yourself rebellious?
- Can a failure be turned into a victory? If you are comfortable doing so, share about a failure in your life that turned out for the good.

#### VIDEO INTRO | STUDY GUIDE

Our view of God and his purposes for both creation and us determine how we relate to God, each other, and the world. Scripture clearly and consistently tells us that God is good and that he created good things. In fact, the first chapter of Genesis concludes by saying after humans were created it was "very good."

It was not long before the people God created decided they preferred to direct their own lives. People decided to step out of God's good plan to forge their own way. This rebellion spoiled life, resulting in death and separation from God. This tragedy is clearly described throughout Scripture. Not only did Adam and Eve sin, but Cain (their first born) killed his younger brother Abel. Selfishness, anger, and death soon reigned.

To prove that people couldn't fix themselves on their own, God gave them a fresh start. In the story of Noah we read that God saw that "the wickedness of humankind was great ... every inclination of their hearts was only evil continually." (Genesis 6:5) A flood removed all but righteous Noah and his family. Any casual reader would imagine this fresh start would enable people to thrive in life without sin. But hardly before the mud dried, Noah got drunk and one of his sons violated his integrity.

History consistently provides records that sin and rebellion continue multiplying. Watching the headlines on the news on any day proves the point. Unfortunately, every

one of us experiences and expresses this rebellion.

Our rebellion from God isn't always expressed in horrible actions. Every thought, act, and even desire that rejects the goodness of God, no matter how seemingly inconsequential, is an act of rebellion. Remember, we said last week that God created us to rule and reign on His behalf. The Greek language, in which our New Testament was first written, has multiple words for what we call "sin." One is rebellion, another is perversion, but the most common in the New Testament is just "missing the mark." Not all of us are champion evildoers, but we "have all sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).

Lest it sound like everything is spoiled and ruined, we must all admit that there is much good all around us and all the time. But just as one spot on an otherwise clean garment means it is dirty, and a bank that only makes one error on our account out of many correct entries is still wrong. So our sins may not be constant, but any sin is less than God intended. We have missed the mark of our potential and the ideal God created. This is what we see continually lived out in the Big Story narrated in the Bible. People have sinned - all people. No one can set themselves or others free of this deadly and destructive rebellion. Left to ourselves people will step out of God's purposes and rebel against God's good life.

After hearing this information you might think God was caught off guard by our rebellion. He was not. He had actually crafted his salvation/restoration plan before he formed the world in Creation. It is into this cosmic level rebellion that Jesus steps. He becomes one of us so that through his own life and sacrifice we and all creation could be restored to God. Out of His love, he gave us freedom to choose. Christ our redeemer was present with God at the beginning of creation. Before we could stamp our sin and rebellion on the garden of goodness we were given, God loved us and his perfect son was the word who spoke life.

### **Scripture to Read**

- Genesis 3
- Genesis 6:5-8
- Romans 7:14-25
- Romans 1:18-23, 28-32

### **Scripture to Memorize**

- Romans 3:23 and 6:23

### **Deeper Discussion Questions**

1. Why didn't God just create people without the ability or choice to sin - perfect by default?

2. What does this conversation tell us about the kind of life the Lord intends for us to live?
3. We can easily become tired with failure and give up on ourselves. Based on this conversation do you think God ever gives up on people, even the most rebellious?

## PRAYER

Ask God to tend with our own rebellion and the ways it settles into our hearts. Make sure to claim some time as a group each week to pray specifically for each other.

## EXTRA RESOURCES/ARTICLES/RESEARCH

1. If God Was Capable of Creating a Perfect World, Why Did He Start with Earth?  
<https://www.epm.org/resources/2022/Nov/10/create-perfect-world/>
2. Bible Project Video - This 6 minute video connects the story from the Fall to the arrival of Jesus and the theme of the serpent and the problem of evil.  
▶ This Is the Hope For Ending the Evil that Affects Your Life
3. Bible Project Video - Word origin of “sin” and its explanation (5 min)  
▶ We Studied “Sin” in the Bible (Here’s What We Found)