

LEADER DEVOTIONAL

I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel. Genesis 3:15

“Let’s start at the beginning—a very good place to start. When you read, you begin with A, B, C. When you sing, you begin with do, re, mi.” So sang Julie Andrews as Maria in *The Sound of Music*. Julie made a good point—the beginning is a good place to start.

When you think of presenting the gospel (or when you actually do present the gospel), where do you start? Jesus’s death? His birth? How about at the beginning? Not at the beginning of Jesus’s life on earth, but at the beginning of it all, back in Genesis.

The Apostle Paul does this in several of his epistles. In presenting the gospel, he reminds his readers why we need salvation in the first place—because Adam (and all of us as his descendants) rebelled against the Creator, disobeying his command:

“Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men[a] because all sinned—for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come. But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man’s trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many.” (Romans 5:12–15)

When we begin at the beginning, we’re able to show that humans had perfect fellowship with God (Genesis 1); define what sin is (disobedience to God’s command, Genesis 2:16–17); share God’s decreed punishment for sin (Genesis 2:16–17, 3:19); and describe what sin did to that once-perfect relationship with the Creator (Genesis 3). We’re also able to show God’s mercy in sparing

Adam and Eve from living forever in their sinful state by denying them access to the Tree of Life (Genesis 2:22–24), and his love in the promise he gave to one day send a Savior (Genesis 3:15). This, then, allows us to set the stage for demonstrating our need of salvation from sin and how God has mercifully and lovingly provided a way of salvation for us through his Son, who fulfilled the promise in Genesis.

Today, as we share the gospel with our children (and as we seize opportunities throughout the week), let’s be sure we’re providing them with the complete picture of salvation, beginning with the beginning. And let’s thank God continually for the glorious salvation he’s graciously provided to us.

Creator and Redeemer God,
Author of all existence, source of all blessedness,
I adore thee for making me capable of knowing thee;

I praise thee for the revelation of thyself in the gospel, for thy heart as a dwelling place of pit, for thy thoughts of peace towards me, for thy patience and thy graciousness, for the vastness of thy mercy.

Thou hast moved my conscience to know how the guilty can be pardoned, the unholy sanctified, the poor enriched.

May I always be amongst those who not only hear but know thee, who walk with and rejoice in thee, who take thee at thy word and find life there.

O God, make me worthy of this calling, that the name of Jesus may be glorified in me and I in him.

—Arthur Bennet, *The Valley of Vision*