



## Focus Lost ... Focus Restored Leader Guide

**Leader's Note:** Begin and end each session with prayer — those printed or one of your own.

**Opening Prayer:** Dear Heavenly Father, as I spend this time in the study of Your Word I pray that you would send Your Holy Spirit to focus my mind and my heart on You to consider how some of the heroes of the Bible lost their focus just as I so often do. Thank you for refocusing my eyes upon You and Your great love for me as is evidenced in the giving of Your Son, Jesus Christ, to be my Savior from sin and eternal death. It is in His Name that I pray, Amen.

**Focus ...** What's your definition of focus? Dictionary.com defines focus as (1) a central point, as of attraction, attention, or activity, (2) a point at which rays of light, heat, or other radiation, meet after being refracted or reflected, (3) optics.

Three differing definitions, but each of them points to some sort of central point. Depending on the situation, focus may vary, but our challenge as a Christian who is “simul iustus et peccator” (simultaneously [at the same time] saint and sinner) is staying focused on the things which God our Heavenly Father would have us focus. We see this at various times throughout the Old and New Testament as God's children lose sight of the opportunities He gives them to serve, and then, in His grace, God restores their focus. Let us begin in the beginning with God's first creation

### Focus ... Adam and Eve

Read **Genesis 1:24-31**.

24 And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds—livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds.” And it was so. 25 And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the livestock according to their kinds, and everything that creeps on the ground according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. 26 Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

27 So God created man in his own image,  
in the image of God he created him;  
male and female he created them.

28 And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” 29 And God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. 30 And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. 31 And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

What was God's desired focus for Adam and Eve? \_\_\_\_\_

Be fruitful and multiply, fill the earth and subdue it, have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the heavens, and over every living thing that moves on the earth. Live in a perfect relationship with God forever.

Read **Genesis 3:1-6**. Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’” 2 And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, 3 but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’” 4 But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. 5 For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” 6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.

How did Adam and Eve lose focus? \_\_\_\_\_  
As Satan held out for them wonderful things they saw the tree was good for food, a delight to the eyes, and was desired to make one wise.

What did their focus become? \_\_\_\_\_  
Being like God, knowing not only good, but also evil.

Bonus question: Did Satan lie to Eve? \_\_\_\_\_  
He didn't really lie. He took what God actually said and added a little to it to confuse Adam and Eve. This is the same way he so often tempts us as he gets us to change things just a little bit.

Read **Genesis 3:7-24**.

7 Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. 8 And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. 9 But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, “Where are you?” 10 And he said, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.” 11 He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” 12 The man said, “The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate.” 13 Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this that you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.” 14 The LORD God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. 15 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.” 16 To the woman he said, “I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.” 17 And to Adam he said, “Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, ‘You shall not eat of it,’ cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; 18 thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. 19 By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to

dust you shall return.” 8 20 The man called his wife’s name Eve, because she was the mother of all living. 21 And the LORD God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them. 22 Then the LORD God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever—”23 therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. 24 He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.

What was the result of their losing focus? \_\_\_\_\_

Adam and Eve lost their relationship with God; they were banished from the Garden; they received the punishment of temporal and eternal death.

Bonus Question: Why did God expel Adam and Eve from the garden? \_\_\_\_\_

So they wouldn’t have to live in their sin and condemnation for eternity.

How did God restore their focus? \_\_\_\_\_

He met Adam and Eve where they were. Through the death of an innocent animal, blood was shed, and Adam and Eve were clothed physically with garments of skin and spiritually with the promise of a Savior who would shed His perfect, innocent blood for them and all humanity so we, too, can be clothed in His garments of righteousness. In love, He banished them from the Garden with the Tree of Life so they wouldn’t have to live in their sin and condemnation for eternity. God promised a Savior.

How does God desire my focus to be like theirs? \_\_\_\_\_

How do I lose focus like Adam and Eve did? \_\_\_\_\_

How does this impact my life? \_\_\_\_\_

How does God restore my focus? \_\_\_\_\_

Bonus Question: How does this parallel my life? \_\_\_\_\_

In a first time event, God sacrificed an animal for atonement (payment) of man’s sins when He provided Adam and Eve clothes to wear to cover their now embarrassing nakedness. He began the process to restore them to a right relationship with Him, even while they were trying to run and hide. What a beautiful word picture here of God’s redemption of mankind, and His desire for us to be healed and made whole again! He wanted Adam and Eve to be in a restored and right relationship with Him and with one another. This demonstrates in a very powerful and convincing way God’s amazing love for us, and how He desires for us to be reconciled in relationships.

**Summary:** *Adam and Eve had it all. They lost focus as they listened to the wisdom of Satan. God called them to repentance and forgiveness, even though the consequences would follow. In His love He restores them and refocuses them as He removes them from the garden, but gives them the promise of the Messiah to lead them all their days.*

**Closing Prayer:** Almighty and everlasting God, through Your Son You have promised us forgiveness of sins and everlasting life. Govern our hearts by Your Holy Spirit that in our daily need, and especially in all time of temptation, we may seek Your help and, by a true and lively faith in Your Word, obtain all that You have promised; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen. (*LSB*, page 312)

**Closing Hymn:** Say or sing together verses 1, 4, 6 of “All Mankind Fell in Adam’s Fall” (*LSB* #562; *LW* # 363; *TLH* #369).

The first lesson in *Focus Lost ... Focus Restored*, which deals with biblical personalities who lost their focus and had it restored by God, by Rev. John Heckmann. Copyright ©2015 Lutheran Women’s Missionary League: [lwml.org/long-bible-studies](http://lwml.org/long-bible-studies)