

Thank you for your interest in the “*Folks Like Us*” Bible studies by Fran Sciacca. Whether you’re using them for your own spiritual growth and journey, or as a resource for your small group, Sunday school, or homeschool program, you’ll soon discover why these studies originally sold over 600,000 copies in their print editions. The recent decision by the publisher to discontinue print editions and to return the publishing rights back to Fran has given him the freedom to make the nearly 70 individual character studies available to you...at no cost.

Before you make copies and use the studies...

- **[COPYRIGHT]** – Each of the Bible studies that are a part of *Folks Like Us* is copyrighted. You have permission to make as many copies as you like/need for yourself and/or whatever ministry environment you intend to use them. You do *not* have permission to sell these studies. You may, however, request a small fee to cover the cost of copying, if necessary.
- **[PRINTING]** – The security setting for each PDF allows you to print the study, but not to edit it. When you print these studies, you may want to use the “Print Page Range” feature of your software, and start the printing with Page 3, and you won’t have to print the color cover or this Introduction page. *If you plan to have them printed professionally, you may want to include the cover.*
- **[DONATIONS]** – Although there is no charge for the studies, feel free to make a non-deductible donation to help offset the annual cost of web-hosting, etc. at: [paypal.me/handsofthur](https://www.paypal.me/handsofthur)
- **[QUESTIONS/COMMENTS]** – Email them to: information@fransciacca.com

Other great resources on fransciacca.com

Now that you’ve begun to explore the Bible study resources developed by Fran Sciacca, you will almost certainly benefit from the other things that he has made available:

- “***The Road to Shalom***” *podcast* – thought-provoking and thoroughly biblical, Fran explores what the Bible calls “shalom,”—the way things are *supposed* to be in God’s Kingdom, why they’re not, and how to restore them. All three seasons are available on the website.
- ***Biblical literacy courses*** – Three, 13-week Bible courses covering the entire Bible. Includes individual course books, audio, and optional animated slide supplements. Course books and animated slide supplements may be purchased on the web store.
- “***What’s Wrong With the World?***” – A 14-part video series exploring the questions, “*What is the gospel, and does it really matter?*” and “*What is a disciple, and what does one look like?*” Each episode includes a small group handout as well as supplemental leader’s notes. You may take the series for a “test drive” and purchase the series.
- “***Knot or Noose? - Recovering the Mystery of Marriage***” – A 9-part video series for singles, engaged, or married couples exploring marriage from a radical perspective. Instead of trying to figure out how to get God into marriage, this series will guide you into how to place marriage into the center of the larger redemptive plan of God. This conference has been presented live throughout the U.S. in a multitude of different settings. Each episode includes everything needed for a small group. You may take the series for a “test drive” and order the series.



FOLKS Like Us

ADAM & EVE

“The Roots Of Our Real Family Tree”

Timeless truths from our ancient past,
for a journey with God in the modern era.

Fran Sciacca

“Folks Like Us” — an introduction

Over the years I’ve written and published a number of Bible studies that collectively have sold well over a half-million copies. They were forged, most of them, in the furnaces of pain, doubt, and loneliness. Maybe that’s why they were well-used, they touched people where they hurt most.

Recently, my publisher decided that they no longer wanted to handle the books that contained these 60 or so individual studies. So, I’ve decided to make them available to any who might benefit from them. At no cost.

I have always believed that because God thought it best to become human in the Incarnation, that perhaps “incarnational truth” was His preferred method of revealing Himself and His purposes to us. I suppose that’s where the basic genre of these studies originated. I wanted to provide believers with Bible studies rooted in our ancestral past. The lives of men and women, who it turns out, are “folks just like us” in so many ways.

So, please take your time and work slowly through as many of these studies as you care to do... there’s a lot of them! And may God use the combination of the struggles and insights of your *ancient* brothers and sisters, combined with those of mine, your modern brother, to help you in your spiritual journey. That is the goal of this project.

Warmly in The Lamb,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Fran Sciacca". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Fran Sciacca
Birmingham, AL

ADAM & EVE

“The Roots Of Our Real Family Tree”

A **BIDING PRINCIPLE** – If I do not understand the extent and magnitude of sin in my own life, I will never fully appreciate the significance of the death of Jesus on my behalf.

“Sin is not doing wrong; it is wrong being—deliberate, emphatic independence of God. It is the saint, not the sinner, who knows what sin is.” —Oswald Chambers

At some point in our ancestral past, in a real garden, two real people made a joint decision to disregard the specific instruction of God. They did so in favor of what they saw as an opportunity to live a more privileged life "outside the lines." Though we do not know in detail all that happened immediately *after* their decision, I am confident that it was both cataclysmic and catastrophic. The cry of death rang out for the first time. The consequences of that single choice have not only outlived the couple who made it, they have become defining constants in life as we now know it. In seeking to get outside the lines, Adam and Eve became responsible for the lines being totally redrawn for the rest of us, their offspring.

Most of us are familiar with the story of Adam and Eve. We tend to be content with an abridged version in which two naked people get kicked out of a garden, plaguing our own gardens with chickweed as a result. But, because Genesis 4 through Revelation 22—the rest of Scripture—is the record of God cleaning up after their one-fruit fiasco, it makes the collateral damage of the choice that day in the garden all the more significant.

The Fall was not small. It was the engine of civilization from Genesis 3 to A.D. 30, and the half-lives of its consequences will endure to the close of human history. Understanding the fallout of the Fall is crucial to comprehending salvation, our lives as believers, and life itself. Do you realize the extent of the devastation of Genesis 3? Have you given much thought to the impact it has had on you, personally? Do you know the difference between being "bad" and "bad off"? And are you aware of how "bad off" you really are?

KEY SCRIPTURE: Luke 18:10-14; Romans 3:9-20

STUDY QUESTIONS...

1. The Bible teaches we are unrighteous before God because we fall short of the standard of His own glory. But what does that mean, and what are the implications? First of all, there are serious *moral* consequences of that for us. What do the verses below indicate are the repercussions of our unrighteousness?
 - a. Romans 3:5-6 –
 - b. Romans 5:12 –
 - c. Romans 5:18 –

d. Hebrews 9:27 –

e. Revelation 20:15 –

2. Look back over your findings above, and write a summary of the our predicament with God as people. In your summary, include both the "what" and the "why."

3. There are a number of significant pragmatic consequences of the Fall as well. Being a descendant of Adam and Eve has poisoned key relationships we have as human beings. Look up the verses below and write down which relationship the passage indicates has been corrupted by sin. Then give a couple of modern examples to illustrate.

a. Deuteronomy 32:20; Isaiah 59:1-2

The Fall has corrupted our relationship with:

Examples:

b. Isaiah 24:5-6; Hosea 4:1-3

The Fall has corrupted our relationship with:

Examples:

c. Romans 7:15

The Fall has corrupted our relationship with:

Examples:

d. James 4:1-3

The Fall has corrupted our relationship with:

Examples:

4. Look over your responses to question 3, and then write a summary of what you have found regarding sin's impact on the relationships we have.

5. The reason humanity's relationship with itself has been so visibly affected by sin has to do with the difference between being "bad" and "bad off." While we generally are not as *morally* "bad" as we might be, we *are* as "bad off" as we can be. Look up the verses below, and identify the aspect of your nature that has been affected by sin in each case. Match the Scripture on the left with the appropriate statement on the right.
 - a. Psalm 89:48 ___ my *will* (ability to choose what is right and good)
 - b. Romans 7:15 ___ my *spirit* (ability to relate properly to God)
 - c. Romans 7:18 ___ my *emotions* (ability to trust my feelings; ability to relate to others)
 - d. Romans 8:5-7 ___ my *mind* (ability to reason accurately and trust my conclusions)
 - e. Ephesians 2:1 ___ my *conscience* (ability to distinguish right from wrong)
 - f. Ephesians 4:18 ___ my *body* (ability to resist aging, illness, pain, and death)
 - g. 1 Timothy 4:2 ___ my *entire* nature (i.e., all of me)

6. Review your findings from question 5 and write a summary of the impact of sin on you as a person. In your summary, include not only the separate "whats" but the consequences of each.

LOOKING BACK...

So far, we have discovered that the Fall was a cataclysmic event that unleashed a plethora of problems and disabilities on the human race and all of creation, and that it placed each of us in a sobering place of judgment and condemnation. We are unrighteous before God; every conceivable relationship we can cultivate has been touched by sin's tentacles, and the change in human nature that accompanied *Adam's* sin has leaked into every fiber of *our* humanity. There is no place in the universe or my life that sin has not colonized.

In the second half of this chapter, you will spend time pondering and wrestling with what this means for you personally. As you read and write, be honest. Don't dodge the obvious or minimize the significant. How faithfully you complete this chapter will have an enormous impact on what you expect out of life, both in general and especially as a believer.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

7. In the first part of this chapter, questions 1 and 2 focus on the *moral* consequences of our sinfulness (i.e., our guilt), and questions 3 through 6 focus on the *systemic* impact sin has on all of life as we know it. When you hear the word *salvation*, which of these two foci have you normally thought of? Why?

8. Look at question 3 on page 5. Which of those four relationships have you *not* seriously thought of being affected by sin before this study? Why not?

9. Look at question 5 page 6. Which of the seven areas of your nature have you *not* seriously thought of being affected by sin before this study? Explain.

10. What do your responses to the previous two questions (8 and 9) tell you about your present understanding of sin?

11. What impact do you think having an anemic understanding of sin has on your perspective of what it means to be “saved”? (Be as thorough as possible.)
 - a. When you think about your own relationship with God, which one of the two assessments do you think *you* use?

12. As a result of this chapter, has your understanding of the nature and effect of sin
 - remained unchanged?
 - changed slightly?
 - changed dramatically?Explain:

13. As a result of this chapter, has your perspective of yourself as a sinner
 - remained unchanged?
 - changed slightly?
 - changed dramatically?Explain:

14. Take a moment to look over your research in this chapter. Write down the two most important things you feel you have learned about sin and the extent of its effects.

15. Is there someone in your life you can share these insights with? Contact that person and try to explain as thoroughly as you can what you've discovered. (Use as much Scripture from this study as possible.)

SCRIPTURE MEMORY (optional)

- The extent of sin's dominion (corporate) – Genesis 6:5
- The extent of sin's dominion (individual) – Romans 7:18