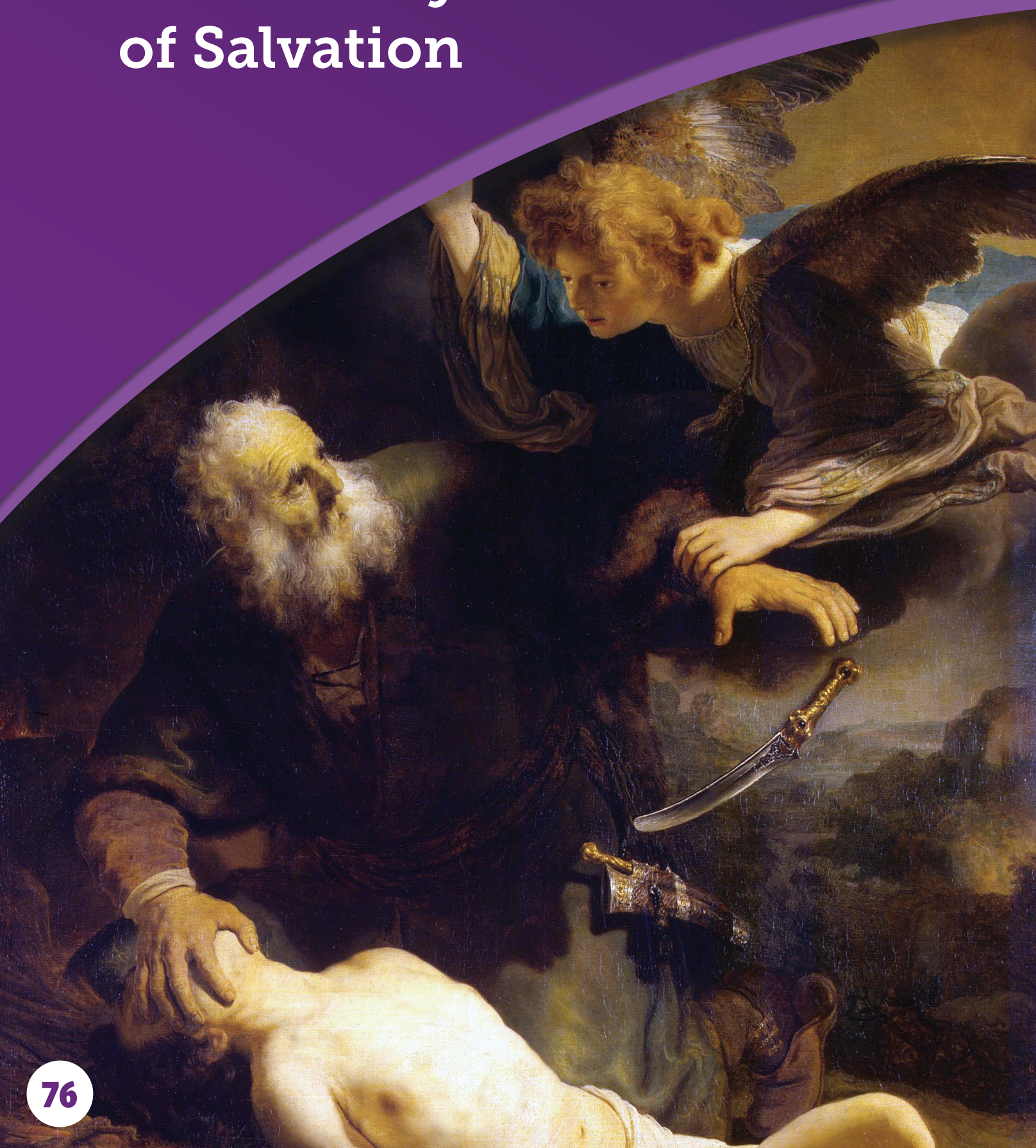


The History of Salvation



Lesson 4 at a Glance



Learning Goals

- God's mercy is infinite.
- Throughout Salvation History, God has sought a relationship with mankind by establishing covenants with us; the story of the Christian faith is a love story between God and His people.
- Covenants establish sacred and permanent familial bonds and relationships.
- God's covenants with man are clear signs of His loving mercy and faithfulness.



Lesson Plan Chart

DAY 1

Warm-Up: *The Anastasis*

- You will need: an image of the fresco found at SophiaOnline.org/Gr6Unit1Lesson4

TEACHER'S
GUIDE PAGES

STUDENT
WORKBOOK PAGES

pg. 79

pg. 49

Activity: Consequences and Relationships

pg. 80

pg. 51

Formative Assessment: Teacher-guided activity

pg. 85

N/A

DAY 2

Warm-Up: Teacher-guided activity

- You will need: a video of the song "One Thing Remains (Your Love Never Fails)" by Jesus Culture, found at SophiaOnline.org/OneThingRemains

pg. 85

N/A

Activity: Salvation History: A Love Story

pg. 86

pg. 53

Formative Assessment: Teacher-guided activity

pg. 86

N/A

DAY 3

Warm-Up: Contracts vs. Covenants

pg. 90

pg. 56

Activity: God's Covenants and Mercy

- You will need: Teacher Resource: God's Covenants and Mercy Cards found at SophiaOnline.org/Gr6Unit1Lesson4

pg. 93

pg. 57

Formative Assessment: Teacher-guided activity

pg. 93

N/A

Lesson 4 at a Glance, continued



Connections to the *Catechism* in This Lesson

CCC 51–73, 781, 1612, 1846–1848



Vocabulary Your Students Will Learn

- A **covenant** is a solemn promise that forms a bond of kinship, or family relationship.
- **Salvation History** is the story of God's mercy and saving love in human history. We read about Salvation History in the Bible.
- A **mediator** is the person who represents everyone else entering a covenant with God.



Key Scripture Passages

Know, then, that the LORD, your God, is God: the faithful God who keeps covenant mercy to the thousandth generation toward those who love him and keep his commandments.

—*Deuteronomy 7:9*

Love is patient, love is kind . . . It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails. So faith, hope, love remain, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

—*1 Corinthians 13:4, 7, 13*



Prayer for This Lesson

O Lord God, I love you above all things,
and I love my neighbor for your sake
because you are the highest, infinite and perfect good,
worthy of all my love.
In this love I intend to live and die.
Amen.

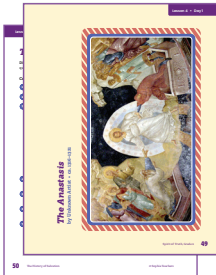
Day 1

Warm-Up

A. Begin by leading your students in the prayer for this lesson:



O Lord God, I love you above all things,
and I love my neighbor for your sake
because you are the highest, infinite and perfect good,
worthy of all my love.
In this love I intend to live and die.
Amen.



B. Next, have your students turn to **The Anastasis** on **pg. 49** in the Student Workbook and **project**  an image of the fresco found at **SophiaOnline.org/Gr6Unit1Lesson4**. Give students a few moments to quietly view the art before you say or ask anything.

C. Then ask your students the following questions:

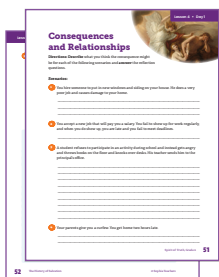
- What do you see in this fresco? What stands out to you about it? *Accept reasoned answers.*
- How do the colors, lighting, and composition of the fresco draw your eye? *Jesus is placed in the center, clothed in white with a white and gray halo or aura surrounding Him, ringed with stars. The other figures in the fresco are lined up to Jesus' right and left, with the stone background arching around Him, framing Him and drawing our eye to His actions, in which He is dramatically grasping the wrists of two figures—a man and a woman, and is seemingly tugging or dragging them towards Himself. Accept additional reasoned answers.*
- Who are the figures in this fresco? What do you think is happening? *Jesus is in the center of the fresco, holding the wrists of Adam (on His right) and Eve (on His left). Off to His sides are King David, King Solomon, St. John the Baptist, Abel, and others. Accept reasoned answers regarding what is happening in the fresco without correction.*

D. Next, explain that, when we profess our faith, especially when we pray the Apostles' Creed, we profess that, after Jesus died, but before His Resurrection, He “descended into Hell,” which, at that time, was the place all the dead went because Heaven was not yet a possibility for them. When Jesus descended to the dead, or Hell, He freed all the righteous souls, who then went to Heaven when He rose from the dead on Easter Sunday. This fresco depicts this moment—the freeing of the dead in Hell.

E. Then arrange your students into pairs or groups of three or four and have them discuss the conversation questions together. During this time, focus on keeping students intent on the artwork and the discussion questions, letting their conversations go in unexpected directions.

F. When they have finished, call on groups to share and discuss their responses to the questions.

G. Explain that your students have already learned how Scripture is the revelation of Jesus Christ in human history—the fullness of God’s revelation of Himself. It is also our story, the written record of where we came from, why we are the way we are, and of our final destiny. It is the story of how we are meant to live our lives to the fullest. We call this story Salvation History. Salvation History is, above all else, a love story between God and His People. Over the next few lessons, we are going to see how God’s revelation of Himself and His plan to save us from sin was steadfast throughout all of human history even though mankind rejected His love over and over again. God entered into a series of sacred relationships—covenants—with mankind, to gradually and in stages, and in words and deeds, enact His plan of salvation, which culminated in the Incarnation of His Son, Jesus Christ. In Jesus, the Son of God and second Person of the Holy Trinity, God fulfilled all the promises He made in the covenants of the Old Testament and established a new and everlasting covenant. His love for us remains steadfast and faithful still today. God calls each of us to holiness and invites us to receive His infinite mercy when we fail. He gives us numerous helps along the way to remain on the path to holiness.



DAY 1 › Activity

- A.** Have your students turn to **Consequences and Relationships** on **pg. 51** in the Student Workbook and work with a partner to read the five scenarios and determine possible consequences for each. Then have them discuss and answer the reflection questions.
- B.** When they have finished, call on students to share and discuss their answers.

C. Next, explain that the scenarios on the worksheet were examples of two different kinds of relationships: the first is a contractual or agreement based relationship based on agreed upon terms and an exchange of goods, services, or actions; the second is a permanent and family based relationship, or a covenant.

D. Ask your students, based on the worksheet, what would they say is the difference between a contract and a covenant. *Allow for reasoned discussion, which should include reference to the fact that contracts can be broken, but covenants, even when one party fails to uphold their part of the relationship, are permanent.*

E. Then write the word *covenant* on the board and explain that the word comes from the Latin *convenire*, which means “to come together” or “to agree.” Although this sounds similar to a contract, it is, in fact, very different. Covenant is the central theme throughout Scripture. In a covenant, two or more parties “come together” and form a permanent, formal, and sacred bond of family relationship. The heart of Salvation History is based upon the idea of covenant—God entering into permanent and sacred relationships with mankind, making His Chosen People members of His family. These covenants bind both man and God to certain promises and consequence made when the covenants were entered into.

Warm-Up Worksheet
(page 49 in the Student Workbook)

Lesson 4 ▪ Day 1

The Anastasis
by Unknown Artist • ca. 1316–1321



Spirit of Truth, Grade 6

49

Answer Key

1. Accept reasoned answers.
2. Accept reasoned answers.
3. He descended into Hell.
4. The two figures are Adam and Eve. Jesus descended into Hell to free the righteous souls so they could go to Heaven.
5. God's mercy is infinite and without limits. There is no sin we can commit that He cannot forgive if we are truly sorry for it. We need only to seek His forgiveness to receive His infinite and loving mercy.
6. He is strong, determined, firm, bold, undaunted, triumphant. The artist is communicating the assuredness of Jesus' victory over sin and death. We have no reason to fear — Jesus repeatedly told us not to fear — because He has won the victory. Accept additional reasoned answers.
7. Jesus' Church defeats Hell. If we believe in Him and keep His Commandments, we will never be separated from God. The battle is already won; Jesus has won it for us. Accept additional reasoned answers.

Warm-Up Worksheet, continued (page 50 in the Student Workbook)

Lesson 4 ▪ Day 1

The Anastasis

Directions: Take some time to quietly **view** and **reflect** on the art. Then **think** about the questions below and **discuss** them with your group.

Conversation Questions

- 1 What do you first notice about this fresco? What is your favorite part?
- 2 How would you describe the mood of this fresco?
- 3 After Jesus died on the Cross, He went to the place of the dead. Jesus is fully human and fully divine, and so His human soul was united to His divine person. Jesus brought all the just souls with Him to Heaven. Recite the Apostles' Creed:

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; He descended into hell; on the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from there He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

What event described in that profession of faith does this fresco depict?

- 4 Who are the two people whom Jesus is grasping by the wrists? Why do you think He is doing so?
- 5 If God can forgive and welcome into Heaven even the couple who committed the very first sin, what does that tell us about His mercy? Does it have any limits?
- 6 How would you describe Jesus' posture? What does the artist show us about who Christ is by the way he painted Him?
- 7 Read Matthew 16:18:

"And so I say to you, you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it."

What does this fresco teach us about Jesus' promises to all of humanity?

Activity Worksheet

(page 51 in the Student Workbook)

Lesson 4 • Day 1



Consequences and Relationships

Directions: **Describe** what you think the consequence might be for each of the following scenarios and **answer** the reflection questions.

Scenarios:

- 1** You hire someone to put in new windows and siding on your house. He does a very poor job and causes damage to your home.

You may refuse to pay the company. You may take them to court. You will almost certainly find a new company with which to do business. Accept additional reasoned answers.
- 2** You accept a new job that will pay you a salary. You fail to show up for work regularly, and when you do show up, you are late and you fail to meet deadlines.

You will get fired. Accept additional reasoned answers.
- 3** A student refuses to participate in an activity during school and instead gets angry and throws books on the floor and knocks over desks. His teacher sends him to the principal's office.

The student will be punished with a suspension and maybe even expelled. Students may become distracted by the fact that this scenario does not include an actual contract, as is the case in the first two scenarios. Remind them that only rarely do our relationships with others involve an actual paper contract. In this example, there are "unwritten" understandings and expectations among classmates, teachers, administrators, and so forth. There are also written ones such as school rules, student handbooks, and our system of laws that punish violence. These go beyond a literal contract, but do not rise to the level of the permanently binding covenants in the next two scenarios. Accept additional reasoned answers.
- 4** Your parents give you a curfew. You get home two hours late.

Your parents will punish you. You will lose their trust. Accept additional reasoned answers.

Activity Worksheet, continued

(page 52 in the Student Workbook)

Lesson 4 ▪ Day 1

- 5 A wife goes out to run errands for the day and asks her husband to do some things around the house. He agrees. She posts the list of things she needs done on the refrigerator. He spends all day watching sports and relaxing on the couch and doesn't do any of the things on his wife's list.

The husband will have to apologize and might have to do some extra things around the house to make up for his laziness. He might have to buy his wife some flowers. His wife might avoid speaking to him for a little while to show she is upset and has lost trust in him. She might forgive him because he works hard all week to support them and needs a little downtime, even if he forgot to speak up about that fact before she left. Accept additional reasoned answers.

Reflection Questions

- 1 What are the differences between the first three scenarios and the last two?
The first three scenarios deal with agreements or contractual obligations. The last two deal with family relationships and respecting the love and trust of those closest to us.
- 2 How do the consequences between the first set and the second set of scenarios differ?
The consequences in the first three scenarios sever the relationships. The "contracts" or agreements that form the relationships become null and void. In the last two, they may hurt or damage the relationship, but the relationship and mutual obligations do not cease to exist. A parent would not disown his or her child for breaking a rule. If marriage vows are lived seriously and respected, a disagreement would not result in the ending of that relationship.
- 3 Is our relationship with God more like the first or second set of scenarios? Explain.
Accept reasoned answers, but students should recognize it is more like the last two scenarios.

DAY 1 › Formative Assessment

- A. Project**  again the image of *The Anastasis* and ask your students to observe the painting quietly for a few moments. Then ask your students to think about the person in their lives they trust the most, the person they know will always have their backs and support them no matter what.
- B.** Explain to your students that this person's faithfulness and unwavering love for them is a glimpse of the faithfulness and love that God our Father and His Son Jesus have for us. This person is sharing with them God's love for us—God, who is always faithful and always loving and always willing to give us His mercy when we seek it.
- C.** Then lead your students in praying an Our Father, a Hail Mary, and a Glory Be, and conclude by reciting the Holy God prayer from the Divine Mercy Chaplet three times.



Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us and on the whole world. (Repeat three times.)

Day 2

Warm-up

- A.** Begin by leading your students in the prayer for this lesson:



O Lord God, I love you above all things,
and I love my neighbor for your sake
because you are the highest, infinite and perfect good,
worthy of all my love.
In this love I intend to live and die.
Amen.

- B.** Next, teach your students the chorus of the song “One Thing Remains (Your Love Never Fails)” by Jesus Culture:
 Your love never fails
 It never gives up
 It never runs out on me
 (repeat three times)
- C.** Then **play the video**  of the song “One Thing Remains (Your Love Never Fails)” by Jesus Culture, found at SophiaOnline.org/OneThingRemains and sing along to the chorus with your students. The video contains the lyrics to the song.

D. After singing the song, ask the following questions:

- What do you think the musicians were singing about? *The steadfastness of God's love.*
- What does this song have to do with the story of salvation we find in Scripture? *God's love never fails us, despite our own failures or unfaithfulness. God always loves us. Jesus paid the debt of sin for us so that we might have eternal life.*
- Why do you think the name of the song is "One Thing Remains"? If you could choose a different name for the song, what would you choose? *Answers will vary.*

E. Read aloud  1 Corinthians 13:4–8, 13 from your Bible. Ask your students how the song illustrates this Scripture passage. *Love is the greatest of the virtues. It never fails, and it remains when all else has passed. God's love for us is so much greater than any other kind of love we experience. Accept additional reasoned answers.*

F. Explain to your students that the goodness of God is His love, mercy, and steadfast faithfulness. While He has given us a clear path to living holy and moral lives, He also knows that we are imperfect human beings in need of His mercy and forgiveness. In fact, from the very beginning of human existence, God has offered His loving mercy to us; He lovingly pursued us and revealed Himself to us so that we may know His love and mercy and, ultimately, be saved. We call the story of God's mercy enacted in human history Salvation History. We read about the story of Salvation History in Scripture.

DAY 2 > Activity



- A.** Have students turn to **Salvation History: A Love Story** on **pg. 53** in the Student Workbook and read independently or with a partner about how all of Salvation History is really a love story between God and His People and then answer the questions. You may also choose to read aloud or call on students to take turns reading aloud and discuss the questions together as a class.
- B.** When they have finished, call on students to share and discuss the answer to the questions.

DAY 2 > Formative Assessment

- A.** Go through and discuss each of the six major covenants in Salvation History, specifically noting the mediators of each covenant, the progression of each covenant (One holy . . .), and the sign of each covenant. Consider recording this information on the board as you discuss it with your class. Students will use this information in the next lesson.
- B.** Then lead your students in praying an Our Father, a Hail Mary, and a Glory Be, and conclude by reciting the Holy God prayer from the Divine Mercy Chaplet three times.



Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us and on the whole world. (Repeat three times.)

Activity Worksheet

(page 53 in the Student Workbook)

Salvation History: A Love Story

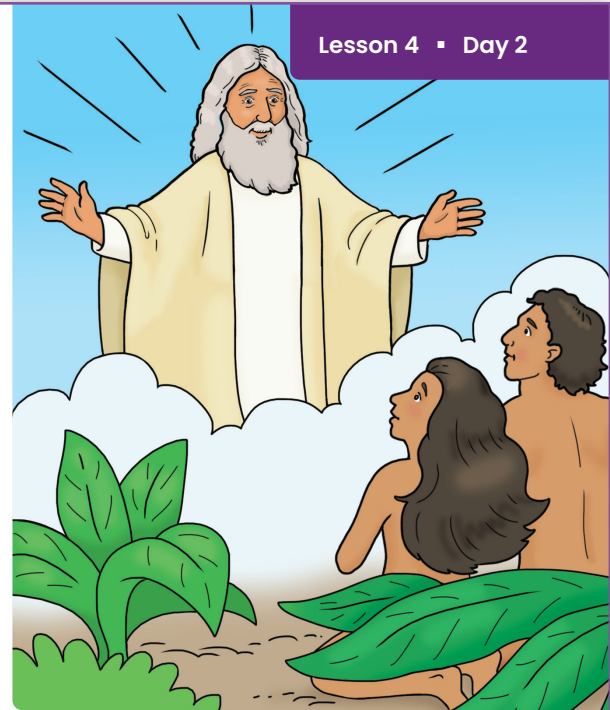
Directions: Read about Salvation History. Then **answer** the questions.

The Christian faith is a love story between God and His people. From the very beginning, God revealed Himself and showed us His love. Because of His love, He has never stopped saving us and forgiving our sins. The *Catechism* tells us:

In the course of its history, Israel was able to discover that God had only one reason to reveal Himself to them, a single motive for choosing them from among all peoples as His special possession: His sheer gratuitous love. And thanks to the prophets, Israel understood that it was again out of love that God never stopped saving them and pardoning their unfaithfulness and sins. (218)

The word *gratuitous* means “unearned,” or “freely given or done.” In other words, everything God does is because of His free and unconditional love for us — a love we have not earned. Even when we turn away from Him, God never stops loving us.

The story of God’s mercy and saving love in human history is called Salvation History. We read about Salvation History in the Bible. God prepared us to receive the gift of salvation in His Son, Jesus Christ. To do so,



He entered into a series of covenants with mankind — sacred promises that create permanent family bonds. Gradually and in stages, in words and deeds, God formed deeper and deeper family relationships with His Chosen People and made Himself known to them.

There are five major covenants in the Old Testament, which, together, are called the Old Covenant. The sixth covenant of Salvation History — found in the New Testament — is the New Covenant made by Jesus Christ. The New Covenant is everlasting.

God chose certain people to be mediators, or the people who represent everyone else entering the covenant with God.

- God first revealed Himself to Adam and Eve.
- God continued to reveal Himself to Noah and his family.

Activity Worksheet, continued (page 54 in the Student Workbook)

Lesson 4 ▪ Day 2

- God chose a people through a tribal leader named Abraham and promised great blessings to the world through his descendants.
- God freed His Chosen People from centuries of slavery in Egypt through Moses and made them a great nation.
- God made His Chosen People a kingdom under David the king.
- God fully revealed Himself through His Son, Jesus Christ, and saved the world from sin.

As the covenants progressed, God brought more people into His covenant family.

- **Adam and Eve:** One holy couple
- **Noah:** One holy Family
- **Abraham:** One holy tribe
- **Moses:** One holy nation
- **David:** One holy kingdom
- **Jesus Christ:** One, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church — the entire human race!

God gave each covenant a sign taken from human experience that represented His faithful love at the heart of each covenant.

- **Adam and Eve:** Marriage and the Sabbath
- **Noah:** The rainbow
- **Abraham:** Circumcision
- **Moses:** The Law and Passover
- **David:** David's throne and the Temple
- **Jesus Christ:** The Holy Eucharist

Throughout Salvation History, God unfolded His plan of salvation. By revealing Himself to us in both words and actions, He invited us to be His adopted sons and daughters. God showed us the way to live holy and moral lives and how to receive His mercy and forgiveness when we sin. As the greatest act of love, He sent His only beloved Son to be an example of holiness, fully reveal the Father's love, and save us from sin by offering His life on the Cross. The life, Passion, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension of Jesus Christ opened the door for us to eternal life with the Father in Heaven. And He sent the Holy Spirit to remain with us and guide us to holiness.

The story of salvation — the love story of a Father saving His beloved children — is the greatest love story ever told.



Activity Worksheet, continued
(page 55 in the Student Workbook)

Lesson 4 ▪ Day 2

- 1 The Christian Faith is a love story between God and His People.
- 2 Because of His love for us, God has never stopped saving us and forgiving our sins.
- 3 What does the *Catechism* teach that God did because of His gratuitous love?
Chose a people as His special possession and revealed Himself to them.
- 4 What is Salvation History? Where do we read about it?
The story of God's mercy and saving love in human history. We read about it in the Bible.
- 5 What is a covenant?
A sacred promise that creates permanent family bonds.
- 6 What is the Old Covenant? What is the New Covenant?
The Old Covenant is the five covenants God entered into with His Chosen People in the Old Testament. The New Covenant is the new and everlasting covenant made by Jesus Christ in the New Testament.
- 7 What is a mediator?
The person or people who represent everyone else entering the covenant with God.
- 8 What happened as the covenants progressed through Salvation History?
God brought more and more people into His covenant family.
- 9 What do the signs of each covenant represent?
God's faithful love at the heart of each covenant.
- 10 Throughout Salvation History, God revealed Himself in words and actions, and invited us to be His sons and daughters.
- 11 What is the greatest act of love?
God sent His only beloved Son to be an example of holiness, fully reveal the Father's love, and save us from sin by offering His life on the Cross.
- 12 Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to remain with us and guide us to holiness.

Day 3



Preparation before Class

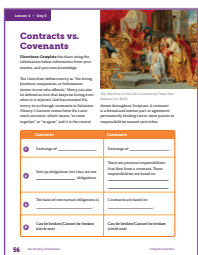
Prior to class, print, copy, and cut out the various covenant components from **Teacher Resource: God's Covenants and Mercy Cards**, found online at **SophiaOnline.org/Gr6Unit1Lesson4**. Make enough sets of cards to give one complete set to each group of two or three students.

Warm-up

A. Begin by leading your students in the prayer for this lesson:



O Lord God, I love you above all things,
and I love my neighbor for your sake
because you are the highest, infinite and perfect good,
worthy of all my love.
In this love I intend to live and die.
Amen.



B. Have students turn to **Contracts vs. Covenants** on **pg. 56** in the Student Workbook. Then draw a T-chart on the board. Label the left side “Contract” and the right side “Covenant.” Using the following questions, go through what a contract is like and have students record their answers on the “Contract” side of the chart.

- Is a contract an exchange of goods and services or an exchange of persons? *An exchange of goods and services.*
- Is a contract made of personal obligations or contractual obligations? *Contractual obligations.*
- Are contracts entered into by human promises or by the word of God? *By human promises or agreements.*
- Do the relationships established by contracts depend on the conditions being met, or are they permanent? *Contracts depend on conditions and can be broken, but often with consequences.*

C. Then go through what a covenant is like using the following questions and have them record their answers on the “Covenant” side of the chart.

- Is a covenant an exchange of goods and services or an exchange of persons? *An exchange of persons. Each party gives their entire self to the other.*

- Is a covenant made of personal obligations or contractual obligations? *A covenant is made of personal responsibilities and mutual obligations. These responsibilities are based on our personal relationship and commitment to the other person.*
- Are covenants entered into by human promises or by the word of God? *By the word of God.*
- Do the relationships established by covenants depend on conditions being met, or are those relationships permanent? *They are permanent.*

D. Wrap up the discussion by explaining that, when people enter into a contract, they promise to do something in exchange for receiving something else, usually money. For example, when a professional athlete signs a contract with a team, they agree to play their sport to the best of their ability in exchange for guaranteed money for a certain period of time, at which point the contract ends. Often, contracts can be broken when certain pre-agreed upon terms are not met. A covenant, however, is much more than a contract. A covenant is an exchange of persons. That is, two people come together and with God as their witness, solemnly agree to give their entire selves to each other. A new relationship is formed, a bond of family relationship is established. Two great examples of a covenant are marriage and adoption. In both, the people involved promise to be committed to each other as husband and wife or as a parent and child. And this new sacred bond is permanent; nothing can take this bond away. As we have learned, covenant is the central theme throughout Scripture. From the beginning, God has sought to bring us into His covenant family, to make us His sons and daughters (and He our Father). This bond of family relationship is forever.

Warm-Up Worksheet

(page 56 in the Student Workbook)

Lesson 4 ▪ Day 3

Contracts vs. Covenants

Directions: Complete the chart using the information below, information from your teacher, and your own knowledge.

The *Catechism* defines mercy as “the loving kindness, compassion, or forbearance shown to one who offends.” Mercy can also be defined as love that keeps on loving even when it is rejected. God has revealed His mercy to us through covenants in Salvation History. *Covenant* comes from the Latin word *convenire*, which means “to come together” or “to agree,” and it is the central

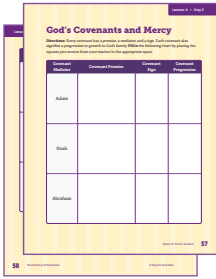


The Sacrifice of the Old Covenant by Peter Paul Rubens (ca. 1640).

theme throughout Scripture. A covenant is a formal and solemn pact or agreement permanently binding two or more parties to responsibilities toward each other.

Contracts		Covenants
1	Exchange of <u>goods and services</u> .	Exchange of <u>persons</u> .
2	Sets up obligations, but they are not <u>deeply personal</u> obligations.	There are personal responsibilities that flow from a covenant. These responsibilities are based on <u>our personal relationship and commitment to the other person</u>
3	The basis of contractual obligations is <u>human words and promises</u> .	Covenants are based on <u>God's Word</u> .
4	<u>Can be broken</u> Cannot be broken (circle one)	Can be broken <u>Cannot be broken</u> (circle one)

DAY 3 > Activity



- A.** Begin by arranging your students into pairs or trios. Have them turn to **God's Covenants and Mercy** on **pg. 57** in the Student Workbook and distribute to each group a complete, shuffled set of cards from **Teacher Resource: God's Covenants and Mercy Cards** found online at SophiaOnline.org/Gr6Unit1Lesson4.
- B.** Review with your students how each of the six major covenants in Salvation History has a promise, a mediator, and a sign. Each covenant also signifies a progression or growth in God's family.
- C.** Then have each group arrange the covenant component cutouts in the proper order, grouping the correct mediator, promise, sign, and progression together, and then putting each covenant in the correct order. Then have students record the information in the proper order from the covenant component cutouts on the chart from **God's Covenants and Mercy**.

DAY 3 > Formative Assessment

- A.** Review and discuss the correct answers to **God's Covenants and Mercy** using the answer key to guide your discussion. Be sure to emphasize the connection that God's covenants are a sign of His mercy and love. Even when we break these covenants, God continues to show us love and mercy.
- B.** Then ask the following questions:
 - What do the major covenants of Salvation History communicate about God's love for us? *They each communicate that God remains faithful to His promises and continues extending His mercy to humanity, despite our sins. Accept additional reasoned answers*
 - How is God's mercy revealed and made known to us more deeply with each successive covenant? *Each covenant establishes an ever-growing family of God. The covenant in Christ fulfills all other covenants and offers eternal life to all who believe. Accept additional reasoned answers.*
- C.** Then lead your students in praying an Our Father, a Hail Mary, and a Glory Be, and conclude by reciting the Holy God prayer from the Divine Mercy Chaplet three times.



Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us and on the whole world. (Repeat 3 times.)

Activity Worksheet*(page 57 in the Student Workbook)*

God's Covenants and Mercy

Directions: Every covenant has a promise, a mediator, and a sign. Each covenant also signifies a progression or growth in God's family. **Fill in** the following chart by placing the squares you receive from your teacher in the appropriate space.

Covenant Mediator	Covenant Promise	Covenant Sign	Covenant Progression
Adam	God called him to share in His blessings in the marriage covenant and promised to deliver him and his wife from sin by crushing the head of the serpent.	Marriage/ The Sabbath	One Holy Couple
Noah	God pledged to keep him and his family safe from the flood and then swore never to wipe out the human family in that way again.	Rainbow	One Holy Family
Abraham	God promised that he would be the father of a host of nations, with descendants as numerous as the stars.	Circumcision	One Holy Tribe

Activity Worksheet, continued
(page 58 in the Student Workbook)

Lesson 4 ▪ Day 3

Covenant Mediator	Covenant Promise	Covenant Sign	Covenant Progression
Moses	The Lord used him to lead Israel out of the bondage of slavery in Egypt and pledged to the people through him that they would occupy the Promised Land of Canaan as their inheritance.	Passover/ The Law	One Holy Nation
David	God made a covenant with him to build a worldwide Kingdom by establishing an everlasting throne with His son.	Throne/ Temple	One Holy Kingdom
Jesus	This covenant fulfills all other covenants and pledges eternal life to all who believe.	The Holy Eucharist	One Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church

The History of Salvation

LESSON OVERVIEW



Vocabulary

- A **covenant** is a solemn promise that forms a bond of kinship, or family relationship.
- **Salvation History** is the story of God's mercy and saving love in human history. We read about Salvation History in the Bible.
- A **mediator** is the person who represents everyone else entering a covenant with God.



Prayer for This Lesson

O Lord God, I love you above all things,
and I love my neighbor for your sake
because you are the highest, infinite and perfect good,
worthy of all my love.
In this love I intend to live and die.

Amen.

The Anastasis

by Unknown Artist • ca. 1316–1321



The Anastasis

Directions: Take some time to quietly **view** and **reflect** on the art. Then **think** about the questions below and **discuss** them with your group.

Conversation Questions

- 1 What do you first notice about this fresco? What is your favorite part?
- 2 How would you describe the mood of this fresco?
- 3 After Jesus died on the Cross, He went to the place of the dead. Jesus is fully human and fully divine, and so His human soul was united to His divine person. Jesus brought all the just souls with Him to Heaven. Recite the Apostles' Creed:

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; He descended into hell; on the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from there He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

What event described in that profession of faith does this fresco depict?

- 4 Who are the two people whom Jesus is grasping by the wrists? Why do you think He is doing so?
- 5 If God can forgive and welcome into Heaven even the couple who committed the very first sin, what does that tell us about His mercy? Does it have any limits?
- 6 How would you describe Jesus' posture? What does the artist show us about who Christ is by the way he painted Him?
- 7 Read Matthew 16:18:

"And so I say to you, you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it."

What does this fresco teach us about Jesus' promises to all of humanity?

Consequences and Relationships



Directions: **Describe** what you think the consequence might be for each of the following scenarios and **answer** the reflection questions.

Scenarios:

- 1 You hire someone to put in new windows and siding on your house. He does a very poor job and causes damage to your home.

- 2 You accept a new job that will pay you a salary. You fail to show up for work regularly, and when you do show up, you are late and you fail to meet deadlines.

- 3 A student refuses to participate in an activity during school and instead gets angry and throws books on the floor and knocks over desks. His teacher sends him to the principal's office.

- 4 Your parents give you a curfew. You get home two hours late.

- 5 A wife goes out to run errands for the day and asks her husband to do some things around the house. He agrees. She posts the list of things she needs done on the refrigerator. He spends all day watching sports and relaxing on the couch and doesn't do any of the things on his wife's list.

Reflection Questions

- 1 What are the differences between the first three scenarios and the last two?
-
-
-
- 2 How do the consequences between the first set and the second set of scenarios differ?
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-
-
-
-
-
-
- 3 Is our relationship with God more like the first or second set of scenarios? Explain.
-
-

Salvation History: A Love Story

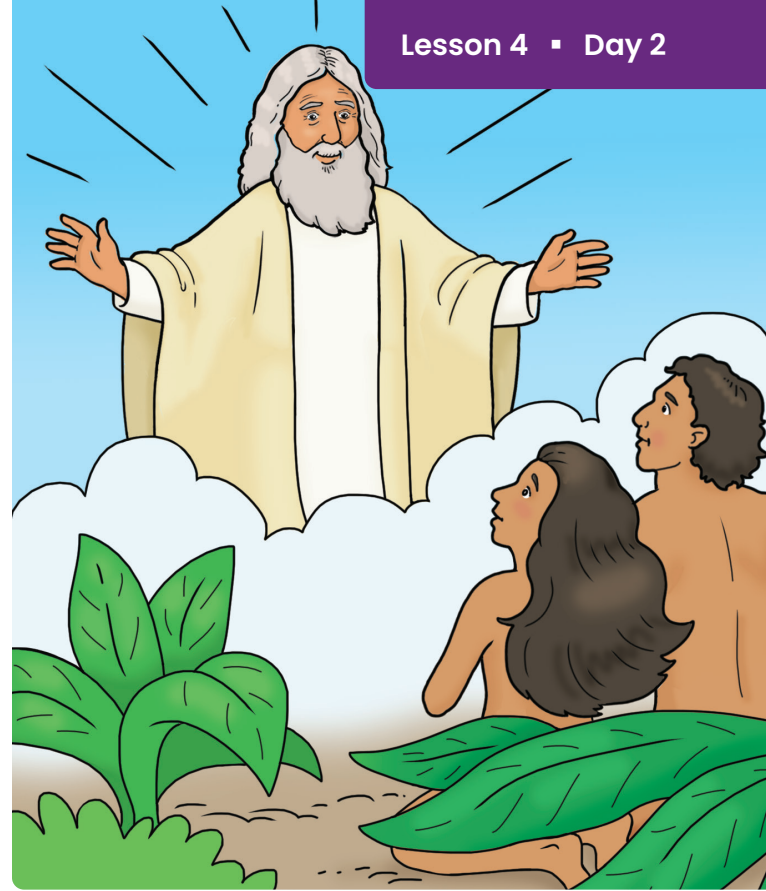
Directions: Read about Salvation History. Then **answer** the questions.

The Christian faith is a love story between God and His people. From the very beginning, God revealed Himself and showed us His love. Because of His love, He has never stopped saving us and forgiving our sins. The *Catechism* tells us:

In the course of its history, Israel was able to discover that God had only one reason to reveal Himself to them, a single motive for choosing them from among all peoples as His special possession: His sheer gratuitous love. And thanks to the prophets, Israel understood that it was again out of love that God never stopped saving them and pardoning their unfaithfulness and sins. (218)

The word *gratuitous* means “unearned,” or “freely given or done.” In other words, everything God does is because of His free and unconditional love for us — a love we have not earned. Even when we turn away from Him, God never stops loving us.

The story of God’s mercy and saving love in human history is called Salvation History. We read about Salvation History in the Bible. God prepared us to receive the gift of salvation in His Son, Jesus Christ. To do so,



He entered into a series of covenants with mankind — sacred promises that create permanent family bonds. Gradually and in stages, in words and deeds, God formed deeper and deeper family relationships with His Chosen People and made Himself known to them.

There are five major covenants in the Old Testament, which, together, are called the Old Covenant. The sixth covenant of Salvation History — found in the New Testament — is the New Covenant made by Jesus Christ. The New Covenant is everlasting.

God chose certain people to be mediators, or the people who represent everyone else entering the covenant with God.

- God first revealed Himself to Adam and Eve.
- God continued to reveal Himself to Noah and his family.

- God chose a people through a tribal leader named Abraham and promised great blessings to the world through his descendants.
- God freed His Chosen People from centuries of slavery in Egypt through Moses and made them a great nation.
- God made His Chosen People a kingdom under David the king.
- God fully revealed Himself through His Son, Jesus Christ, and saved the world from sin.

As the covenants progressed, God brought more people into His covenant family.

- **Adam and Eve:** One holy couple
- **Noah:** One holy Family
- **Abraham:** One holy tribe
- **Moses:** One holy nation
- **David:** One holy kingdom
- **Jesus Christ:** One, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church — the entire human race!

God gave each covenant a sign taken from human experience that represented His faithful love at the heart of each covenant.

- **Adam and Eve:** Marriage and the Sabbath
- **Noah:** The rainbow
- **Abraham:** Circumcision
- **Moses:** The Law and Passover
- **David:** David's throne and the Temple
- **Jesus Christ:** The Holy Eucharist

Throughout Salvation History, God unfolded His plan of salvation. By revealing Himself to us in both words and actions, He invited us to be His adopted sons and daughters. God showed us the way to live holy and moral lives and how to receive His mercy and forgiveness when we sin. As the greatest act of love, He sent His only beloved Son to be an example of holiness, fully reveal the Father's love, and save us from sin by offering His life on the Cross. The life, Passion, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension of Jesus Christ opened the door for us to eternal life with the Father in Heaven. And He sent the Holy Spirit to remain with us and guide us to holiness.

The story of salvation — the love story of a Father saving His beloved children — is the greatest love story ever told.



- 1 The Christian Faith is a _____ story between God and _____.
- 2 Because of His love for us, God has never stopped _____ us and _____ our sins.
- 3 What does the *Catechism* teach that God did because of His gratuitous love?

- 4 What is Salvation History? Where do we read about it?

- 5 What is a covenant?

- 6 What is the Old Covenant? What is the New Covenant?

- 7 What is a mediator?

- 8 What happened as the covenants progressed through Salvation History?

- 9 What do the signs of each covenant represent?

- 10 Throughout Salvation History, God revealed Himself in _____ and _____, and invited us to be His _____ and _____.
- 11 What is the greatest act of love?

- 12 Jesus sent the _____ to remain with us and guide us to _____.

Contracts vs. Covenants

Directions: Complete the chart using the information below, information from your teacher, and your own knowledge.

The *Catechism* defines mercy as “the loving kindness, compassion, or forbearance shown to one who offends.” Mercy can also be defined as love that keeps on loving even when it is rejected. God has revealed His mercy to us through covenants in Salvation History. *Covenant* comes from the Latin word *convenire*, which means “to come together” or “to agree,” and it is the central



The Sacrifice of the Old Covenant by Peter Paul Rubens (ca. 1640).

theme throughout Scripture. A covenant is a formal and solemn pact or agreement permanently binding two or more parties to responsibilities toward each other.

Contracts	Covenants
1 Exchange of _____.	Exchange of _____.
2 Sets up obligations, but they are not _____ obligations.	There are personal responsibilities that flow from a covenant. These responsibilities are based on _____ _____
3 The basis of contractual obligations is _____.	Covenants are based on _____.
4 Can be broken/Cannot be broken (circle one)	Can be broken/Cannot be broken (circle one)

God's Covenants and Mercy

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Noah			
Abraham			

Covenant Mediator	Covenant Promise	Covenant Sign	Covenant Progression
Moses			
David			
Jesus			