

Bible Passage: Genesis 4-5

Key Passage: “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” Romans 3:23

Big Picture Question: *What does it mean to sin? To sin is to think, speak, or behave in any way that goes against God and His commands.*

LEADER DEVOTIONAL

Siblings often fight and compete as children and even adults. It may be over something as innocent as who gets the last cookie or as serious as who inherits their parents’ prized heirloom.

The competition Cain felt toward Abel—the world’s first siblings—reminds us that these family tensions can cause great damage to our relationships with one another, with parents, and even with God.

In the story of Cain and Abel, we find a progressing pattern of jealousy, which led to hatred, which led to murder. The result was not one but two lost sons for Adam and Eve.

God’s disregard of Cain’s offering stirred an intense jealousy and anger within Cain. Cain raged not only because his offering was rejected by God, but also because his brother’s offering was accepted by the Lord. Cain’s jealousy led him into a pit of misdirected hatred of Abel, ultimately leading him to murder his brother. The consequence of sin—death—that God had warned Adam and Eve about had come to fruition.

Jealousy never produces anything godly in us. And why is that? It’s primarily because jealousy is nothing more than proof that we have staked our identity on what we have done or can do, rather than on what God has done for us through Christ.

When you are tempted to compare yourself to others, let that trigger a reminder of who you are in Christ.

Second Corinthians 5:17 tells us that “if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.” As a child of God, our identity is not dependent upon what we do, but instead upon what Christ has done to save us through His life, death, and resurrection. Rather than living in the comparison between ourselves and others, let’s live in the confidence that we have been made new. In Christ, we are fully loved and accepted.

Fight the temptation to compare. Fight the urge to compete with others before God. And trust in the finished work of Christ. For you are not your own; you were bought with a price. And that price is one you could never repay.

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WELCOME

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, ask kids about their week, and help new kids connect to your group.

SAY: *Are you the best at everything you do? Has there ever been a time when someone was better than you at basketball, math, or drawing? How does that make you feel? (Guide the discussion to the word “jealousy.”)*

ACTIVITY PAGE

Invite kids to complete the “My Letters’ Keeper” activity page.

SAY: *There were a lot of words to find. Did you have trouble keeping up with all of the letters? In today’s story, Cain knew exactly where to find his brother, but he lied to God*

KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY

SAY: *Our key passage tells us that we have all sinned. We all have fallen short of God’s glory. We can’t earn back a life with God. We need a Rescuer.*

Provide each kid with a pencil, paper, and scissors. Instruct kids to write the key passage on the paper. When finished, the kids will cut their papers into small pieces. Challenge them to put the puzzles together and read the key passage aloud. Continue reviewing by trading puzzles with someone else.

SESSION STARTER

Emoji Feelings

Work as a whole group to create a list of feelings on the board or a large piece of paper: happy, sad, angry, excited, surprised, jealous, and so forth. Provide each kid with paper and crayons. Also, see enclosed emoji page. Instruct kids to create their own set of emoji characters for the feelings listed on the board. When the kids are finished drawing the emoji characters, challenge them to switch papers with a partner and see if they can identify the emotions of each emoji character on their partner’s paper.

SAY *Feelings are a big part of our lives. We can feel lots of these different emotions every single day. In our Bible story today, Cain and Abel felt a variety of emotions, too. What kind of emotions do you think will be in our Bible story today?*

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BIBLE LESSON

Sin Spread to People

Adam and Eve had two sons, Cain and Abel. Abel grew up and became a shepherd, and Cain worked the ground like a farmer to grow crops.

One day, Cain gave God an offering of some of the produce he grew. Abel gave God some of the firstborn of his flock. God accepted Abel’s offering, but He did not accept Cain’s offering.

Cain was furious. “Why are you so angry?” God asked. “If you do what is right, won’t you be accepted?” God warned Cain that sin was crouching at the door. “Sin wants to control you,” God said. “But you must control it.”

Then Cain invited Abel to go out into the field. While they were in the field, Cain killed his brother.

Then God asked Cain, “Where is your brother Abel?”

“I don’t know,” said Cain. “Is it my job to look after him?”

But God knew what had happened. He said to Cain, “What have you done?”

God punished Cain. God told Cain that if he tried to work the ground, nothing would grow for him. God said Cain would spend the rest of his life wandering the earth. He would not have a home or anywhere to rest.

“This punishment is too much!” Cain said. “You are sending me away from this land and away from You. If I have to wander the earth, whoever finds me will kill me!”

So God put a mark on Cain to protect him so that whoever found him would not kill him. Then Cain left the land and went to live in Nod, a land to the east of Eden. He had a wife and a family, but they did not follow God.

God gave Adam and Eve another son, Seth. Adam and Eve’s family grew. Seth grew up and had a family too. Around this time, Adam’s descendants in Seth’s family began to call on the name of the Lord.

Christ Connection: Adam and Eve’s sin and its consequences spread to all of their descendants. But God did not forget His promise to send a Rescuer. At just the right time, God would send His Son to save sinners.

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Small Group ACTIVITIES



SAY • Raise your hand if you had heard this Bible story before today.

Distribute Bibles and help the kids find Genesis 4–5. Explain how to use the Table of Contents to locate the books of the Bible. Remind kids that Genesis is the very first book of the Bible. Explain how to locate the chapters in each book.

Choose a volunteer to read aloud Genesis 4–5. If your group is still learning to read, consider reading the passage for them.

SAY *Genesis 4–5 continues the story of sin. The story of Cain and Abel shows how sin spread from Adam and Eve to their sons. This spread of sin continued from generation to generation in Adam and Eve’s family, all the way to you and me. Cain allowed sin to control him. When we read the Bible, we read story after story after story of people who let sin control them. Even though we’re not in the Bible, we are still part of the story of sin. Yet God still loves us. He sent His Son, Jesus, to die in our place for our sin. The Bible tells us that if we confess our sin and believe in Jesus, we will be saved. That means that those who have faith in Jesus aren’t just part of the story of sin, we are part of God’s story of salvation too!*

Group Discussion (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the kids to discuss their answers.

SAY *How did Cain let sin control him?*

Help the kids understand that Cain’s jealousy was not sin on its own. When Cain was jealous, God warned him that he needed to control those feelings because sin was near. Guide the kids to discuss how feelings alone are not sinful. When we let those feelings control our thoughts, words, or actions, then we have let sin control our hearts.

SAY *What was the real reason God asked Cain, “Where is your brother?”*

Guide the kids to consider whether God really needed help finding Abel. Help them understand that God already knew what had happened to Abel. God was giving Cain an opportunity to confess his sin and tell the truth. Help the kids to understand that God knows everything about us. He wants us to trust Him with our sin, be able to confess our sins and ask for help obeying Him.

SAY *Can God punish sin and still love us?*

Help the kids understand that sin must be punished. God must punish sin because He is holy and righteous. Help the kids consider that even in God’s punishment of sin, He can still love people and show mercy. Just as God punished Cain by sending Him away, He also showed Cain mercy by putting a mark on Cain that would protect him. Help the kids consider how God can show us mercy even in our sin.

PRAYER TIME

Take prayer requests. Pray for your group.