

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 can 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: Can you think of a time someone else got something you wanted? How did you feel? Were you happy for the other person, or were you jealous?

ACTIVITY PAGE

Invite kids to complete “What Does It Mean?” on the activity page. Kids will use the code to answer the big picture question.

*Say: **What does it mean to sin?** When you think about sin, you might think about wrong things that people do. The Bible says that sin is more than just doing what is wrong. **To sin is to think, speak, or behave in any way that goes against God and His commands.** We will hear more about that in today’s Bible story.*

KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY

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Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Romans 3:23 together.

Form two teams of kids and lead them to stand across from each other. Each team will stand shoulder to shoulder.

Show the key passage poster. Instruct the first team to say the first word of the passage, the second team to say the second word, the first team to say the third word, and so forth until kids say the entire passage.

Challenge the teams to see how quickly they can say the key passage. As kids master the verse, cover the poster.

SAY All have sinned and fallen short of God’s glory. We saw that in the garden of Eden, in the field with Cain and Abel, and in the world around us. Praise God for showing us undeserved kindness in Jesus.

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SESSION STARTER

OFFERING TOSS

Form two teams to stand in single-file lines. Give each player one cotton ball and position a bowl across from each team.

When you say “go,” players should take turns tossing a cotton ball toward the bowl. The team that lands the most cotton balls in its bowl wins. Play a few rounds as time allows.

Point out that the cotton balls look like sheep—white and fluffy.

SAY In today’s Bible story, we’ll hear about two brothers who brought offerings to God. An offering is a gift given to God. One brother brought some of his produce, and the other brought sheep from his flock. God accepted one of the offerings but not the other. Let’s find out why.

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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 a Bible to each kid. Guide boys and girls to open their Bibles to Genesis 4. Explain that after Cain killed Abel, Cain went out east of Eden. Remind kids that we don’t know exactly where the garden of Eden was located. Point to the region in the bottom right corner of the map, and explain that some people think it may have been in that area.

Consider comparing the Old Testament Mediterranean Map to a modern-day map to help kids understand where these stories took place. (Tip: Locate the areas in and around modern-day Iraq.) Choose a volunteer to read aloud Genesis 4:7.

Say Before Cain killed Abel, God warned Cain to watch out for sin. Sin is like a lion waiting to pounce. Sin wants to control us, and the Bible says that sin leads to death. Jesus came to free us from sin. He changes our hearts so we can live for Him.

GROUP DISCUSSION

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

Say What does the story of Cain and Abel show about sin and people?

Guide kids to discuss how sin spread from Adam and Eve to their children. Adam and Eve’s disbelief of God’s words led to their disobedience in eating the forbidden fruit. Sin was in Cain’s heart, and out of his jealousy he killed his brother. Sin spread to people, and we all experience its consequences. Our hope is not that the next generation will do a better job at obeying; our hope is found only in Jesus who obeyed for us.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Rom. 5:12.)

Say Why is it sometimes hard for people to get along?

Remind kids that Cain’s sin separated him from God and people. Sin not only hurts our relationship with God, it hurts our relationships with others. Sin often comes from pride—thinking you are the best. Jesus demonstrated a better way of living and loving by putting others first.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read 1 Pet. 4:8.)

Say What should we do when we sin?

Guide kids to discuss how to seek forgiveness with God and with other people. We can repent—turn from our sin and turn back to God. We can confess our wrongdoing and ask forgiveness. Prompt kids to think of someone who might feel hurt by something they did. Encourage kids to seek forgiveness this week. Discuss how kids may need to make right what was wrong. For example, if they broke a friend’s toy, they may need to replace it.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Col. 3:13.)

PRAYER TIME

Lead the kids in a time of guided prayer. Remind them that they do not have to pray aloud if they feel uncomfortable doing so. Encourage them to pray about more than just things they want, but also to pray as a way to praise God and thank Him.

Take prayer requests and pray for your group.