

THE FIRST FAMILY

GENESIS 4



KEY PASSAGE: Psalm 104:24

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Who is God? God is our Creator and the King of everything.

CHRIST CONNECTION: God had promised that one of Eve's descendants would put an end to sin and death. Cain was not that descendant. He was sinful like his parents, Adam and Eve. As families grew and sin spread, people waited for God to keep His promise. At just the right time, God would send His Son, Jesus, to save sinners.

STORY POINT: Sin separates us from God.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

Genesis 4 offers insight into the first family in history—showcasing sin’s desire to rule human hearts and the merciful nature of God. Here, we read of Abel’s blood that was wrongfully shed, which cried out for justice. Later, the Biblical narrative reveals to us One whose blood speaks a better word than Abel’s—a firstborn Son would shed His blood to justify sinners and provide everlasting life. (Heb. 12:24)

What can we learn about God through His response to Cain’s sin? How is Jesus the greater firstborn Son?

Brothers Cain and Abel both gave offerings to God, but the former’s offering wasn’t truly pleasing to God and reflective of His true worth. God spoke directly to Cain asking him to consider why he felt so rejected by His response to the offering. God also warned him that though sin’s temptations were strong, he could rule over it. Through God’s encounters with Cain, we come to learn that God desires for the sinner to not be ruled by sin, which leads to death; rather, God calls us to trust Him by faith that we may do what is right. Yet, Cain did not heed the words of his Creator. Instead, he chose for sin to rule over him, resulting in murderous actions toward his brother.

God drew near to Cain and addressed his wickedness, acknowledging the unjust death of the righteous Abel. God told Cain that he was now cursed. As a result, Cain would not receive back from the earth the fruit of his labors and would wander for the rest of his days. Even still, God protected Cain from the fate he forced upon his brother; he received protection against the threat of death by another’s hands. However, this act was only a glimmer of God’s mercy toward sinners. In Christ’s sacrifice on the cross, we see the greatest picture of God’s mercy toward sinners: the righteous blood of Jesus satisfies God’s wrath over sin and provides our justification.

Reflect on Jesus’ righteousness in light of the unrighteousness of Cain, Adam and Eve, and the rest of mankind. The promised descendant who would redeem us amidst our sin wasn’t Eve’s firstborn son, but Jesus, the firstborn of all creation. God’s plan has always been to redeem us through faith in His Son. Pray for the kids hearing today’s lesson, that their hearts will be opened to the mercy of their Creator who leads us away from destruction and into everlasting life.



PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



WELCOME

10-15 MINUTES

Greet kids and open the session



LEARN

25-30 MINUTES

Teach kids the story of the gospel



LOVE

15-20 MINUTES

Lead kids to love the God of the gospel



LIVE

15-20 MINUTES

Lead kids to live out the mission of the gospel



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- ☐ "Sin's Consequence?" activity page

Session Starter (Option 1)

- ☐ balls, 2
- ☐ music



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- ☐ Small Group Timeline and Map Set
- ☐ world map



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- ☐ "Gospel Icons" printable
- ☐ Gospel Plan Poster

Reflection and Prayer

- ☐ Journal Page
- ☐ "Hope for Sinners" activity page



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- ☐ countdown video
- ☐ Story Point Poster

Big Picture Question

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- ☐ Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- ☐ "The First Family" video
- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster

Questions from Kids

- ☐ "Unit 1, Session 3" Questions from Kids video

Missions Moment

- ☐ inflated balloons or soccer balls, 1 per group

Key Passage Activity

- ☐ Key Passage Poster
- ☐ "Countless (Psalm 104:24)" song
- ☐ worship song of your choice (optional)
- ☐ cardstock strips, 1 per kid



WELCOME Kids

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

SAY “What happens if you disobey a rule at your school or in your home? Do you have a consequence? Why?”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Sin’s Consequence?” activity page.

SAY “Today, we will learn how Adam and Eve’s son, Cain, sinned against God and his brother. Because of Cain’s sin, he faced the consequence of separation from God.”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

☐ OPTION 1: CAST OUT

Before the session, gather two balls of different colors. Designate one ball as “sin.” Lead kids to form a large circle. Hand one ball to a kid and the “sin” ball to another kid. Direct kids to pass the balls around the circle in opposite directions. Play music for about 15–20 seconds, allowing kids time to pass the balls around. When you stop the music, whoever is holding the “sin” ball is out. Continue playing as time allows.

SAY “Being caught with the ‘sin’ ball cast you out of the game. Last week, we learned how sin entered the world through Adam and Eve’s disobedience. Because of their sin, all people sin. Today, we will learn how **SIN SEPARATES US FROM GOD**. We’ll hear a story of how Adam’s son, Cain, was cast out from God’s presence because of his sin.”

☐ OPTION 2: IS IT MERCIFUL?



Lead kids to stand in the middle of the room. Define mercy by telling kids it means showing forgiveness and kindness or choosing not to punish someone who deserves it. Tell kids to listen to the statements you say aloud. Direct kids to run to the right side of the room if the statement shows mercy or run to the left side if the statement does not show mercy. Call out the following statements or create your own:

- Choosing to be kind to someone who called you a name
- Sharing a toy with someone who is mean
- Laughing at a kid who made a mistake
- Giving to someone in need
- Shoving a kid so you can be first in line

SAY “God is merciful! Even when we sin and disobey Him, He shows us mercy. Mercy is always a gift of God because we don’t deserve it. Today, we will learn how God showed mercy to Cain when he sinned. We’ll also learn how God’s promise to send a Savior at just the right time shows us mercy too.”





INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “Welcome, kids! My name is [your name], and I am so excited you are here to learn from the Bible. God’s Word is true and helps us know God. The Bible also reminds us how God wants to show mercy to sinners through His Son, Jesus.

Did you bring your Bible with you? If so, please hold it up. [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.] Today, we’ll learn about the family of Adam and Eve and their two sons—Cain and Abel. As we learn about Cain, we will also learn that **SIN SEPARATES US FROM GOD**. [Display the Story Point Poster.] Let’s prepare our hearts to hear from God’s Word. Pray with me: ‘Dear God, please open our ears to listen and our eyes to see the truth from your Word. Give us hearts to believe. Amen.’ ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

SAY “Who remembers the answer to our big picture question: **Who is God?** [Allow responses.] The answer we have learned is, **God is our Creator and the King of everything**. Let’s repeat the answer together: **God is our Creator and the King of everything**.

As Creator and King, everything God made is good and He perfectly rules over what He made. Nothing God creates or does is bad or sinful. He is holy and without sin. Yet, last week we learned that people are sinful. Because of Adam and Eve’s disobedience to God’s command, sin entered the world. Today, we will learn more about how our sin separates us from our Creator and King. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “Who can tell me where our timeline begins? [Allow responses.] That’s right! Our timeline begins with God creating the world and everything in it. We’ve learned how God made the world in six days and rested on the seventh. Then we saw how the people God made, Adam and Eve, disobeyed God and sinned. Who remembers how they disobeyed? [Allow responses.] Yes, they disobeyed God’s command to not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. They failed to trust God and His Word. Instead, they chose to reject His command and believe the lies of the serpent. Today, we will learn about Adam and Eve’s family and how sin continued to spread in the world. ”



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Genesis 4:1-16,25-26. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “The First Family.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

THE FIRST FAMILY

“After Adam and Eve left the garden of Eden, they had a son named Cain and another son named Abel. Abel became a shepherd, and Cain worked the ground by growing plants and crops. Because sin entered the world through Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel were sinners too.

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. God said to Cain, “Why are you so mad? If you do what is right, your offering will be accepted.” Then God warned Cain, “If you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at the door. Sin wants you, but you must rule over it.”

Cain said to his brother, “Let’s go out to the field.” And while they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him.

God said to Cain, “Where is your brother Abel?”

“I don’t know,” Cain lied. “Is it my job to keep track of him?” But God knew what Cain had done.

Because God is holy, God had to punish Cain for his sin. “Now you are cursed,” God told Cain. “You will work the ground, but nothing will grow for you. Instead, you will wander the earth, never finding rest.”

Cain would not be able to stay with his family. He could no longer live in God’s presence. Even though God punished Cain, God was merciful. He put a mark on Cain to warn people not to 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: God had promised that one of Eve’s descendants would put an end to sin and death. Cain was not that descendant. He was sinful like his parents, Adam and Eve. As families grew and sin spread, people waited for God to keep His promise. At just the right time, God would send His Son, Jesus, to save sinners. ”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Pause and reflect:

Pause in the story when you tell how God had to punish sin. Invite kids to reflect on why sin must be punished.

Emphasize God’s

mercy: Remind kids what mercy means and emphasize it when you share how God showed mercy to Cain. Define *mercy* by telling kids it means showing forgiveness and kindness or choosing not to punish someone who deserves it. Tell kids that we all deserve punishment for our sin, but God is merciful to us through His Son, Jesus.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ Through Adam and Eve’s disobedience, sin entered the world. All people sin. We all choose to go our own way instead of God’s way. The Bible tells us that all people miss the mark and fail to meet God’s perfect measure. In our story today, we learned how Cain chose his own way and sinned against God and his brother.

Both Cain and Abel offered God an offering. But God accepted Abel’s offering and rejected Cain’s. Why do you think that was? **[Allow responses.]** The Bible tells us that God accepted Abel’s offering because he gave it by faith. (Heb. 11:4) This means he trusted in God and His promises. Abel wanted to please God and give Him an offering that showed his love for God.

Cain was furious that his offering was rejected. God warned Cain to not let the sin in his heart rule over him. Yet, Cain did not listen. How did Cain show that sin ruled in his heart? What did he do to Abel? **[Allow responses.]** Cain killed Abel. Cain did not obey God or want to live in a way that showed he loved God. He chose to reject God’s warning and failed to show love to his brother.

God punished Cain because of his sin. God cursed Cain and the ground he worked. Then God sent Cain away to the land of Nod. **SIN SEPARATES US FROM GOD.** But even in Cain’s punishment, God showed mercy. How did God show Cain mercy? **[Allow responses.]** He protected Cain with a mark so that whoever found him would not kill him.

God had promised that one of Eve’s descendants would put an end to sin and death. Cain was not that descendant. He was sinful like his parents, Adam and Eve. As families grew and sin spread, people waited for God to keep His promise. At just the right time, God would send His Son, Jesus, to save sinners. ”

3 GOSPEL DISCUSSION

SAY “ We are all sinful and **SIN SEPARATES US FROM GOD.** But God is merciful and sent His Son, Jesus, to save us from sin. We have a choice to trust in Jesus and let Him rule our hearts or we have a choice to continue to let sin rule our hearts. When we trust in Jesus, our sin is forgiven and we are brought back to God. Have you trusted in Jesus and asked Him to forgive you of your sin? ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 1, Session 3” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. Why do we fight with our siblings and other people?
2. Why is trusting in Jesus good news for sinners?



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Form groups of three to five kids. Give each group an inflated balloon. (Tip: If an outdoor space or gymnasium is available, consider playing there with a soccer ball.) Choose one player in each group to be It. The other players will use their feet to tap the balloon back and forth to one another, keeping it away from It. If It intercepts the balloon with his feet, he may choose the next player to be It.

SAY “ In this game, you kept the ball away from the player in the middle. Sin keeps us away from God. This is bad news! Missionaries like Eric and Ramona Reese have dedicated their lives to telling others about Jesus. They live in Brazil, where soccer is the most popular sport, and tell people that **SIN SEPARATES US FROM GOD**, but God sent His Son—Jesus—to save sinners. ”

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Psalm 104:24 together.

SAY “ God made a beautiful and good world! Even though sin has broken the world, we can still see how great God is through what He’s made. Just think about how you feel when you see a cute puppy or a bright starry sky. God is a good Creator! ”

Provide kids with a Bible and a strip of cardstock. Assist kids in finding Psalm 104:24 in their Bibles. Teach kids what a chapter number is and what a verse number is. Invite kids to create a bookmark by copying the verse on the cardstock. Provide markers and stickers as needed.

Lead kids to sing “Countless (Psalm 104:24).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “ Dear God, You are an amazing Creator and King! We praise You for Your mercy, and we ask that You would help us trust You. In Jesus’ name, amen. ”





LOVE

THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the Old Testament Israel Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Genesis 4. Explain that the Bible traces the family history of Adam throughout the Bible. Tell kids that we call these family histories genealogies. Explain that genealogies not only show us the historical accuracy of the Bible but also remind us of God's promise to bring a Rescuer into the world through Eve's offspring. If time allows, point to the family names in Genesis 4:25-26 and Luke 3:38.

Consider comparing the Old Testament Israel Map to a modern-day map to help kids understand where this story took place. (Tip: Locate the areas in and around the modern-day land east of the Euphrates River.) Choose a volunteer to read aloud Genesis 4:26 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verse aloud.

SAY “ After Cain was sent away, Adam and Eve had another son named Seth. Then Seth had a son named Enosh. The Bible also records these names in the New Testament book of Luke. (Luke 3:38) We see these names in Luke because they are a reminder of God's promise to send a Rescuer through Eve's offspring.

At just the right time, God sent His Son—Jesus—to live a perfect life and die on the cross for our sins. **SIN SEPARATES US FROM GOD**, but when we trust in Jesus, we are saved from our sin and are brought back to God. ”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY “ Why must God punish sin? ”

Remind kids that God is holy and hates sin. Tell kids that sin also makes us enemies with God. Share how our sin reveals that we have rejected Him. Explain that sin must be punished because God is just. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Rom. 2:8.)

SAY “ God showed Cain mercy even though he sinned. How does God show us mercy? ”

Discuss how God kept His promise to Adam and Eve by sending Jesus into the world to save sinners. Explain how Jesus took the punishment our sin deserves when He died on the cross. Tell kids that we receive mercy by not getting the punishment our sin deserves when we trust in Jesus. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Rom. 5:6-11.)

SAY “ Cain let sin rule in his heart. How can we not let sin rule our hearts? ”

Remind kids that God is our Creator and King. Tell kids that we can choose to acknowledge and submit to God as King and follow Him, or we can choose to go our own way and let sin rule in our lives. Share how trusting in Jesus changes our hearts so that we desire to make God our King and follow Him. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Jer. 24:7.)

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

☐ OPTION 1: BRING IT BACK

Before the session, print a copy of the “Gospel Icons” printable for each group of five kids. Form kids into groups of five and provide them with scissors. Lead kids to cut out the gospel icons. Then take them from each group and place them in individual piles on the opposite side of the room. Explain that each team of five kids will race to their pile, grab a cut out, and bring it back to their team. When all the cutouts have been brought back, teams will assemble them in the correct order of The Gospel: God’s Plan for Me poster. The first team to put all five in the correct order wins.

SAY “ The icons help tell us the good news of the gospel. We learn how God rules, we sinned, God provided, Jesus gives, and we respond. Every person needs to hear the good news of the gospel because all people sin. **SIN SEPARATES US FROM GOD** and only Jesus can bring us back to Him. ”

☐ OPTION 2: SEEK MERCY



Form kids into five groups and provide each group with a Bible. Assign one of the following Bible verses to each group: Proverbs 28:13; Lamentations 3:22-23; Ephesians 2:4-5; Titus 3:5; 1 Peter 1:3. Direct groups to look up their Bible verse and discuss how it shows the mercy of God. Allow a minute or two for discussion. Then invite groups to share with everyone what they learned about God’s mercy. For example, maybe they learned God’s mercy never fails or that God shows mercy to those who repent of their sins.

SAY “ Mercy is an attribute or a characteristic of God. God is merciful, and He shows mercy. In today’s story, we saw how God showed mercy to Cain even when Cain killed his brother. God shows mercy to us through His Son, Jesus. When we trust in Jesus, we don’t receive the punishment our sin deserves. That’s mercy! ”

2 JOURNAL AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute journal pages and pencils. Guide kids to think about and answer the questions listed on the page. As kids journal, invite them to share their ideas.

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God’s glory and my good?
- Are there promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
- How does this story help me to live on mission better?

Review the gospel and encourage kids to speak with you or another teacher if they have questions. Then pray, praising God for His greatness and goodness, knowing He is Creator and King. As time allows, lead kids to complete “Hope for Sinners” on the activity page.