

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.



PREPARE

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

- ☐ "Sent Away" activity page

Session Starter (Option 1)

- ☐ plastic bags filled with 36 pieces of fruity O-shaped cereal or 36 beads of six different colors, 1 per group
- ☐ bowls, 6 per group
- ☐ timer

Session Starter (Option 2)

- ☐ paper bags, 4
- ☐ piece of felt
- ☐ cotton balls, 2–4
- ☐ corn cob
- ☐ raw broccoli



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- ☐ Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- ☐ painter's tape
- ☐ building block sets, 1 per group

Reflection and Prayer

- ☐ Bible Story Coloring Page (optional)



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 balls, 1 per group

Key Passage Activity

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



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’s the best gift you have received? How did the gift show that you are loved?”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Sent Away” activity page.

| **SAY** “Today, we will learn how Cain’s sin against his brother, Abel, led to him being sent away.”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

☐ OPTION 1: SORT IT

Before the session, fill plastic bags with 36 pieces of fruity O-shaped cereal or 36 beads of six different colors. Make enough sets for each group of kids. Form kids into groups of three or four. Provide each group with a plastic bag filled with fruity O-shaped cereal or beads and six small bowls. Instruct groups to sort the cereal or beads by color and place each color in its own bowl. Consider timing kids to see which group can sort the colors the fastest.

SAY “When you sorted the colors, you had to separate them. Blue is not the same color as purple and yellow is not green. Today, we are going to learn that **SIN SEPARATES US FROM GOD**. God will not accept sin because there is no sin in God. He is holy and perfect. When we sin, we disobey God and His commands. We choose to let sin rule our hearts, instead of choosing God as our King. Let’s get ready to learn how a man named Cain sinned and how his sin separated him from God.”

☐ OPTION 2: WHAT IS IT?



Before the session, place some cotton balls, a piece of felt, corn cob, and broccoli in individual paper bags. Number the bags 1–4. Lead kids to sit in front of you, while you display the paper bags. Tell kids that in each paper bag is a clue about our Bible story. Hold up bag number one and invite kids one at a time to feel what is inside the bag. Then lead kids to guess what they think is in the bag. Reveal the contents of the bag. Repeat with the three remaining bags.

SAY “Our bags revealed cotton balls, felt, corn, and broccoli. Each of these materials represents something about our Bible story. We’ll hear how two brothers, Cain and Abel, gave offerings to God. Abel gave to God from his flock [point to the cotton and felt], and Cain gave an offering from the produce he grew [point to the corn and broccoli]. Let’s get ready to hear why God accepted Abel’s offering but not Cain’s.”





LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

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 teaches us that even though we all sin, God wants to forgive us of our sin 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 “Last week, we learned our big picture question: **Who is God?** Does anyone remember the answer? [Allow responses.] **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. 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 did not follow God’s command to not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Today, we will learn about Adam and Eve’s family and how sin continued to spread in the world. ”



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

Make letters: Invite kids to make letters with their hands. Tell kids to make a C when they hear the name Cain and an A when they hear the name Abel.

Mark it: Lead kids to make a X with their fingers when they hear how God marked Cain and showed Him mercy.



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ Sin is like a terrible sickness. It infects everyone’s hearts. In our story today, we learned how sin had infected Cain’s heart. Cain worked the ground like a farmer while his brother, Abel, was a shepherd. When it came time to provide an offering from their work, whose offering did God accept? **[Allow responses.]** God accepted Abel’s offering and rejected Cain’s. 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.

Cain was furious because his offering was rejected. Rather than try to do what is right and honor God, Cain allowed the sin in his heart to rule him. How did Cain sin against God and his brother Abel? **[Allow responses.]** He killed Abel. Cain did not obey God or want to live in a way that showed he loved God.

God punished Cain because of his sin. What was Cain’s punishment? **[Allow responses.]** First, God cursed Cain and said that the ground would not give him food. Then God said Cain would wander the earth, leaving his family and the place he had lived. He was sent out from God’s presence and lived in the land of Nod. **SIN SEPARATES US FROM GOD.** But even in Cain’s punishment, God showed mercy. 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. 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 others, like our friends and family?
2. Why is trusting in Jesus good news for sinners?

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.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

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! Like Abel, we praise and worship You. Help us turn away from sin and turn to Jesus. 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 God's Word is true and trustworthy. Tell kids that the events in the Bible really happened and the Bible has genealogies or family histories that show the accuracy of the Bible. Point out some of the names in Adam's family from Genesis 4:25-26.

Consider pointing out the location of the land east of the Euphrates River on the Old Testament Israel Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Genesis 4:26 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verses aloud.

SAY “ Even though Cain sinned and rejected God's ways, other people worshiped God. Abel worshiped God by faith when he gave an acceptable offering. Seth's family members worshiped God and called on His name. Some people still trusted God and had hope that He would send someone to rescue them from sin.

At just the right time, God sent His Son—Jesus—to live a perfect life and die on the cross for our sins. When we trust in Jesus, we are saved from our sins. Jesus forgives us and changes our hearts so we can worship God and live for Him. ”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY “ What is sin? Why must God punish sin? ”

Remind kids that sin is disobeying God and His commands. Help kids understand that our sin must be punished because God is holy and without sin. Explain that when we sin, we go against who God is and all that God loves. Tell kids that it would not be good or loving of God if He overlooked sin. Share that God is a good Judge and punishes sin.

SAY “ How did Cain's sin separate him from God? How does our sin separate us from God? ”

Discuss how God cast out Cain from His presence and the community of his family. Tell kids that when we choose sin over obeying God, it's like traveling on a road away from God. Our sinful choices lead us away from the Lord. Explain that sin comes between us and God because He is holy and just.

SAY “ God promised that a Rescuer would come to save people from sin. How does Jesus bring us back to God? ”

Tell kids that God's Son, Jesus, came to earth and always obeyed God. Share how Jesus died on the cross and took the punishment our sin deserves. Help kids understand that God was just because our sin was punished through Jesus' sacrifice, but He was also merciful because we escape the punishment through faith in Jesus. Discuss how faith in Jesus' death and resurrection brings us back to God.

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





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

☐ OPTION 1: BRIDGE THE GAP

Before the session, create three pairs of X marks on the floor using painter's tape. Make each pair of Xs 4 feet apart. Form kids into three groups and provide each group with building blocks, making sure groups will not have enough material to bridge the gap between the Xs. Lead each group to a pair of Xs and instruct the groups to build a bridge from one X to the other. Tell kids they can only use the materials you have given them. Allow a few minutes for groups to work together to build their bridge.

SAY “No matter how hard you tried, you could not make a bridge long enough to connect the Xs. This reminds me of how **SIN SEPARATES US FROM GOD**. When we sin and disobey God and His commands, we fall short of His perfection. Thankfully, we don't have to build a bridge to God because God has done that for us. He sent His Son, Jesus, to be the way back to God. When we trust in Jesus, we can now be with God forever.”

☐ OPTION 2: WHAT TIME IS IT?



Choose one kid to be Mr. Wolf. Lead Mr. Wolf to stand at the front of the room and the remaining kids to stand at the back of the room. Tell the kids to say, “Mr. Wolf, Mr. Wolf, what time is it?” Then direct Mr. Wolf to call out a time such as four o'clock. Lead kids to step forward the number called out, in this case four times. Lead kids to repeat saying, “Mr. Wolf, Mr. Wolf, what time is it?” until he decides to say, “Lunch time!” Then Mr. Wolf will turn around and try to tag as many kids as possible while they run away from him. Play again as time allows choosing a new kid to be Mr. Wolf.

SAY “At just the right time, Mr. Wolf decided to call out ‘Lunch time!’ This reminds me of how God determined just the right time to send His Son, Jesus, into the world. God had promised Adam and Eve that a Rescuer would come, and today we learned that Cain was not the promised son. But the good news is God kept His promise! Jesus came into the world at just the right time to die for our sins that we may be saved.”

2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask the kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does this story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids. If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.