

THE FIRST FAMILY

GENESIS 4



CHRIST CONNECTION: God had promised that someone from Eve's family would put an end to sin and death. Cain was not that person. 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.

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

KEY PASSAGE: Psalm 104:24

STORY POINT: Sin keeps 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 offered sacrifices to God, but the former’s offering wasn’t truly a sacrifice—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 preschoolers 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 preschoolers and open the session



LEARN

25-30 MINUTES

Teach preschoolers the story of the gospel



LOVE

15-20 MINUTES

Lead preschoolers to love the God of the gospel



LIVE

15-20 MINUTES

Lead preschoolers to live 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, Allergy Alert, construction paper, copy paper, washable markers, crayons, blunt-tipped scissors, glue sticks, glue, tape, blocks, baby dolls, play dough, world map, snacks, paper cups, napkins.



WELCOME

Welcome

- ☐ "How Countless (Psalm 104:24)" song

Activity Page

- ☐ "Missing Pieces" activity page, 1 per child

Draw your family

- ☐ craft sticks, 6 per child
- ☐ colored pencils

Transition

- ☐ countdown video (optional)



LOVE

Snack and talk

- ☐ hand sanitizer (optional)
- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster
- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster

Make a sheep snack

- ☐ powdered donut holes
- ☐ pretzel sticks
- ☐ marshmallows
- ☐ plates
- ☐ ziplock bags



LEARN

Introduce the Bible story

- ☐ fresh banana
- ☐ over-ripe banana

Learn about the Bible

- ☐ bookmark
- ☐ Giant Timeline or Small Group Timeline

Tell the Bible story

- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster
- ☐ "The First Family" video (optional)
- ☐ storytelling tips props (optional)

Practice the key passage

- ☐ Key Passage Marker
- ☐ Key Passage Poster
- ☐ "How Countless (Psalm 104:24)" song

Learn the Big Picture Question

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster

Missions moment

- ☐ soccer ball



LIVE

Build homes

- ☐ people figures

Toss a beanbag

- ☐ beanbag

Put together a puzzle

- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster
- ☐ wooden blocks, 6–8

Find the sheep

- ☐ shallow plastic bin
- ☐ plastic tablecloth
- ☐ uncooked rice or shredded paper
- ☐ cotton balls
- ☐ spoon

Transition

- ☐ coloring page, 1 per child
- ☐ "How Countless (Psalm 104:24)" song
- ☐ Big Picture Cards for Families



WELCOME Preschoolers

Post an allergy alert, if needed. Set out supplies to engage preschoolers as they arrive. Play music as you welcome preschoolers. Greet children by name at eye level. Follow your church's security procedures.

1 ACTIVITY PAGE

Lead preschoolers to complete "Missing Pieces" on the activity page.

SAY 🗨️ What kind of animal do you see on your activity page? (a sheep) In today's Bible story we will hear about two brothers. One brother gave God an offering, or gift, of sheep and the other brother gave some food that he grew. God was happy with one offering, but not with the other. 🗨️

2 SESSION STARTER

Use one or both of the following options to engage curiosity about today's Bible story.

TOSS A BALL



Draw a large heart shape on a piece of paper and tape it to the floor. Wad another piece of paper into a ball. Invite preschoolers to form a large circle around the heart. Take turns tossing the paper ball toward the heart. When the ball lands, guide the preschooler who threw the ball to say a way he can show love to his family. Play several rounds, varying how far away preschoolers are from the heart shape.

SAY 🗨️ Those are great ways to show love and kindness to your family. In today's Bible story, we will hear about two brothers, Cain and Abel. Unfortunately, Cain was not kind and loving to his brother. 🗨️

DRAW YOUR FAMILY

Distribute six craft sticks, construction paper, and glue to each child. Help preschoolers make a house on their papers by gluing four craft sticks together to make a square and adding the remaining craft sticks to form a triangle-shaped roof. Encourage preschoolers to use colored pencils to draw their family inside the house and add other designs around the house. Be sensitive to preschoolers' family situations.

SAY 🗨️ Who are some people that live at your house? Today we will learn about Adam and Eve's children. They had three sons: Cain, Abel, and Seth. 🗨️

3 TRANSITION TO LEARN

Gain preschoolers' attention by showing the countdown video, turning the lights off and on, or clapping a simple rhythm for children to copy. Invite preschoolers to bleat like sheep as they transition to Learn.

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE BIBLE STORY

Show a fresh banana and an overly ripe, brown banana. Ask preschoolers which banana they would rather eat.

SAY “For breakfast, would you rather eat this brown banana or this fresh, yellow one? Which one do you think would taste best? If we were to give something to God, should it be the very best? [Allow responses.] In today’s Bible story, we will learn about two brothers who gave God gifts, but only one brother gave his very best.”

2 LEARN ABOUT THE BIBLE

Place a bookmark at Genesis 4 in your Bible. Invite a preschooler to open it. Reverently display the open Bible.

SAY “The Bible has two parts, the Old Testament and the New Testament. Our Bible story today is found in the first book of the Old Testament: Genesis.”

Point to the Bible story picture on the giant timeline or small group timeline. Remind children that all the stories in the Bible fit together to tell an even bigger story. The Bible tells us the big story of how God rescues sinners through His Son, Jesus.

3 TELL THE BIBLE STORY

Tell the following Bible story using the provided storytelling tips or show the video. Use the bold version of the Bible story for younger preschoolers.

THE FIRST FAMILY

“After Adam and Eve left the garden of Eden, they started a family. Adam and Eve had two sons, Cain and Abel. They grew up and Abel became a shepherd. Cain became a farmer.

One day, Cain took some of the food he grew and gave God an offering. Abel gave God some of his sheep. God was happy with Abel’s offering, but He was not happy with Cain’s. This made Cain angry!

“Why are you so upset?” God asked. “If you do what is right, I will be happy with your offering.” God told Cain to be careful. “Sin wants to control you,” God said. “But you must control it.”

Then Cain did something very wrong. Cain invited Abel to go out into the field, and Cain killed Abel.

“Where is your brother Abel?” God asked Cain.

“I don’t know,” Cain lied. “Is it my job to take care of him?”

But God knew what Cain did, and God punished Cain. God said Cain would spend the rest of his life walking around the earth. He would not have a home. If Cain tried to farm, nothing would grow.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

Still, God was kind to Cain and put a mark on him to protect him. So Cain went and lived in the land of Nod.

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, the people in Adam's family began to pray to God. ”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Show faces: Make a smiling face on one side of a paper plate and a frowning face on the other side. Show the different emotions as you tell the story.

Sit in a field: Lay a large brown blanket or sheet for children to sit on as you tell the story. Tell them to pretend like they are sitting outside in a field.

4 CHRIST CONNECTION

SAY ” God had promised that someone from Eve's family would put an end to sin and death. Cain was not that person. 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. ”

5 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY ” At first, Adam and Eve had two sons. One son was named Cain. Do you remember the other son's name? (Abel) When Abel grew up, he became a shepherd. What kind of animals do shepherds take care of? (sheep) What sound does a sheep make? [Allow responses.] Cain became a farmer. Both brothers gave an offering to God. God was happy with Abel's offering, but he was not happy with what Cain brought. How did that make Cain feel? (angry) Cain was very angry and he made a wrong choice and killed his brother. God punished Cain and sent him away because of his sin. **SIN KEEPS US FROM GOD**, that's why God sent Jesus! At just the right time, God would send His Son, Jesus, to save sinners. ”

6 PRACTICE THE KEY PASSAGE

Place the key passage marker at Psalm 104:24. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Read the key passage aloud. Lead preschoolers to do the following motions as you say the verse together: “How countless are your works, LORD!” (Count on fingers) “The earth is full of your creatures.” (Use fingers to make a large circle) “Psalm 104:24” (Open hands like a book.).

SAY ” Our key passage says, ‘The earth is full of God's creatures.’ You and I are created by God! That means Cain and Abel were created by God, too. Abel trusted God and gave Him an offering of sheep. Cain chose to sin. God had promised that someone from Eve's family would put an end to sin and death. Cain was not that person. Who did God send to save us from sin? (Jesus) ”

Sing the key passage song, “How Countless (Psalm 104:24).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

7 LEARN THE BIG PICTURE QUESTION AND ANSWER

SAY “ Our big picture question asks, **Who is God?** Do you remember the answer? The answer is, **God is our Creator and King.** Let’s say that again. I’ll ask the question, and then you say the answer. **Who is God?** [Pause for responses.] That’s right! **God is our Creator—He made us!—and King—He is in charge of everything.** ”

8 MISSIONS MOMENT

Guide preschoolers to sit in a circle. Give one preschooler a soccer ball. Remind preschoolers that **SIN KEEPS US FROM GOD**, but the good news is that God sent His Son, Jesus, to rescue us from sin. Point out that for people to believe in Jesus, another person must tell them about Jesus. Invite preschoolers to take turns saying the name of a friend, family member, or neighbor that they could tell about Jesus. Remind preschoolers that they can share Jesus by telling a Bible story or simply saying, “Jesus loves you!” Let preschoolers take turns rolling the soccer ball and saying people’s names. Be sure everyone has a chance to play.

SAY “ What kind of ball did we pass around the circle? (a soccer ball) Soccer is the most popular sport in the country of Brazil. We call it ‘soccer,’ but in Brazil, it’s called ‘football.’ People in Brazil need to hear the good news about Jesus. **SIN KEEPS US FROM GOD.** That’s why missionaries like Eric and Ramona Reese are there telling people that Jesus rescues people from sin. Let’s pray for the people we named. [Lead in prayer.] ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**



LOVE God because of what we learned

1 PRAY

Invite preschoolers to close their eyes and think about God as they talk with Him.

SAY “God, we know our sin keeps us from You. Thank you for sending Jesus, who takes away our sin so that we can be a part of your family forever. Amen.”

2 SNACK AND TALK

Post an allergy alert. Wash hands or use hand sanitizer. Serve a snack. Show the Bible story picture poster as you ask the following questions. Retell parts of the Bible story as needed.

SAY “What was your favorite part of today’s Bible story?”

SAY “What did you learn about God in today’s Bible story?”

SAY “Why was Cain angry?”

SAY “Who is God? God is our Creator and King.”

3 MAKE A SHEEP SNACK

Distribute a plate with one powered donut hole, three pretzel sticks, and one marshmallow to each preschooler. Demonstrate how to break the pretzel sticks in half and push them into the bottom of the donut hole to create four legs. Use the other pretzel stick to make a neck for the sheep. Place a marshmallow on top of that pretzel stick to make the sheep’s head. Assist preschoolers as needed. Allow preschoolers to eat their sheep snack or provide ziplock bags to transport them home.

SAY “You made a yummy sheep snack! In today’s Bible story, Abel brought God an offering. An offering is a gift. What did Abel give to God? (a sheep) Abel trusted God and God was happy with his offering. Abel showed God how much he loved Him. What are some ways we can show God that we love Him?”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE for God out of love

- 1 Choose the activities that best fit your group, space, available resources, and time constraints. Set up activities in one of these ways: as a group, all at the same time; in small groups that rotate through each activity; or set up as centers, allowing preschoolers to browse and choose.

WATCH AND OBEY



Play a “mirror” game by instructing preschoolers to watch and mimic your movements, sounds, and facial expressions. Repeat the game, choosing a child to stand in front of the class to be it.

SAY “ In our game, how did you know what to do? [Allow responses.] You had to watch whoever was it. The way we know how to obey God is by learning from the Bible. [Hold up a Bible.] The Bible teaches us that **God is our Creator and King**. This means that God made us and gives us what we need. He loves us such much that He gave us the best thing ever, His Son, Jesus. ”

BUILD HOMES

Lead preschoolers to use blocks to build homes and neighborhoods. Use people figures to play out family scenarios such as going to the park, eating a meal together, or going to church. Be sensitive to preschoolers’ family and living situations.

SAY “ What kind of things do you enjoy doing with your family? [Allow responses.] God gave you a family. Adam and Eve had a family too. God had promised that someone from Eve’s family would put an end to sin and death. **SIN KEEPS US FROM GOD**. 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. ”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

PUT TOGETHER A PUZZLE

Print a copy of the Bible story picture poster on heavyweight paper and cut into six equal pieces. Tape each piece to the flat side of a square or rectangle block. Lay the block with the puzzle pieces facing up. Mix up the pieces and invite preschoolers to slide the pieces around to solve the puzzle. Consider providing an additional copy of Bible story picture poster to use as a reference.

SAY “ You put the puzzle together and now we can see the picture. In our Bible story today, Cain chose to sin. Sin is disobeying God and **SIN KEEPS US AWAY FROM GOD**. God had promised that someone from Eve’s family would put an end to sin and death. Cain was not that person. 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. ”

FIND SHEEP



Before the session, fill a plastic bin halfway with uncooked rice or shredded paper. Bury several cotton balls or white craft pom-poms in the rice. Set the bin on top of a plastic tablecloth. Provide digging tools such as spoons or small shovels. Challenge preschoolers to find all the cotton ball “sheep.”

SAY “ These cotton balls remind me of sheep. God was happy with the sheep offering Abel brought. What kind of offering did Cain bring? (crops) God was not happy with Cain’s offering. Cain became angry and sinned. **SIN KEEPS US FROM GOD**. God punished Cain because of his sin, but He was also kind to him by protecting Him. God showed kindness to us by sending Jesus. When we trust Jesus and ask Him to forgive our sin, He does! ”

2 TRANSITION

Invite preschoolers to complete their coloring pages. Consider leading preschoolers to sing the key passage song or involving them in a simple game to practice the key passage or big picture question. If parents are picking up children at this time, tell them something that their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session. Give parents the completed activity page. Distribute the big picture cards for families. Encourage parents to engage with the family discussion starters and family activities during the week.