

THE FIRST FAMILY

GENESIS 4



CHRIST CONNECTION: Cain sinned like his parents did. Cain was not the Rescuer that God promised to send. Families grew and sin spread, and people waited for God to keep His promise. One day, God would send Jesus to rescue sinners.

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

KEY PASSAGE: The earth is full of God's creatures. Psalm 104:24

STORY POINT: Sin keeps 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 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

Lead preschoolers to love the God of the gospel

30-40 MINUTES



LIVE

Lead preschoolers to live the mission of the gospel



BONUS

60-65 MINUTES

Teach preschoolers for an additional hour



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a supply of the following items available during all teaching sessions: Allergy Alert, Bibles, washable markers, crayons, scissors (adult use), blunt-tipped scissors, construction paper, copy paper, glue sticks, glue, tape, baby dolls, blocks, play dough, and a beanbag.



WELCOME

Find a toy sheep

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster
- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster
- ☐ toy sheep
- ☐ gift bags



LEARN

Introduce the Bible story

- ☐ gift box wrapped in beautiful packaging
- ☐ gift box wrapped in plain or damaged packaging

Review the Bible story

- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster

Learn and practice the key passage phrase

- ☐ Key Passage Phrase Marker
- ☐ small gift



LOVE

Sort gift bows

- ☐ self-adhesive gift bows, various colors

Build a house for a family

- ☐ people figures



LIVE

Pass and whisper

- ☐ stuffed lamb

Missions activity

- ☐ soccer ball



BONUS

Examine gifts

- ☐ wool fluff or wool dryer ball
- ☐ piece of fruit

Care for baby dolls

- ☐ doll care items (baby clothes, blankets, brush, bottle, etc.)

Make a sheep

- ☐ green or light blue paper, 1 sheet per child
- ☐ cotton balls, 10-12 per child
- ☐ googly eyes, 1 per child



WELCOME Preschoolers

Provide as many learning activities as possible from the Love and Live sections to give preschoolers choices to learn. Incorporate the Bible story, the Christ connection, and key passage phrase in your conversations as the preschoolers engage in learning activities throughout the session.

Use the following activity to greet children as they enter the classroom. Talk about the big picture question and answer. After each child completes the welcome activity, encourage him to participate in the activities provided from the Love and Live sections of the leader guide.

FIND A TOY SHEEP

Hide toy sheep in gift bags. Place the gift bags around the room. Post the big picture question poster and the Bible story picture poster in an open area of the room. Invite children to look in the gift bags and bring you what is inside. Read the big picture question poster to the child and look together at the Bible story picture poster.

SAY “ I am so glad you came to church today! What did you find in the gift bag? [Pause for responses.] I wonder what sheep have to do with our big picture question and our Bible story? Do you have any ideas? What do you think? [Pause for responses.] **God is our Creator and King.** After Adam and Eve left the garden, they had a family. One of their sons took care of sheep. He knew **God is our Creator and King.** He offered a special gift to God. ”





LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE BIBLE STORY

Show the children two gifts, one wrapped in lovely packaging and the other gift in plain or damaged packaging. Ask children which gift they would rather give to God if they could give a present to Him. Wait for the children to answer. Ask why they would choose the one they did. Wait for them to respond.

SAY “ In the Bible there is a story that tells about two brothers who both offered a gift to God. We would call that an offering. One gift made God very happy. The other gift did not. Today we will discover that **SIN KEEPS US FROM GOD.** ”

2 TELL THE BIBLE STORY

Open your Bible to Genesis 4 and tell the following Bible story:

THE FIRST FAMILY

SAY “ Adam and Eve had two sons, Cain and Abel. Abel grew up and took care of sheep. Cain worked the ground to grow plants.

One day, Cain gave God a gift of some of the food he grew. Abel gave God a gift too: some of his sheep. God was happy with Abel's gift, but He was not happy with Cain's gift. This made Cain so mad!

“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 hurt Abel, and Abel died.

“Where is your brother?” God asked Cain.

“I don't know,” Cain said.

But God knew what Cain did. God punished Cain. Cain had to go live in another land. God gave Adam and Eve another son, Seth, and their family grew. ”

Christ Connection: Cain sinned like his parents did. Cain was not the Rescuer that God promised to send. Families grew and sin spread, and people waited for God to keep His promise. One day, God would send Jesus to rescue sinners.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

3 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

Name things from the Bible story and ask children to show you thumbs-up or thumbs-down if each event was good/right or bad/wrong: Abel offered God some of his sheep (up), “Cain offered God some of the food he grew” (up), “Cain was mad” (down), “God warned Cain not to let his anger control him” (up) “Cain didn’t listen to God” (down), “Cain hurt Abel” (down) “God gave Adam and Eve another son, Seth” (up).

SAY “Sin always has consequences. First, **SIN KEEPS US FROM GOD**. In Cain and Abel’s story, it meant Abel died. It also meant Cain had to move from home to a different land. Cain sinned like his parents did. He was not the Rescuer God promised to send. Families grew, sin spread, and people waited for God to keep His promise. One day, God would send Jesus to rescue sinners.”

4 SING A SONG

Sing the song to the familiar tune of “The Bear Went Over the Mountain”:

The earth is full of God’s creatures,
The earth is full of God’s creatures,
The earth is full of God’s creatures,
Psalm 104:24

5 LEARN AND PRACTICE THE KEY PASSAGE PHRASE

Place the key passage phrase marker at Psalm 104:24. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Read the key passage phrase. Lead children to say the key passage phrase two times while passing a small gift around the circle.

SAY “God gave us a gift when He created our earth. His works are countless. The earth is full of His creatures. We can thank God for His creation.”

6 PRAY

Pray, thanking God for His plan to rescue people from sin by sending Jesus.



LOVE

THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God because of what we learned

1 TOSS A BEANBAG



Instruct children to stand in a circle. Demonstrate how to play the game by tossing the beanbag to a child. Tell the person who receives the beanbag to name something that makes God happy when we do them. Give an example such as “Obey parents.” or “Helping someone.” Tell the person who received the beanbag to toss it to someone else in the circle. Continue play until every child who would like a turn has tossed the beanbag.

SAY “It is always good to choose to do things that make God happy. God is happy when we choose to obey Him. **SIN KEEPS US FROM GOD.** Cain hurt his brother Abel. Cain’s choices did not make God happy. God promised to send a Rescuer to rescue people, like Adam, Eve, and Cain, from sin. Jesus is the Rescuer God promised to send.”

2 SORT GIFT BOWS

Scatter self-adhesive gift bows on a table with matching colored paper. Talk about Cain’s gift, Abel’s gift, and Cain’s reaction to God’s preference of Abel’s gift. Talk to the children conversationally about God’s warning to Cain about not allowing his sin to control him.

SAY “God loved Cain and Abel. God wanted Cain to make the right choice, to not let his anger control him. But Cain did not listen to God. He chose to hurt his brother instead. Cain had to leave home and move away to a different land. **SIN KEEPS US FROM GOD.**”

3 BUILD A HOUSE

Gather blocks and family people figures. Guide children to build a house for the people figures. Talk about Adam and Eve’s family by retelling key points from the story.

SAY “Cain sinned like his parents did. Cain was not the Rescuer that God promised to send. Families grew and sin spread, and people waited for God to keep His promise. One day, God would send Jesus to rescue sinners.”

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





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE for God out of love

1 PASS AND WHISPER

Gather preschoolers to sit in a circle. Pass a plush lamb around the circle. Lead preschoolers to whisper the key passage in the lamb's ear. Say the key passage phrase aloud together when each child has whispered the key passage phrase to the lamb: "The earth is full of God's creatures. Psalm 104:24."

SAY "God made the sheep and lambs that Abel cared for. Abel offered some of his sheep back to God as a gift. This made God happy. The whole earth is full of God's creatures. We can thank God for His work in our world."

2 MISSIONS ACTIVITY

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, God must reveal Himself to them. This often happens through others. 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. 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.]"

3 SNACK AND TRANSITION

Post an allergy alert. Serve the snack. As children eat, review and talk about the Bible story. When children finish their snack, lead them to complete the activity page. As they work, continue talking about the Bible story and emphasize the Christ connection.

SAY "Cain sinned like his parents did. Cain was not the Rescuer that God promised to send. Families grew and sin spread, and people waited for God to keep His promise. One day, God would send Jesus to rescue sinners."

Remember to communicate helpful information to the bonus teaching hour leaders. If parents are picking up children at this time, tell them something their child did well during the session. Distribute big picture cards for families. Encourage parents to engage with the family discussion starters and family activities during the week.





BONUS Teaching Hour Group Time

1 EXAMINE GIFTS

Post an Allergy Alert prior to the session. Greet children in group time by welcoming them to sit in a circle. Pass around a piece of wool fluff and a piece of fruit. Ask children which would be a better gift to offer to God? Allow time for children to think about this and offer their opinion.

2 TALK ABOUT THE BIBLE STORY

Open the Bible to Genesis 4. Use the summarized points below to talk about the Bible story:

THE FIRST FAMILY

- Adam and Eve had a family. Their son Abel took care of sheep. Their son Cain grew food to eat.
- One day, Cain gave God some of his crops as a gift. Abel gave God some of his sheep. God was happy with Abel's gift, but He was not happy with Cain's.
- Cain was so mad. God warned Cain not to make a wrong choice, but Cain hurt his brother and he died. God punished Cain and sent him away.
- After Cain left, God gave Adam and Eve another son, Seth. Adam and Eve's family grew.

3 SING A SONG

Sing the song below to the tune of "The Bear Went Over the Mountain":

The earth is full of God's creatures,
The earth is full of God's creatures,
The earth is full of God's creatures,
Psalm 104:24

4 SAY THE KEY PASSAGE PHRASE

Place the key passage phrase marker at Psalm 104:24. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Lead children to say the key passage phrase with a sad face and again with a happy face. Remind children of God's countless works that gave us an earth filled with creatures.

5 PRAY

Pray, thanking God for the Bible that teaches us about God's creation and about His people.



BONUS Teaching Hour Activities

6 PLAY "SIMON SAYS"

Play a simple game of "Simon Says," offering simple commands that require repetitive motion such as "pat your head", or "stomp your feet". Ask children if it is easy to control how many times, they pat their head or stomp their feet. Give the command, "Simon says, 'Stop,'" and see how many children you can catch still doing the motion.

SAY “ Oh! I see some of you were still moving after Simon said to stop. That reminds me of the Bible story. God told Cain not to let his anger control his actions. Cain did not listen. Cain hurt his brother and Abel died. Cain had to move away to another land. **SIN KEEPS US FROM GOD.** We must obey and do what God says so that we do not sin. ”

7 CARE FOR BABY DOLLS

Set out baby dolls, doll clothes, and other baby care items for children to discover. Allow children to play with the dolls, reminding them how parents care for babies as opportunities arise. Talk with children about Adam and Eve's children, reviewing key points from the story naturally during their play. Review the Christ connection and the story point as children move to the next activity.

SAY “ Adam and Eve had two sons. Eventually, Cain and Abel grew up. Cain sinned like his parents did. Cain was not the Rescuer God promised to send. Families grew, sin spread, and people waited for God to keep His promise. One day, God would send Jesus to rescue sinners. **SIN KEEPS US FROM GOD.** ”

8 MAKE A SHEEP

Use a marker to trace around each child's hand onto the construction paper. Allow the child to glue cotton balls onto the palm section and add a googly eye to the thumb. Point out that the four fingers look like the legs of the sheep. Remind children that Abel offered some of his sheep as an offering (gift) to God; God was pleased with Abel's offering.

SAY “ Abel gave God the best sheep from his flock. Cain offered God some food he had grown. God was pleased with Abel's gift. Cain was angry God did not like his gift. God warned Cain not to make a wrong choice, not to allow his anger to control him. Cain did not listen to God. Cain sinned. **SIN KEEPS US FROM GOD.** God sent Jesus to rescue people from sin. ”

Release preschoolers to parents according to your church's security procedure. Tell them something that their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session.