

LESSON 4

Cain & Abel

GENESIS 4:1-16



BIBLE TRUTH

OUR ACTIONS REVEAL THE TRUE MOTIVATION OF OUR HEARTS

LESSON SNAPSHOT

- 1. OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN**
Use last week’s lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.
- 2. BIBLE STORY 10 MIN**
Read Genesis 4:1–16 from the Scriptures or read story 4, “Cain and Abel,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.
- 3. OBJECT LESSON 1 10 MIN**
Mastering Sin
SUPPLIES:
 - ✓ a light wooden chair (a plastic folding chair will do in a pinch)
 - ✓ a whip (an imitation whip can be made by attaching a length of twine to a wooden dowel)
 - ✓ a lion tamer’s outfit (safari hat, khaki shirt, and pants)
- 4. TEACHING/DISCUSSION 10 MIN**
- 5. OBJECT LESSON 2 10 MIN**
The King’s Seal
SUPPLIES:
 - ✓ bowl of freshly popped popcorn
 - ✓ a gold star or seal
- 6. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN**
- 7. ACTIVITY TIME 15 MIN**
Cain’s Mark
SUPPLIES:
 - ✓ paper
 - ✓ pencils
 - ✓ crayons
- 8. CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN**
- 9. BONUS OBJECT LESSON 15 MIN**
Reenact the Crime

TOTAL 85 MIN

PREPARING TO TEACH

TEACHING POINTS

True worship puts God first—Abel made an offering to God from sheep he personally owned, the firstborn sheep, the very best he had. That was definitely a sacrifice. But what Cain gave does not seem to have been very special, just “the fruit of the ground.” Maybe he even found it growing wild! Cain’s offering was not a celebration of God’s goodness because Cain was not sacrificing the first or the best of what he owned.

When God approved of Abel’s offering, but not Cain’s, Cain got angry. If Cain really cared about God being glorified, then instead of being angry he would have been sad that God was not pleased. This shows Cain was more concerned with his own glory than with God’s.

Unrepentant sin will bring destruction—In Genesis 4:6–7, God gave Cain a warning that was kind and loving but also very serious. God told Cain that if he did not turn from his sinful anger it would bring destruction. But Cain’s anger burned so hot that not even God’s warning could stop him from killing his brother.

Galatians 6:7–8 tells us that we reap what we sow. Here we see how true this is. Because of Cain’s anger, Abel is dead and Cain is cursed by God. Unrepentant sin brings destruction.

God’s grace extends even to the disobedient—God could have judged Cain as soon as his offering was found to be unacceptable. Instead, God allowed Cain to live. Then, when Cain became angry, God could have judged Cain’s anger right away. Instead, God warned him for his good. And when Cain rebelled against God’s warning and killed his brother and was driven away, God could have abandoned him immediately. Instead God placed a mark on Cain for protection.

So we see that God’s grace extends even to those who are disobedient. Psalm 103:10 describes God as not treating us as our sins deserve or repaying us according to our sinfulness.

WHERE IS JESUS? _____

How does today's Bible story fit into God's greater plan of redemption?

Read Hebrews 12:22–24.

Abel was the first man ever to be killed. Jesus was the most important man ever to be killed. They were killed for the same basic reason—because they were favored by God, and others not favored by God hated them for it. So in some ways the deaths of Abel and Jesus are very similar.

But Abel's blood could not bring forgiveness of sin. Only the shed blood of Jesus, both God and man, could do that. This is why "the sprinkled blood [of Jesus] speaks a better word than the blood of Abel." The sacrifice of Jesus was perfect.

THE LESSON

OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week's lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read Genesis 4:1–16 from the Scriptures or read story 4, "Cain and Abel," from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

OBJECT LESSON 1 10 MIN

Mastering Sin

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ a light wooden chair (a plastic folding chair will do in a pinch)
- ✓ a whip (an imitation whip can be made by attaching a length of twine to a wooden dowel)
- ✓ a lion tamer's outfit (safari hat, khaki shirt, and pants)

Before class, dress up in the lion tamer's outfit. Have the chair and whip handy. This skit will introduce teaching on the mortification of the flesh (the action of subduing one's bodily desires).

“Hello, I am a lion tamer. Let me tell you a little about taming lions. First, just because we can train lions to jump through rings of fire, and we can train them to allow us to place our heads in their opened mouths, doesn’t mean they are really tame. In fact, when we first get the lions we need to be very careful. Lions are used to hunting for their prey. We start them on a diet of pig’s legs. The pigs are dead of course. People don’t like to watch lions kill things. The problem with feeding them dead things is that they can’t use their killer instincts. Then, when they get into the ring with a tamer like myself, and see my legs moving, they start to get itchy for a good kill. They crouch down and hide behind whatever there is to hide behind. (Act as if you are the lion.) And then, if you are not on your guard, watch out!! That is why lion tamers always carry a chair and a whip for protection against the lion. Where was I? Oh, yes, and then, if you are not on your guard, they will jump out and devour you! That means eat you. So, you’ve got to always be on your guard. Well, I hope that is helpful.”

Read Genesis 4:6–7 to the children and ask them the following questions:

- What are some ways that sin is like the lion described in the skit?
(Both the lion and sin are out to get you when you let down your guard.)
- How does a lion tamer protect himself against the lion?
(He uses the chair and the whip to protect himself against the lion.)
- How do we protect ourselves from sin?
(The Lord said to Cain, “If you do well, will you not be accepted?” [Genesis 4:7]. If we do what is right, sin cannot attack us. In fact, doing what is right is like sticking a chair in the face of sin and cracking a whip against our sinful desires.)

When we say “no” to sin and “yes” to righteousness, the Bible tells us we are putting sin to death.

TEACHING/DISCUSSION 10 MIN

Using the teaching points, teach through the lesson for today.

OBJECT LESSON 2 10 MIN

The King’s Seal

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ bowl of freshly popped popcorn
- ✓ a gold star or seal

Place the popcorn out on a table in front of the class and let its fragrance fill the room. If anyone in the class asks if they can have popcorn tell them, “No, it is not for you.” While this is happening, explain to the class that you have a very special gold seal. Tell them that the person who wears the seal will have special authority. Then, walk around the room and pick someone to wear the seal. (Try to pick a person who will not take advantage of the situation as an opportunity to draw attention to themselves.)

Explain to the class that the person selected is the only person who is allowed to take a handful of popcorn. This person can get up whenever they want as long as they are wearing the special seal. Offer the popcorn to the selected person and welcome them to come and take as much as they want. They may choose to give it away, but they may only take one handful at a time.

The class at this point should get the picture that the person with the seal can go up and get them some popcorn. The class will probably start overwhelming the selected person with requests for popcorn. Let the activity play out and encourage the person to pass out the popcorn. When everyone has had popcorn and the bowl is empty (this should take all of five minutes), ask the children the following questions:

- **Why was the person with the seal so special?**
(They were the only one allowed to go to the popcorn bowl for popcorn.)
- **What did they do to deserve the seal?**
(nothing)
- **What is it called when a person gets something as a free gift that they did not work for?**
(We say it was given out of grace.)
- **How is the seal like the story of Cain after he killed his brother?**
(God placed a mark upon Cain's forehead so that no one would kill him when they saw him.)
- **How was the mark on Cain's forehead a sign of God's grace?**
(Cain did not deserve to be protected; in fact, he deserved to be punished for what he had done. God demonstrated his grace to Cain. In fact, Romans 5:8 tells us that while we were still sinners and enemies of God, God showed us his grace by sending his Son to die for us.)

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

ACTIVITY TIME 15 MIN

Cain's Mark

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ paper
- ✓ pencils
- ✓ crayons

Have the children draw a picture of Cain with the mark God placed on his forehead. Use this to talk about how God protected Cain. Ask the children what we learn about God from this story. (God is compassionate and gracious [Exodus 34:6].)

CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

Pick several children to pray prayers based on the day's scripture passages.

BONUS OBJECT LESSON 15 MIN

Reenact the Crime

Choose two children to play the roles of Cain and Abel. Then, as a review, pretend that you can't remember what happens in the story and solicit the class' help. Have them tell you where Cain and Abel should stand and how they should play out the scene where Cain killed his brother. This exercise should get them involved. If you want to tease them a little, add an element not found in the biblical account like a getaway car or poison apple. Once you have the story staged, pick a student to play the role of the director who can say, "Cut!" if the actors make a mistake.

Read the story as the children act out the scene. If the child playing the director does say, "Cut!," stop the action, find out why, and then continue on to the end.

LESSON 4 - CAIN AND ABEL

