

Sin Hunts Like a Predator

Key Scriptures: Gen 4:3-15

In the course of time Cain brought to the LORD an offering of the fruit of the ground, ⁴ and Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and his offering, ⁵ but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his face fell. ⁶ The LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? ⁷ If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it." ⁸ Cain spoke to Abel his brother. And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him. ⁹ Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" He said, "I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?" ¹⁰ And the LORD said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground. ¹¹ And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. ¹² When you work the ground, it shall no longer yield to you its strength. You shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth." ¹³ Cain said to the LORD, "My punishment is greater than I can bear. ¹⁴ Behold, you have driven me today away from the ground, and from your face I shall be hidden. I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me." ¹⁵ Then the LORD said to him, "Not so! If anyone kills Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold." And the LORD put a mark on Cain, lest any who found him should attack him.

Key Point: Sin crouches at the door—take it seriously, subdue it, and turn to Jesus.

TALK IT OVER

Start talking: Pick a conversation starter for your group.

- What's something that looks harmless but can actually cause a lot of trouble? Have you ever ignored a warning and later wished you hadn't?

Reflect, Think, & Share: Read through the key scriptures and share any observations or questions with the group.

- What stands out to you most about Cain and Abel's story? Is there a detail you had never noticed or thought much about before?
- According to Luke 11:50-51, who was the world's first prophet? Why?
- What are some of the reasons why God may have rejected Cain's offering but accepted Abel's?
- Who was Cain hostile/angry toward? Why?
- Why do you think God sometimes responds to sin by asking questions rather than immediately confronting? (see Gen 3:9, 11, 13, 4:9-10) Why do you think that with Adam & Eve and Cain, God's first question is about location?
- Cain knew that something was wrong before he killed Abel. What do you think kept him from responding to God's warning?
- Cain responded, "Am I my brother's keeper?" What does his response reveal about the condition of his heart? What responsibility do we have toward the people God has placed around us when we see them struggling with sin?
- Can you think of examples where a seemingly small attitude, if left unchecked, could lead to something much more destructive?
- Sin crouches and tries to hide itself and look small to us. In what ways does living alongside others who will speak the truth in love help to us in overcoming sin?
- In Gen 4:10 Abel's blood cries out for justice. Yet Hebrews 12:24 says Jesus' blood **speaks a better word than the blood of Abel**. What is the "better word" that Jesus' sacrifice speaks to our sin and guilt? How should the gospel change the way we respond when we recognize sin in our own lives?

Start doing: What is one "door" in your life where you need to take sin more seriously right now—and what would it look like to shut that door rather than open it?

Prayer: Do you have any specific decisions or areas of life where you could use prayer from others asking God to guide you? If you feel comfortable, share these issues with your study group so that they can pray with you and for you.

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