

**The Story – Week #16**  
**The Tale of Two Brothers**  
**Genesis 4:1-24**

**Rules for the Road**

1. The Bible was written for me but not to me.
2. The Bible is a library with different literary genres (**Narrative, Poetry** & Discourse)
3. The Bible must be read in Context (Ancient, Situational & Biblical)
4. The Bible must be read with an understanding of language and words (Repeated words drive dominant **patterns & themes**)  
**The Law of first mention**
5. The Bible is a unified story that leads to Jesus

**How to Defeat Sin — Part 2**  
**Overview:**

**Two Brothers - Cain & Abel (& Seth)**

**Two Offerings - Farmer & Shepherd/Cereal & Lamb**

**Cain - A grain/fruit (Cereal) offering**

**Genesis 4:2** “*Cain brought to the LORD an offering of the fruit of the ground...*”

**Abel - A sacrificed lamb offering**

**Genesis 4:3** “*Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions...*”

**Two Attitudes - Pride or Humility**

- **A prideful (more vulnerable to sin) attitude:**

**Deuteronomy 12:8; Judges 17:6 & 21:25**

**Judges 17:6** “*Everyone did what was right in their own eyes.*”

- **A Humble (more able to defeat sin) attitude:**

**Two Choices - Good or Bad (Tov or Ra/Right or Wrong/Life or Death)**

**Two Seeds - Woman & Serpent**

**Genesis 3:15** “*I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.*”

Last week we looked at what SIN is and 4 things that SIN does, to make us vulnerable.

### Sin is:

Missing or falling short of the target or goal - to love, prioritize and trust God and to love & care for others (Deuteronomy 6:4-9 & Matthew 22:36-40).

### Sin does:

- It Lies in wait
- It Lures us off course
- It Listens not to correction
- It Leads our lineage astray

The most important thing we can do to defeat sin (Our Part):

- Accept Jesus
- Believe (Trust) in Jesus
- Confess to Jesus

### Three things about sin:

1. Jesus, on the cross, died once to pay for the penalty of sin. (God's Part)
2. We must take up our cross daily & die to the power of sin. (Our Part)
3. We will one day die & be free from the presence of sin.

### Back to our story:

I. Four things we can be Aware of, and do, to Defeat (Die to the power of) Sin  
The path to spiritual growth comes through the door of awareness.  
The path to defeat sin comes through the door of awareness.  
Awareness is the process of some truth about God (and His purposes) or ourselves (who we are) coming to light. It is seeing what was previously unseen, understanding what was previously not understood, knowing what was previously unknown.

Antonyms for Awareness:  
Ignorance at best, Denial at worst

Awareness of sin can empower us to Recognize that in our vulnerability, sin can be:

### 1. Activated by Pride & Anger

(HALT - Hungry, Angry, Lonely & Tired)

Genesis 4:5b "So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast. Then the LORD said to Cain, 'Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? If you do what is right, will you not be accepted?'"

- God invites Cain into awareness.

**Proverbs 16:18** (MSG) *“First pride, then the crash—the bigger the ego, the harder the fall.”*

**Ephesians 4:26-27** *“In your **anger** do not sin, do not let the sun go down while you are still **angry**; and do not give the **devil a foothold**.”*

**Choose a posture of Humility over Pride, as quickly as possible.**

Look at Eve and her Seed, who becomes the Seed of the Serpent.

**Eve’s Pride:**

**Genesis 4:1** (MSG) *“Adam slept with Eve his wife. She conceived and had Cain. She said, **I’ve gotten** a man...”*

**Genesis 4:25** (MSG) *“Adam slept with his wife again. She had a son whom she named Seth. She said, **God has given** me another **child** in place of Abel whom Cain killed.”*

**“Gotten” in Hebrew is “qanah” and means to get, acquire or create.**

**Genesis 14:22** *“With raised hand I have sworn an oath to the LORD, God Most High **Creator**, (**Qanah**) of heaven and earth...”*

Eve, in verse 1 is in a posture of pride – “Look at what **I** have done... **created** (Qanah) a **man**.” But, by the end of the narrative/story, she says, “Look at what the **LORD** has done... **given** me another **child**.”

- Notice Eve’s shift from pride to humility

**Cain’s Pride:**

Cain, in contrast, cannot escape his posture of pride even after **God invites him into awareness & a better choice** (He doesn’t listen to correction) & kills his brother Abel.

**Genesis 4:7** *“**If you do what is right, will you not be accepted?**”*

**1 John 3:12** (MSG) *“We must not be like **Cain**, who joined the **Evil One** (Seed of the Serpent) and then killed his brother (Abel).”*

**Lamech’s Pride:**

**Genesis 4:23-24** *“Lamech said to his wives, ‘Adah and Zillah, listen to me; wives of Lamech, hear my words. I have killed a man for wounding me, a young man for injuring me. If Cain is avenged seven times, then Lamech seventy-seven times.’”*

- Lamech's pride is over the top - presuming to be like God

**Ephesians 4:26-27** "In your **anger** do not sin, do not let the sun go down while you are still **angry**; and do not give the **devil a foothold**."

**James 1:19-20** "Be quick to listen, slow to speak and **slow to become angry**, because **human anger** does not produce the righteousness that God desires."

- Awareness of our vulnerability toward pride and anger can empower us to defeat sin.

## 2. **Broken by doing what is Good & Right** - (Obedience)

**Genesis 4:6-7** "Then the LORD said to Cain, 'Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? If you do what is **right** (tov) will you not be accepted?'"

**Psalms 25:9** (ESV) "He leads the **humble** in what is **right**, and teaches the **humble** his way."

**Galatians 6:10** "Therefore, as we have opportunity, **let us** do **good** to all people..."

**1 Thessalonians 5:15** "See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do **good** to one another and to everyone."

**Romans 12:21** "Do not be overcome by evil but overcome evil with **good**."

"The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for **good** men to **do** nothing." – Edmund Burke.

- Awareness of our need for good (Tov) choices, (discerning Good from Bad - Evil) can empower us to defeat sin.

**Hebrews 10:24-25** "**Let us** consider how we may spur **one another** on toward **love and good deeds**, **not giving up meeting together**, as some are in the habit of doing, but **encouraging one another**—and **all the more** as you see the Day approaching."

- Awareness of our need for, and participation in community is critical to defeat sin.

## 3. **Close, at the Door** - (Don't Open the Door)

**Genesis 4:7** "But if you do **not do** what is **right** (tov), sin is crouching (lying) **at your door**..."

- "At the door" indicates proximity and vulnerability.

**Hebrews 12:1** “Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us **throw off** everything that hinders and **the sin that so easily entangles.**”

- Where there is **accessibility** there is **vulnerability**.
- What's the point? If the door is open to sin, close it. If the door is closed, lock it.

#### **4. Driven by Deceptive Desires**

**Genesis 4:7b** “Sin is crouching at your door; it **desires** to have you, but **you must rule over it.**”

This links back to Genesis 1:28 “**Rule over**” & 3:6 “**Desirable for gaining wisdom.**”

**Walking with God; staying in sync with God, is where we learn to rule over (Manage) our desires instead of our desires managing (ruling over) us.**

**Jeremiah 17:9** (NIV84) “The **heart is deceitful** above all things and beyond cure. **Who can understand it?** ‘I the **LORD** search the **heart** and examine the mind, to reward a person according to what he has done, according to what his deeds deserve.’”

**James 1:14** “Each one is tempted when they are dragged away by their **own evil desires** and enticed.”

**Ephesians 4:22-23** “You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its **deceitful desires**; to be made new in the attitude of your minds...”

- **Awareness of our deceitful desires brings caution instead of compulsion; we recognize the need to pause to purify our desires instead of pursuing our desire just because we have them.**

**II. Three things to practice/do (Our Part) to gain **Awareness & Defeat Sin****

**Ask God to:**

1. **Search Your Heart** - Cultivating the Condition of our Heart (your desires)

**Psalms 123:23-24** (NIV 84) “**Search me,** O God, and know my **heart**; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me the way everlasting.”

**2. Forgive Your Sin - Purifying the Content our heart  
(aberrant desires)**

**1 John 1:8-9** “If we claim to be without sin, we **deceive** ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we **confess** our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”

**3. Accept Your Offering - Maintaining the Commitment of our Heart (Pure desires)**

**Romans 12:1-2** (MSG) “So here’s what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and **place it** before God as an **offering**. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. Don’t become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it **without even thinking**. Instead, **fix your attention on God**. You’ll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and **quickly respond to it**. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you.”

## SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS:

**Take a few minutes to check in with each other to see how everyone is doing, then do the following mixer and questions.**

**Ice Breaker/Mixer Q:** Awareness is the process of some truth about God (and His purposes) or ourselves (who we are) coming to light. It is seeing what was previously unseen, understanding what was previously not understood, knowing what was previously unknown.

Can you give an example of some area of your life where you came into awareness and then began to experience growth from that discovery?

**Some possible examples could be...**

**Discovering within yourself:** ignorance, pride, addiction, insecurity, fear, anxiety, denial, prejudice, jealousy, defensiveness etc.

**Discovering God's:** love, acceptance, forgiveness, kindness, holiness, omniscience (He's everywhere), Spirit, etc.

1. Pastor spoke about our need to have an increased awareness of sin (the human condition of not loving and trusting God and not loving and caring for others). Does this idea of sin, missing the mark/goal of those two things (loving God and others) redefine for you (at all) what sin is? If so, please describe.
2. Can you give any examples of how sin can be:  
(pick one or two from below)  
**A.**ctivated by pride or anger?  
**B.**roken by doing what is good or right?  
**C.**lose, "at the door" - proximity & vulnerability?  
**D.**riven by deceptive desires?
3. Pastor gave three ways to defeat sin through a deepening awareness in who we are and who God is by asking God to:  
Search our hearts  
Forgive our sins  
Accept our offering of ourselves  
Have you practiced any of these spiritual habits, if so please describe your experience.