

**The Story–Week #15**  
**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**

**Overview:**

Two Brothers - Cain & Abel (& Seth)

Two Offerings - Farmer & Shepherd/Cereal & Lamb

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

Two Seeds - Woman & Serpent

**I. What is sin?**

The Bible describes sin as the human condition that fails to love and trust God and love and care for others.

*Khata* (Hebrew)

*Hamartia* (Greek) To miss the mark or fail to reach a goal.

**The Hebrew people's (Israelites) most intimate prayer is called the "Shema" (Hebrew for "Hear") and represents the goal.**

**Deuteronomy 6:4-9** "**Hear**, O Israel: The LORD our God, (YHWH Elohim) the LORD is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. **Impress them on your children**. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates."

**When Jesus was asked what the goal was (based on his reading and understanding) of the OT he quotes the Hebrew shema/prayer.**

**Matthew 22:36-40** “Teacher, which is the **greatest** commandment in the Law?’ Jesus replied: “**Love** the Lord your **God** with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.” This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: “**Love your neighbor** as yourself.” All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

## We all fall short of this goal

**Romans 3:23** (NLT) “For **everyone** has **sinned**; we all **fall short** of God’s glorious standard.”

## Back to Our Story

### II. Four things that Sin Does to **Defeat** you

#### 1. Sin **lies** in wait

**Genesis 4:7a** “Sin is **crouching** at your door...”

“Crouching” in Hebrew “Ravats” = to stretch out, or to lie down.

#### 2. Sin **lures** us off course

**Genesis 4:7b** (ESV) “Its (Sin’s) desire is **contrary to you**, but you must rule over it.’ Cain spoke to Abel his brother. And when they were in the field, Cain... killed him.”

**James 1:14** “[E]ach person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil **desire** and enticed. Then, after **desire** has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.”

#### 3. Sin doesn’t **listen** to correction

**Genesis 4:6-8** “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? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it.... Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him.’”

#### 4. Sin can **lead** our **lineage** (children) astray (Two Genealogies - The seed of the Serpent) Sin habits get passed down from one generation to the next.

**Genesis 4:23-24** “Lamech said to his wives... ‘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.’”

**Isaiah 59:2** (NASB) “[Y]our **wrongdoings** (NIV: “iniquities”; NLT: “Sins”) have caused a **separation** between you and your God, and your sins have hidden His face from you so that He does not hear.”

### III. The Most Important thing you can do to Defeat Sin

#### 1. **Accept** Jesus

As the one who took all the wrong of sin to put you in the right with him.

**1 Peter 2:22-24** “He (Jesus) committed no sin... **‘bore our sins’** in his body on the cross, so that we might **die to sins and live for righteousness...**”

**2 Corinthians 5:21** (MSG) “In Christ. God put the wrong on him who never did anything wrong, **so we could be put right with God.**”

**Hebrews 10:14** (TPT) “For by one (Jesus’) sacrifice (Offering) he has made us perfect (back in right standing with God) and complete for all time!”

#### 2. **Believe** in Jesus (Believe = Trust)

**John 1:12** “Yet to all who did receive him, to those who **believed** in his name, he gave the right to become children of God...”

**John 3:16** “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever **believes** in him should not perish but have **eternal life.**”

**John 6:47** (Jesus) “I say to you, whoever **believes** has **eternal life.**”

#### 3. **Confess** to Jesus (God)

**1 John 1:9** “**If we confess** our sins, **he** is faithful and just and **will forgive** us our sins and **purify** us from all unrighteousness.”

## 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: What is your earliest memory of doing something wrong (sinning, missing the mark) and what happened in that experience?**

1. Does the definition of sin that Pastor Jeff gave in the message match what you have always thought about sin or does it change your view at all?

“The Bible describes sin as the human condition that fails to love and trust God and love and care for others.

*Khata* (Hebrew) & *Hamartia* (Greek) Means, “to miss the mark or fail to reach a goal.”

2. We see in the early Genesis stories that even though the characters (Adam, Eve, and now Cain) miss the mark of God’s ideal, God still pursues them with kindness. Romans 2:4 says that it is God’s kindness that leads us to repentance (to change). How have you experienced God’s kindness as a motivation to change and embrace him as he pursues you?
3. Sin is described in Genesis 4 as “lying in wait” (“crouching at the door”). This portrays sin as something that is close, dangerous and ready to deceive us. Can you share an experience or story that matches that description?
4. Look at the other three things that “Sin does” (see below or review your notes under point #1) and share a thought about, or story where you have seen “Sin” (the human condition):
  - Lure someone (or yourself) off course
  - Not listen to correction
  - Lead children astray (get passed from one generation to another)
5. Does the ABC (Accept, Believe & Confess) illustration/model for trusting in Jesus make sense to you and why? Do you think you could use this model as a tool to share with someone who might feel separated from God and his purposes?

**Pray for each other as you close your small group time.**