

The Story–Week #17
The Tale of Two Brothers
Genesis 4:1-24

How to Defeat Sin — Part 3
Genesis 4:5b-15

Three things about sin:

1. Jesus, on the cross, died once to pay for the **penalty of sin. (God's Part)**

1 Peter 3:18 (NIV84) “For **Christ died for sins once for all**, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God.”

2. We must take up our cross daily & die to the **power of sin. (Our Part)**

1 Peter 2:24 “He himself bore our sins’ in his body on the cross, **so that we might die to sins** and live for righteousness...”

3. We will one day die & be free from the **presence of sin.**

Overview of our Story

Two Brothers - Cain & Abel (& Seth)

Two Offerings - Farmer & Shepherd/Cereal & Lamb

Two Attitudes - Pride or Humility (Humble awareness)

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

Two Seeds - Woman & Serpent

Review Part 1:

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 Big Picture about sin:

1. Jesus, on the cross, died once to pay for the **penalty of sin. (God's Part)**

1 Peter 3:18 (NIV84) “For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God.”

The most Important thing we can do to defeat sin: **A**ccept Jesus, **B**elieve in Jesus & **C**onfess Jesus.

2. We must take up our cross daily & die to the **power of sin.**
(Our Part)

1 Peter 2:24 “He himself bore our sins’ in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness...”

3. We will one day die & be free from the **presence of sin.**

Part 2

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

The path to **spiritual growth** comes through the **door of awareness**.
The path to **defeat sin** comes through the **door of awareness**.

Some possible examples of coming into awareness, could be...

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

Discovering God’s: love, acceptance, forgiveness, kindness, holiness, omniscience (He’s everywhere), Spirit, Comfort, Compassion, etc.

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

- 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?

How to Defeat Sin — Part 3
Genesis 4:5b-15 (ESV)

“So Cain was very angry, and his face fell. The LORD said to Cain, ‘Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? 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.’ Cain spoke to Abel his brother. And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him. Then the LORD said to Cain, ‘Where is Abel your brother?’ He said, ‘I do not know; am I my brother’s keeper?’ And the LORD said, ‘What have you done? The voice of your brother’s blood is crying to me from the ground. And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your hand. 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.’ Cain said to the LORD, ‘My punishment is greater than I can bear. 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.’ 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. Then Cain went away from the presence of the LORD and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden.”

“When a man is getting better he understands more and more clearly the evil that is still left in him. When a man is getting worse he understands his own badness less and less. A moderately bad man knows he is not very good: a thoroughly bad man thinks he is all right.”

— CS Lewis

I. God’s **Invitation into **Awareness of Sin** is through **Communication & Conviction** - It’s God’s **Pursuit****

Genesis 3:9 (NKJV) *“Then the LORD God called to Adam... ‘Where are you?’”*

Genesis 4:6-7 (ESV) *“Then the LORD said to Cain, ‘Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? 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.’”*

- of us despite our sin.

Romans 5:8-10 *“But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.... For if, while we were God’s enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!”*

II. God’s **Education for **Awareness of Sin** is through **Consequences** - It’s His **Penalty****

1 Corinthians 10:11-13 (NIV84) *“These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us (ESV: “for our instruction”), on whom the*

fulfillment of the ages has come (i.e. Jesus). So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall! No temptation has seized you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it."

When we resist God's pursuit we experience the repercussions of sin. And God will use it to educate us, get our attention to draw us back to himself.

"God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pain: it is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world."

— CS Lewis

SIN causes us to:

1. Act Definitely (& independently)

Genesis 4:8 "Now Cain said to his brother Abel, 'Let's go out to the field.' While they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him."

2. Deny Responsibility

Genesis 4:9 "Then the LORD said to Cain, 'Where is your brother Abel?' 'I don't know,' he replied. 'Am I my brother's keeper?'"

3. Exacerbate Iniquity (Feel guilty)

Genesis 4:10 & 13 "The LORD said, 'What have you done? Listen! Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground' ... Cain said to the LORD, 'My punishment is more than I can bear.'"

Exacerbate means to make some (problem, bad situation, or negative feeling) **worse**.

Punishment in Hebrew is Avon and means (can be translated) **iniquity**, punishment and **guilt**, and is closely related to the word *avah* which means to be crooked and can describe the consequences of sin or being crooked.

You find this idea in the biblical phrase "to punish," which in biblical Hebrew is to "visit someone's *avon* upon them," that is, to let them **sit in the consequences of their crooked choices**.

4. Lose Productivity

Genesis 4:11-12a “Now you are under a curse and driven from the ground, which opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your hand. **When you work the ground, it will no longer yield its crops for you.**”

(ESV) “...it shall no longer yield to you **its strength.**”

(MSG) “...it will no longer give you **its best.**”

5. Experience **Insecurity**

Genesis 4:13-14a “Cain said to the LORD, ‘My punishment is more than I can bear. Today you are driving me from the land, and I will be hidden from your presence...’”

6. Experience **Instability**

Genesis 4:14b “I will be a **restless wanderer** on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me.”

Restless in Hebrew is “*Nua*” and means to quiver, totter, shake, reel, stagger, wander, waver, and tremble.

Wanderer in Hebrew is “*Nud*” and means to shake, waver, wander, move to and fro, flutter, to grieve.

III. God’s **Restoration** from Awareness of Sin Is through **Compassion** - It’s His **Pardon**

Genesis 4:26 “At that time people began to **call upon the name of the LORD.**”

Deuteronomy 4:29-31 (MSG) “But even there, **if you seek GOD**, your God, you’ll be able to find him if you’re serious, **looking for him** with your whole heart and soul. When troubles come and all these awful things happen to you, in future days you will come back to **GOD**, your God, and listen obediently to what he says. **GOD**, your God, is above all a **compassionate** God.”

Psalms 86:15 “But you, Lord, are a **compassionate** and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness.”

Ephesians 4:31-32 “Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and **compassionate** to one another, **forgiving** each other, just as in Christ God **forgave** you.”

Ask God to:

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

Psalms 139:23-24 (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**.”

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.

You may not get through all of the questions today, take your time. We will likely come back to finish the questions next week.

Ice Breaker/Mixer Q: What is a favorite (or pleasant) memory you have of discovering something for the first time that has now become a cherished aspect of life? This could be a food, a hobby, a special place or experience or person.

1. Coming back to this concept of Awareness. Look again at the definition and examples below and share what you are gaining awareness in, both about yourself and God.

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:
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Some possible examples of coming into awareness, could be...

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

2. God invites us into Awareness - His Pursuit.

In the following passages, can you see how God was inviting (Pursuing) both Adam & Cain into awareness?

Genesis 3:9 *"The LORD God called, 'Adam...Where are you?'"*

Genesis 4:6-7 (ESV) *"Then the LORD said to Cain, 'Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? 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.'"*

Have you ever sensed God bringing you to a greater awareness of some sin in your life? If so, describe, if not go to the next question.

3. Read together the CS Lewis quotes below and share if and how they speak to you, or maybe help to increase your awareness of how God works in our lives.

“God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pain: it is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world.”

“When a man is getting better he understands more and more clearly the evil that is still left in him. When a man is getting worse he understands his own badness less and less.” A moderately bad man knows he is not very good: a thoroughly bad man thinks he is all right.”

– CSLewis

4. If God’s **Education** for *Awareness of Sin* is through **Consequences** - It’s His **Penalty** for sin “Reaping what we sow” how does the passage below encourage us to learn (get educated) through someone else's consequences?

1 Corinthians 10:11-13 (NIV84) “*These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us (ESV: “for our instruction”), on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come (i.e. Jesus). So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don’t fall! No temptation has seized you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.*”

5. Looking back at the passage from 1 Cor. 10 (above), do you see anything that might point us toward the character quality of humility?
6. Look back through this week message at the 6 things that SIN causes us to do (Point # II), and pick one or two that have been true in your life:

Act **Definitely** (& independantly)

Deny **Responsibility**

Exacerbate **Iniquity (Feel guilty)**

Lose **Productivity**

Experience **Insecurity**

Experience **Instability**

Take a moment to thank one another for sharing and have someone close your time in prayer.