

Sailing the 7 C's

The "C" of Character: Cain and Abel*

LESSON OVERVIEW

Key Point: ⇒ Don't let sin be your master—Follow God.

Bible Story: Cain and Abel

Bible Reference: Genesis 4:3-16

Challenge Verse: "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin." 1 John 1:7

Younger Option: "The blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin." 1 John 1:7

ITEMS NEEDED

1 bundle of red yarn

Salt

Fish Cards (same as last week)

Bible Verse Poster

A note explaining where to get a cup full of ice cubes for today's activities.

A "Follow God" blank sheet of paper

Crayons, markers, or pencils should already be in your room. If not, please let Carrie know.

BEFORE CLASS

- Put up the Bible Verse Poster for today.
- Set out any items you need for today's lesson
- Pray for each student by name.

AS STUDENTS ENTER

- Greet each student by name as they enter.
- Give each student an attendance sticker for the attendance chart, and feel free to add guest names to the chart. This will give them a sense of belonging.
- Be sure to smile.

OPENING ACTIVITY

Activity: The Ice Pass

Have children gather in a close circle with hands behind their backs and facing the center of the circle. Choose one person to be “it” and have him stand in the center. Have him close his eyes while you place an ice cube in the hands of another child in the circle. He passes it to someone else and the ice cube continues to be passed around. The object of the game is not to be caught holding the ice. The person who is “it” opens his eyes has three tries to guess who is holding the ice cube.

The players can try to fool “it.” They can do this by pretending to pass the ice off to another person’s hand while still holding it behind their back. That person, in turn, can continue to pass the imaginary ice cube. However, sometimes the real ice cube is being passed. Since the ice cube is cold and wet to hold, facial expressions can give away who is holding the ice.

Alternate with new players in the center. After several minutes of playing, gather the children in a circle around the ice cube. Ask the following questions:

Discussion

Ask the students—**What did it feel like when you were holding the ice cube and you did not want to get caught with it?** (Nervous. Sneaky. Excited. Cold.)

Ask the students—**Do you think it would hurt to hold an ice cube in your hand for a long time? Why?** (Yes, because it might begin to freeze my skin. No, maybe it would melt.)

Ask the students—**Sin is doing things that are against God’s rules. It is disobeying God. Examples might be disobeying our parents or teachers. How is sin like the ice cube?** (Sometimes we try to hide it. Holding it hurts us. It makes us feel cold.)

Ask the students—**Have you ever tried to hide a sin and felt badly inside? Did you feel cold? Does anyone want to share a story about that?** (It is sometimes helpful if you tell a personal story from your life.)

SAY: Today we’re going to find out how dangerous it is to hide a sin or to continue practicing sin. We will watch the very first family who ever lived have a bad fight. One of the brothers will be mastered by sin and do something terrible. We will learn...Don’t let sin be your master—follow God!

Control Tool

Anytime you say, “Who should you follow?” students should say back, “Follow God!”

Leader: *Who should you follow?* / Students: *Follow God!*

BIBLE LESSON, part 1

Ask the students—**Who did we talk about last week?** (Adam and Eve)

Ask the students—**Who were they?** (The first people God created.)

Ask the students—**Who remembers where to find their story in the Bible?** (Genesis 2-3. It's at the beginning—The word "Genesis" means "Beginning.")

Ask the students—**Does anyone know the names of their first two sons?** (Cain and Abel.)

Divide your class into two sides: Tell one side they are Cain and the other side that they are Abel.

SAY (to the Cain's side): Cain was a farmer, so all of you are farmers.

SAY (to the Abel's side): Abel was a shepherd, so all of you are shepherds.

Ask the students—**(To the Cain's) As a farmer, if you were going to bring an offering (or a gift) to God, what would you bring?** (Cain brought some crops to the Lord.) **Do you think this was a good choice for a gift?**

Ask the students—**(To the Abel's) As a shepherd, if you were going to bring an offering (or a gift) to God, what would you bring?** (Abel brought the firstborn of his animals and the choicest part of the meat for his offering He gave God his very best.) **Do you think this was a good choice for an offering?**

SAY: The Lord accepted Abel's offering but rejected Cain's.

(Teacher's Note: The focus on today's lesson is *not* why God rejected Cain's offering, but how Cain responded. If a student asks a question along these lines, briefly explain that later God would institute a system of sacrifices where people would bring certain animals to be killed as a "temporary payment" of obedience looking forward to the ultimate and only true payment for all sins which was the death of Christ on the cross. At this time, however, it seems evident that certain offerings were already understood to be acceptable to God. Cain, however, brought an offering of crops, which grew by the result of his own work and labor against the curse given to Adam's sin. Symbolically, what he was offering to God was the sweat of his own brow for the Lord's acceptance and, of course, this is unacceptable. God's forgiveness is not the result of our labor and salvation can't come through hard work. Only a sacrifice, such as Abel bringing an innocent, "living animal," was representative of grace and mercy and the cost of life for the payment of sin.)

Ask the students—**(To the Abel's) How would you feel if God took your offering and was pleased but rejected your brother's?** (I'd be glad. I'd feel sorry for my brother, etc.)

Ask the students—**(To the Cain's) How would you feel if God rejected your offering but took and was pleased with your brother's?** (Very angry. Disappointed.)

SAY: Let's have a Bible Drill to see what the Bible says about how Cain responded.

Ready... Genesis 4:4-11...Go!

Read the verses.

SAY: Cain was angry and disappointed.

Ask the students—**Have you ever felt really angry or disappointed?** (Let a few share.)

Ask the students—**Is it wrong to feel disappointed?** No.)

Ask the students—**Is it wrong to feel angry?** (No, as long as you respond in the right way and in the right time. In other words, as long as you control your anger and don't keep it for a long period of time.)

Ask the students—**Can anyone tell me a Bible story about a time Jesus was angry or disappointed?** (For example, Jesus was angry when the people were wrongfully selling items in the temple [John 2:13-17]. He was angry and He ran them out, but He was NOT out-of-control or throwing a tantrum. He was in control. He was angry for the right reason and He expressed his anger in the right way and at the right time. An example of Jesus being disappointed is when Peter denied he knew Him [Luke 22:55-62]. Peter was one of His best friends, and it must have been very disappointing for such a good friend to deny Him.)

BIBLE LESSON, part 2

Pass out a 10-inch section of red yarn to each student. The kids will use the yarn to spell the answers to the observation questions below.

Read Genesis 4:3-4 from your Bible.

Ask the students—**Both Cain and Abel sacrificed to the Lord. Who gave their best? (Abel.) How can you tell? (Verse 4 said Abel brought the choice parts.)**

Ask the students—**Which brother did not give his best to the Lord? (Cain.)**

Have your students spell out the word "Cain" using their sections of red yarn. (*Write the word so that younger students can see it and try to copy it with their yarn. Write it in CURSIVE. Many younger students will not be able to write like this but most of them will have seen it and can copy it by looking at a sample.*)

Ask the students—**When God was not pleased with Cain's offering, Cain was angry and disappointed. In verse 7, God gave him a warning. He said, "Sin is lying outside your door ready to attack." Don't let sin be your _____.**
(*master*)

Have the group write “master” using their sections of red yarn.

Ask the students—**Did sin master Cain? Check verse 8. What did he do? (Hurt [his brother] or Kill.) Write your answer with your yarn.**

Ask the students—**When God asked Cain, “Where is your brother?” Cain said, “I don’t know.” This was a _____. (lie) Write your answer with your yarn.**

Ask the students—**In verse 9, Cain asked the question, “Am I supposed to take care of my brother?” Did Cain care or not what happened to his brother? (No. He did not care.) Write “yes” or “no” with your yarn.**

What consequence did God give to Cain? (He made him a wanderer. But he also put a mark on him and protected him from anyone else taking revenge on him.)

SAY: Sin always has a punishment. Cain’s sin had a punishment and so does all of our sins. That’s the reason God sent Jesus, take make a way to take our sins away.

Control Tool

Leader: *Who should you follow? / Students: Follow God!*

TREASURE VERSE ACTIVITY

Direct the students to look at today’s memory verse (or to have a Bible Drill to look it up in 1 John 1:7.)

SAY: **1 John 1:7 says, “And the blood of his Son Jesus cleanses us from every sin.” What does the blood of Jesus do? (It cleanses us from all sin.)**

Have your students REPEAT today’s verse after you.

Ask the students—**Do we need God’s forgiveness for some of the mean things we might have done to our brother or sister? Or even Mom or Dad? Who can give examples of some of the things we might do and need forgiveness for?**

Get responses from the kids. As they give their responses, have some ice cubes ready so they can be placed in the center of the group and the kids can take turns letting their yarn drop onto the top of the cube. By putting salt on the cube, it will allow the children to pick up the ice with their yarn.

SAY: The ice reminds us of the cold-heartedness of sin, but the red yarn reminds us of Jesus’ blood and how Jesus can lift sin out of our lives.

If time permits, talk about how it is important to not hide sin or pretend we don't care. If we hurt our brother or sister, we must admit to God that it is wrong and we need forgiveness. We should also admit to our family member that we need his forgiveness too. We should care for that person instead of hurting him.

SAY: Don't let sin be your master—follow God!

Control Tool

Leader: *Who should you follow?* / Students: *Follow God!*

CHALLENGE VERSE ACTIVITY

Activity: Follow God

Give each student a piece of paper that says "Follow God."

Older students: Tell them to list ways they can follow God.

Younger students: Tell them to draw a picture of ways they can follow God.

Discussion

Gather kids in your lesson circle and have them tell you ways they can follow God.

Control Tool

Leader: *Who should you follow?* / Students: *Follow God!*

Challenge your students to be loud enough to "disturb" other classes.

PRAYER TIME & WRAP UP

Cast Your Cares

Ask the students—**Who knows what a person's character is?** (Character is basically what people think about when they see how you live. A person can have godly characteristics. A person can also have sinful character traits, like anger that they don't control.)

Ask the students—**How do you think people would describe you—Would they say that you live like Jesus or that you've been "mastered" by sin?** (This is a rhetorical question—Students don't need to answer it, just to think about it.)

Ask the students—**What do you think a person who trusts Jesus would be characterized by?** (A life of peace because they trust Jesus. They wouldn't easily worry or get upset because they would know that God will take care of everything.)

SAY: Let's take a look at a familiar verse about trusting God.

Bible Drill

Ready...1 Peter 5:7...Go!

Ask the students—**Who wrote the book of 1 Peter?** (Peter)

Briefly re-explain to students what this verse means. Then let each student write their “cares” or prayer requests on a fish cut-out. You can write them in the space provided below. Then let them take turns throwing (or “casting”) them into the fish net. Then pray for their requests.

Pray today that sin would not be a master over your students but that the power of Jesus’ forgiveness would lift that sin so it does not make them hard and cold-hearted to others.

List Prayer Requests Here

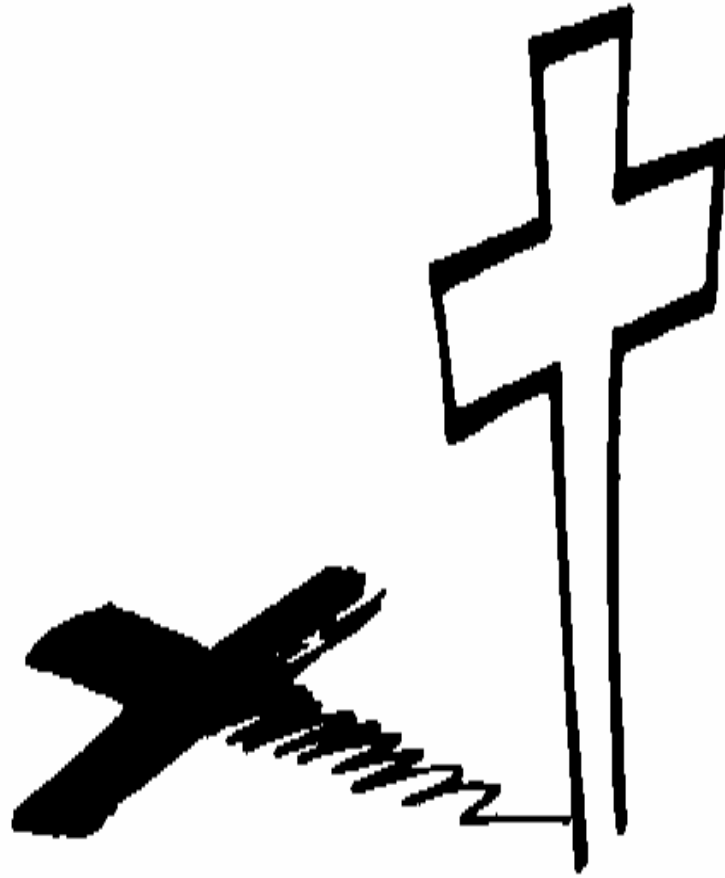
Be sure to pray specifically for each request above.

EXTRA TIME

Use any extra time to:

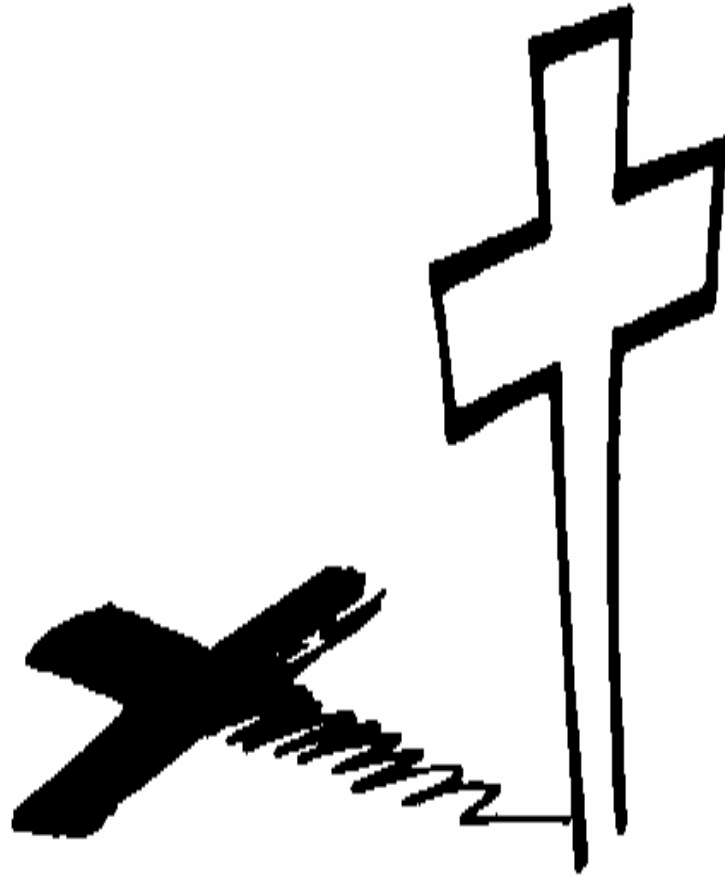
- Help your students memorize the verse for today
- Practice extra Bible Drills by looking up the Challenge Verse for the previous weeks.

*This lesson was adapted from Kid’s Kount Publishing, Lesson 8, “Pass the Promise,” Summer 2004, p. 3.



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