

05 THE FIRST MURDER

KEY TEXT: **GENESIS 4:1-12**

CENTRAL truth

In a tragic turn of events, Adam and Eve's son—the one they probably thought was God's promised rescuer—fell right into Mom and Dad's pattern of sin. Genesis 4 is a haunting echo of Genesis 3, culminating in the first ever murder. Sin makes big promises, and we're often tempted to indulge in our sin similarly to how we're tempted by a plate of our favorite cookies. But just as one cookie tends to lead to more, when we feed sin, it grows. **Sin is dangerous because it always leads to death and destruction.**

key question

What are some examples of how you've seen sin behaving the way God describes it in verse 7?

God's memorable description of sin characterizes sin as a hungry predator, ready to devour its prey. This is a helpful reminder for all of us, because Satan's classic trick is to tempt us to believe that sin is actually good and that God is a cosmic fun-squasher. We're often tempted to believe God isn't good but is keeping us from good! To defend against this, we need to always be ready to properly identify the enemy of sin.

keep in mind

- Today's text describes the first-ever murder, and Scripture doesn't downplay its horror. Notably, God describes Abel's blood crying out to Him from the ground. This may be an opportunity to emphasize that God, too, felt this was horrible. Sin is a big deal to Him, and we can trust that He will never sweep it under the rug. All of this points to the need for Jesus.
- People often argue about why God looked with favor upon Abel's offering but not Cain's offering. It's okay to consider a few options (the "Give An Answer" context note offers some helpful New Testament verses that point to Cain's heart issue), but it's also good to remind students that we can always bring our questions to God—and we can always have confidence that God's Word has given us all we need. Often our questions are an invitation to remember and reflect upon God's character.

application

How does today's text impact your view of sin? How does it challenge you?

the win

FOR THE STUDENT: If students can come away from this lesson thinking about sin in a godly way, that's a big win! This passage can equip them to identify sin and sin's deceptive promise in their lives. It will never bring them life but always brings destruction and death.

FOR THE LEADER: Leaders can encourage students to truly internalize God's description of sin and to begin to live as if sin is bad for them. They can help students understand that battling against sin is one of the most life-giving things they can do!

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