

Genesis

Cain and Abel
(Genesis 4:1-16)

LESSON WARM UP

What are the things that cause you unhappiness? [Let the children respond.]

What are the things that cause God unhappiness? [Lead the children into a discussion of specific sins. Summarize by saying that doing things our own way and not God's way makes Him very sad.]

Today we're going to learn about a boy who learned a very hard lesson about how much unhappiness his sin caused himself and others...

OPENING PRAYER

Lord, this morning we're going to learn about how bad our sins really are to You. But, before we begin, we just want to thank You for sending Jesus to take the punishment for our sins. Open our ears, Lord, and help us to listen now as we study Your word. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

MEMORY VERSE

To do righteousness and justice is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice. (Proverbs 21:3)

LESSON

Last week we learned that when Adam and Eve sinned against God, He punished them by sending them out of the Garden of Eden. Life was not the same outside the lovely garden.

Genesis 4:1

Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the Lord."

Eve must have been so happy to have her first son, Cain. His name means "Possession." Perhaps Adam and Eve valued him more than anything else in the world. She realized from the beginning that Cain was given to her by God.

Genesis 4:2

Then she bore again, this time his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

Cain grew up to be a farmer and Abel, the younger brother, grew up and became a shepherd.

Genesis 4:3-4a

And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the Lord. Abel also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat.

Each brother brought his offering; Cain brought *some* fruit and vegetables from his garden, but Abel brought *his best* lamb from his flock. Cain's gift was not brought out of a heart of love and thankfulness.

Genesis 4b-5a

And the Lord respected Abel and his offering, but He did not respect Cain and his offering.

In Genesis 3:21, after Adam and Eve had sinned, they suddenly became ashamed of their nakedness before God. Do you remember what God clothed them with? (*Animal skins*) God had to kill an animal to cover their

shame. In this way, God showed mankind the seriousness of sin. Blood had to be shed. He was giving them a picture of what Jesus would someday do by coming to earth to die for all of mankind. The Bible tells us that *without shedding of blood there is no remission* (Hebrews 9:22b).

This is why God valued Abel's offering of his best lamb from his flock and did not appreciate Cain's offering of fruit and vegetables. Cain knew that God required the sacrifice of an animal. But, he evidently didn't believe God. He wanted to have his own way. The Bible says, *The heart [the real you] is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked* (Jeremiah 17:9). That means our hearts are very sinful. Wanting your own way is sin. No one had to teach you how to sin because we are all born with a "want to" to do wrong things. God loves you very much, but your sin must be punished.

Genesis 4:5b

And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.

Cain was furious. He was angry with God for rejecting his offering. He was also jealous of his brother Abel, because Abel's offering was accepted. Cain's jealousy led to anger and his anger to hatred. People who do not obey God become very unhappy. Sin brings much unhappiness. It drives peace from the mind and joy from the heart.

Genesis 4:6-7

So the Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it."

God was telling Cain that if he would change his attitude, believe God, and do what He said, everything would be fine. All he had to do was bring the offering that God required; a perfect lamb. God provided a way of forgiveness to solve Cain's sin problem. All Cain had to do is come to God, God's way.

Genesis 4:8

Now Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed Him.

Cain's refusal to accept God's way led him to murder his brother Abel.

Genesis 4:9-10

Afterward the LORD asked Cain, "Where is your brother? Where is Abel?" "I don't know," Cain responded. "Am I my brother's guardian?" But the LORD said, "What have you done? Listen! Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground!"

God tried to get Cain to admit that he had killed his brother, but Cain refused. Cain lied to God, he knew what happened to his brother.

Genesis 4:11-12

Now you are cursed and banished from the ground, which has swallowed your brother's blood. No longer will the ground yield good crops for you, no matter how hard you work! From now on you will be a homeless wanderer on the earth."

Because Cain refused God's way, he had to suffer sin's unhappy consequences. No doubt, this caused much unhappiness to his parents, Adam and Eve.

Genesis 4:13-14

Cain replied to the LORD, "My punishment is too great for me to bear! You have banished me from the land and from your presence; you have made me a homeless wanderer. Anyone who finds me will kill me!"

Cain thought his punishment was too severe. Cain thought the Lord wasn't being fair.

Genesis 4:15

The LORD replied, "No, for I will give a sevenfold punishment to anyone who kills you." Then the LORD put a mark on Cain to warn anyone who might try to kill him.

In His mercy, God put a mark of protection on Cain.

Genesis 4:16

So Cain left the LORD's presence and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

Sin always causes unhappiness and has to be punished; it brings guilt that only God can forgive and erase. Thankfully, God *has* provided a way of forgiveness through Jesus Christ!

Sin always separates loved ones from each other and from God. But thankfully God loved you and me so much that He sent Jesus to die on the cross to pay for our sins. This is God's way and the *only* way of forgiveness.

Closing Prayer

Lord, our sins are not funny or cute to You. They bring You so much unhappiness. Help us to realize how serious our sins are. And, Lord, thank You for providing a way for us to receive forgiveness from You. Help us to want to do things Your way. Let bringing You happiness be our greatest joy in life. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

LEARNING CENTERS

Imagination Station

(Craft Center)

Choose one of the following craft project ideas:

1. Acceptable Sacrifice to God

Discuss what an acceptable sacrifice to God is. Have them draw pictures to illustrate.

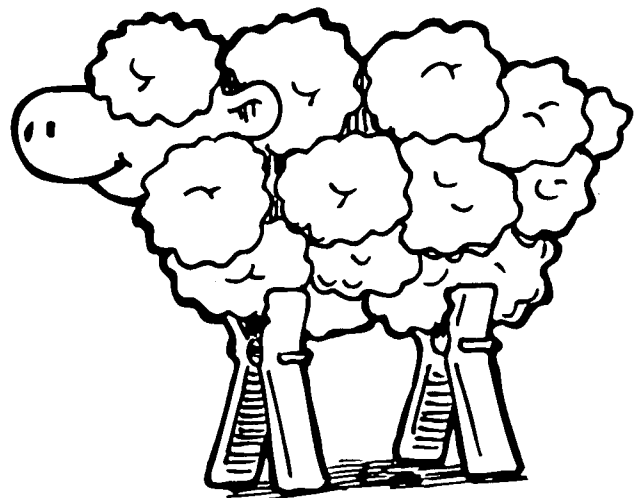
2. Cotton Ball Lamb

Materials

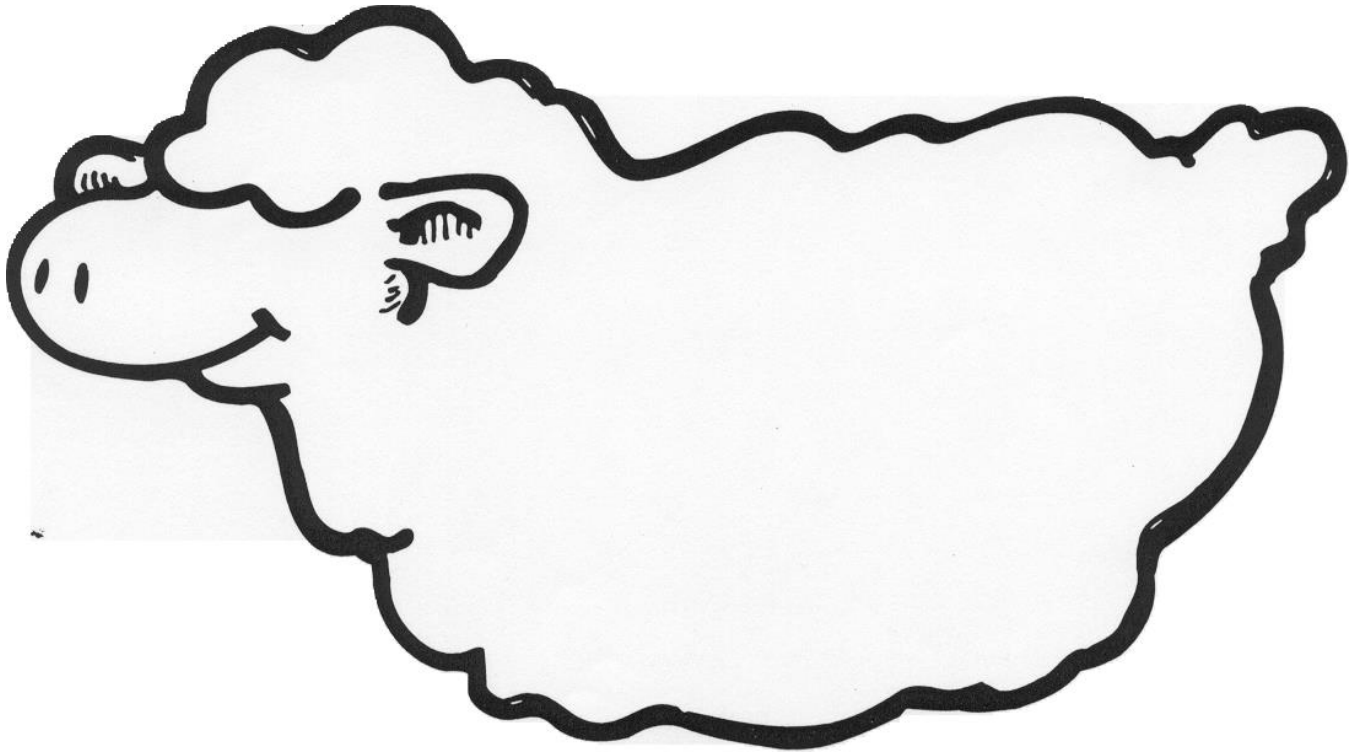
- White card stock
- Cotton Balls
- 2 spring-style clothespins
- Black and red markers
- Paste or glue

Directions

1. Copy the lamb pattern shown on the next page onto card stock.
2. Cut out a lamb for each child.



3. Use a red marker to color the lamb's mouth.
4. Use a black marker to color both clothespins and to outline the lamb's facial features.
5. Cover the lamb's body (but not the face) with paste or glue. Attach the cotton balls to the body.
6. Clip the black clothespins to the bottom of the lamb so it can stand alone.



Fun House

(Game Center)

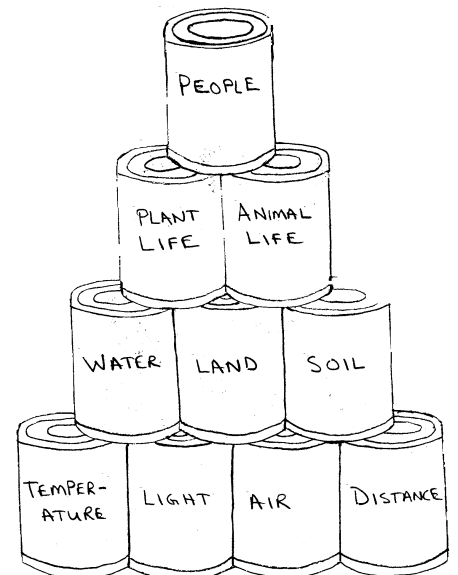
Cain's choice to sin had consequences. Play a rendition of "Truth or Consequences."

God's Weird and Wonderful World

(Science Center)

God's Wonderful Plan of Creation

The perfect conditions for human life on Earth are very much like the pyramid of cans shown below. Each part of creation is a building block that is set just right in order to sustain life on this planet. The pieces fit together perfectly, and not one can be removed without the whole structure tumbling down. The pieces build upon each other and interact with each other to provide an ideal physical environment for us to live in. For example, God placed this planet at just the right distance from the sun to provide the correct amount of light and just the right temperature we need. Water, soil and plant life work together to give us food to eat and fresh air to



breathe. God, in His infinite wisdom, engineered this marvelous world in which each piece is perfectly designed and fits together perfectly with all the other parts, in just the right way, so we can survive. This could not have happened by accident! God put this all together out of His love for us!

How Much Do You Know About God's Weird and Wonderful World?

1. 93 million miles is the approximate _____ from the Earth to the sun.
2. Although many different gases make up the _____ we breathe, oxygen is most important to us.
3. Photosynthesis is the process where plants use _____ from the sun to convert water, carbon dioxide and minerals into oxygen and other important stuff we need to stay alive.
4. As the planet orbits the sun the distance between them changes somewhat, resulting in the changes in the _____ we relate to the four seasons.
5. Dry _____ is our living space and makes up about one-third of the total area of the planet.
6. The other two-thirds of Earth is covered by _____ which is essential to life on the planet as well as home to many species of plants and animals.
7. The top layer of the land is called _____ and it provides the base for land plants to grow and living space for many insects.
8. Both _____ life and _____ life depend on all the other parts of creation to survive.
9. God put _____ at the top of this pyramid because He made this weird and wonderful world for our pleasure and so that we'll be in awe of Him and give Him all the glory due His name!

