



Welcome + Opening Prayer

THEMATIC OVERVIEW

God's gracious response when we snap and what that reveals about us.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Names in the Bible are not an accident and often are helpful to understanding the people who bear them.

The name Cain means "successful, or someone to whom success comes easily or regularly." In a hashtag: #winning. Cain's birth is celebrated.

Abel's birth on the other hand is briefly noted. The name Abel basically means "loser." You get the idea there are thousands of baby pictures of Cain and maybe one or two somewhere of Abel. Abel was someone who probably spent double the effort with half the results. And yet— God shows great focus and attentiveness to Abel. Why does this make Cain mad?

PRAYER GUIDELINES

In prayer, we ask God to transform us and the world around us with His grace.

GROUP SCHEDULE - FALL

Next Meeting: week of Nov 18 which is the week of Thanksgiving.

Discuss if you plan to host a meal as a home group and consider inviting neighbors or saving space for people with no where to go.

Genesis 4:1-16

See passage printed on the back of this page.

Explore + Apply

1. How do you feel about God being gracious to Cain, especially since he doesn't deserve it?
2. Recall a time when you snapped or had a heightened response and did something that surprised you, or seemed irrational to you? What could that be telling you about where your identity is located and its fragility?
3. Why do you think Abel's offering is regarded by God and Cain's isn't? Why does Cain get the thumbs down? What does that mean about how we approach God in faith? How do you struggle to be swept up into God's regard for Jesus? How does your own concern— to maintain God's regard for you— get in the way?

Pray

- Spend time praising God that His response to us, even when we snap and act out, is gracious. God asks questions designed to open pathways to healing and reconciliation.
- Pray and listen: How are the difficulties you face now, not a circumstantial problem, or someone else's problem— but a *you* problem?
- Imagine yourself, your neighbors, family, friends, our country, other countries with a non-fragile sense of identity. What would our interactions and institutions be like if we rooted our identity upon the solid rock of Christ's mediating work. 1 John 1:9 "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." How can you more deeply trust and more authentically extend God's grace for the sinner and God's justice to the victim? Pray for opportunities to speak and live in light of this hope.

Home Groups are a vital part of shared life and growth in Christ. Here, we build community, deepen relationships, and discover and live the Christian life together.

Genesis 4:1-16

¹ Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, "I have gotten a man with the help of the Lord." ² And again, she bore his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a worker of the ground. ³ In the course of time Cain brought to the Lord an offering of the fruit of the ground, ⁴ and Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and his offering, ⁵ but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his face fell. ⁶ The Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? ⁷ 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."

⁸ Cain spoke to Abel his brother. And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him. ⁹ Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" He said, "I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?" ¹⁰ And the Lord said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground. ¹¹ And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. ¹² 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." ¹³ Cain said to the Lord, "My punishment is greater than I can bear. ¹⁴ 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." ¹⁵ 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. ¹⁶ Then Cain went away from the presence of the Lord and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden.