

GOSPEL COMMUNITY
GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE
GENESIS - Genesis 4:1-16



CONNECT, REVIEW, PRAY

~5-10 minutes

- Announce any church activities/events and handle any housekeeping for the GC
- What are you thankful for / have struggled with this week?
- How did you apply or share what we learned last week?
- How can we pray for each other?

READ & RE-TELL

~5-10 minutes

- Have someone read out loud from the ESV translation.
- Have someone read out loud from a different translation.
- Do we need to define any confusing/unknown/curious words or phrases?
- Ask one person to re-tell the passage in their own words (different from the person reading).

ASK, LISTEN, LEARN

~30+ minutes

- What does this passage tell us about the character and nature of God?
- What does this passage tell us about ourselves/humanity?
- What does this passage tell us about the relationship between God and people?
- Review "FURTHER APPLICATION" questions.

APPLY, OBEY, GO

~10+ minutes

- Does anything in this passage change how you should live, or how you view God / people / yourself?
- Does this passage reveal a specific sin in your life?
- How can you live differently this coming week, with what you've learned?

FURTHER APPLICATION

1. Discuss Cain's reaction when God pointed out the sin he committed. What was it like? How does it help you understand Cain's character? Are there any places in your life where you react the same way when someone points out sin?
2. In what ways have you experienced that sin was not just about you - that it often comes out sideways and affects others more than we realize?
3. How have you seen generational effects of unrepentant sin in your family?
4. How have you seen God be gracious to you, even when you are confronted with sin?
5. What is one thing from this sermon/passage that you want to take with you and remember, as you follow Jesus?

5 HELPFUL GROUP DISCUSSION RULES

1. *If you talk a lot, allow space for someone else to speak up.*
2. *If you don't talk as much, work on sharing more.*
3. *Focus on what this passage is saying, don't stray too far from it. Seek not only to understand more about God through the passage, but also how it specifically applies to your own life as a Christian.*
4. *Give other people time to respond, silence is ok.*
5. *Respect your GC family and exercise grace.*

COMMENTARY EXCERPT:

In sketching the story of Cain and his descendants, Genesis illustrates the increasing grip of sin on the human race. 4:1–16 Cain and Abel. Ch. 3 showed how sin disrupts relations between God and human beings and between man and wife. Ch. 4 shows it destroying the bonds of brotherhood. Indeed, Cain is portrayed as a more hardened sinner than Adam. Killing one's brother is more wicked than eating a protected fruit. Adam had to be persuaded to sin; Cain could not be dissuaded from sinning, even by God himself (6–7). Sin is personified as an animal waiting to pounce (7; cf. 1 Pet. 5:8). When questioned by God about his sin, Adam, though rather petulant, at least told the truth; Cain lied and then made a joke about it (3:9–11 cf. 4:9). Adam accepted God's judgment in silence, but Cain protested fiercely (13–14) and was despatched even further from Eden (16).

Notes. 5 The reason for the rejection of Cain's sacrifice is not immediately obvious. The contrast between Cain's some of the fruits and Abel's fat portions ... of the firstborn of his flocks probably gives the clue. Perhaps Abel brought the best parts of his flocks and Cain was not so particular. But sacrifice is only acceptable to God if it is perfect and costly (Lv. 22:20–22; 2 Sa. 24:24); he will not be satisfied with second best (Mal. 1:6–14; Rom. 12:1). 15 Whether the mark of Cain was a tattoo, his name Cain, a dog or something else is quite obscure. Like the clothing given to Adam and Eve in 3:21, the mark served a double function. It reminded Cain of his sin and assured him of God's protection against potential enemies. Thus, his protest prayer (13–14) did not go unheeded, for even hardened sinners like Cain may pray for mercy and receive it.

Wenham, G. J. (1994). Genesis. In D. A. Carson, R. T. France, J. A. Motyer, & G. J. Wenham (Eds.), New Bible commentary: 21st century edition (4th ed., pp. 63–64). Inter-Varsity Press.