

SIN IS SOMETHING SERIOUS

All Activity Sheets

KEY WORDS

LOVE ALIVE RIGHTEOUS MERCY SINNER SIN UNRIGHTEOUS DEATH

BIBLICAL REFERENCE

Genesis 3:1-4:16; Hebrews 11:4; 1 John 4:11-12

LESSON OBJECTIVE

To understand that, although sin is something very serious, God is merciful and loves sinners

MEMORY VERSE

“For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit” (1 Peter 3:18, NIV*).

PREPARE YOURSELF TO TEACH

Most preadolescents of this age have already experienced changes in relationships, in the broadest sense of the word. Some of their experiences are normal, almost inevitable. Friends move and we lose contact with them. People’s interests change and separate us. But in other circumstances, such as the divorce of parents, divisions within a family, or the end of a friendship, the cause is sin.

In this lesson and unit, your students will discover the high cost that sin caused, and the wonderfulness of God’s grace. Sin is disobedience to the will of God, which disrupts the fluid relationship between him and the individual. Sin was what led Adam and Eve out of the garden of Eden and resulted in the first murder. Since then, everything remains the same.

But from the very beginning, God provided what was necessary to restore the relationship of love between himself and his people. First, he accepted the sacrifices of his worshipers. Then he established a sacrificial system. Finally, he offered his own Son, Jesus, as the perfect and final sacrifice for our sins.

The Scriptures clearly state that God intends an intimate relationship with his people. Through time, he has sought to reach all people. All must decide if they want to enjoy that relationship with the Lord.

BIBLICAL COMMENTARY

Genesis 3 is the introduction to the tragic chain of events that culminates in chapter 4. In chapter 3, the idyllic life that took place in Eden came to a catastrophic end. The pure and unobstructed relationship that once existed between Adam, Eve and God was annihilated as a consequence of sin.

We often think that the first sin occurred when Eve bit the forbidden fruit. But the separation from God happened much earlier. In responding to Satan's insinuations, Eve began to doubt the goodness of the Creator and assigned wrong motives to God. We see evidence of this in Eve's answer to the snake's question about eating from the trees in the garden.

The cunning of the snake was also manifested in its statement that by eating the forbidden fruit, Eve would become like God. Adam and Eve, in many ways, were already like him, because they were created in his image. The deception with which Satan sought to involve Eve was to assure her that she would become like God, rebelling against him.

This chapter shows that sin is an intentional action or set of attitudes that violate a known law of God. In this way, it damages the relationship between the person and the Creator. The Global Wesleyan Encyclopedia of Biblical Theology (Branson: 2020) says there are two main terms for sin: "hamartia" (missing the mark) and "adikia" (unrighteousness).

Where once there was open and sincere communication, now there is discomfort, deceit, guilt and evasion. God's holy presence became a threat instead of a warm well-being. The garden ceased to guarantee comfort and security, to become a suitable place to hide from the Lord.

God's mercy manifested itself from the beginning. Adam and Eve didn't die immediately, although they did lose the quality of life with which they were created.

Rather, God covered their now shameful nakedness, and for that he sacrificed some of his creation to make them clothes. In addition, Genesis 3:15 is considered as the first suggestion of God's redemptive plan through Christ.

The events reported in chapter 4 occur in a radically different spiritual setting. Sin is now a constant obstacle that interferes with intimacy with God.

Why did Cain and Abel bring offerings? The Bible doesn't say so. Nor does it explain why God accepted Abel's offering and rejected Cain's, although we do find some evidence. Abel brought "the fattest" from among the firstborn of his sheep, but Cain brought "the fruit of the earth" (v. 3-4). In the New Testament, the book of Hebrews says that Abel gave his offering by faith, suggesting that Cain might not have done so (11:4).

But yet, verse 7 says that Cain had the opportunity to avoid the entanglement of sin. He chose not to prevent it and sinned. Then he discharged his spiritual frustration on his innocent brother. Despite God's judgment on his sin, Cain also experienced the unspeakable mercy of the Lord. He didn't kill Cain, nor did he allow others to do so. Instead, he had mercy and made a mark on him that allowed him to survive.

INTRODUCE THE LESSON

Problems and more problems

Divide the students into three groups and hand out Student Activity Sheet #392-A. Assign each group one of the three events for them to complete. Give several minutes for them to work. When regrouping, ask them to read their comments, starting with "Friends get angry at each other when...". The rest of the group will listen and eventually participate with new ideas. You write on the board what the students say. Do the same with the other two groups.

Say: "Relationships between people are important to all of us, but there are many situations that can be misunderstood and put us in confrontational situations. Ultimately, instead of having good and strong relationships, they break up ... and they end badly ... all because of sin. Today we'll learn from two broken relationships and how they were restored.

TEACH THE LESSON

Divide into two groups to read the Bible study passages:

Genesis 3 and 4:1-16 to answer the following questions about broken relationships.

In the garden

•What did God forbid Adam and Eve to do? (Eat fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.)

•What made the forbidden fruit so tempting to Eve? (It was attractive, good food, source of wisdom) Affirm that most of Satan's temptations are like this. He tempts us by making us want a lot of attractive possessions, or to satisfy normal physical desires in the wrong way. He also tempts us to become the god of our own life instead of relying on the true God.

•In what way did Adam and Eve's disobedience affect their relationship and communication with God? (It shattered the relationship of love and trust that they had previously. Now they felt ashamed and fearful to the point of hiding from the Creator instead of enjoying him as they had done before.)

•What were other results of their disobedience? (Friction between Adam and Eve blaming each other, pain, heavy and frustrating work and, eventually, death.)

•In what way did God show his mercy towards Adam and Eve? (By providing clothing to cover themselves.) It seemed cruel, at first, for God to throw them out of the garden of Eden. Actually, this was an act of love and mercy since there was another tree in the garden: the tree of life. If they had eaten this fruit, they would have lived forever in their sin, with fear and separated from God. The Lord didn't want that to happen.

In the field:

•Why was there a problem between Cain and Abel? (Cain's jealousy because God didn't accept his offering as he did with Abel's.) See verses 3 and 4.

•How did Cain sin? (He got mad at Abel, killed him and lied to God.)

•In what way did God show mercy to Cain? (He put a special mark on him so that others wouldn't kill him.)

In conclusion, Adam and Eve paid a terrible price for eating the forbidden fruit. Why does God consider sin something so serious and horrible? Let the students present their ideas. Remind them that God created us to relate to him and our neighbor. Sin breaks and destroys that ability; this is what makes sin so serious.

CONNECT THE LESSON

In the garden

Give the group Student Activity Sheet #392-B and guide them in responding to the questions about "In the Garden" from Genesis 3, and then about "In the Field" from Genesis 4.

What is sin?

Give cards for students to write the definition of sin, which they already studied in the Important Words, and you explained during the lesson. Then, ask those who want to read their definition to raise their hands. Explain and clarify the concept if there are doubts. Point out that you'll continue studying during the unit about how sad and bad sin is and its consequences. Then talk about the statements in Student Activity Sheet #392-C (What is "Sin").

PRACTICE THE MEMORY VERSE

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Write the memory verse and reference on cards, one word on each. Before the session, hide them in different places in the room. Practice the passage you wrote on the board several times. Explain the importance of Christ's sacrifice to reestablish God's relationship with people, shattered by sin and the fall of Adam and Eve. Ask the students to look for the cards. When they find them, they must form the Bible verse correctly on a table.

WRAP-UP

Pray

End today's lesson by thanking God for the gift of prayer. Ask God for wisdom to pray the right way. If you decided that the students would have prayer partners, plan a time for them to talk to each other about their concerns, so they can pray together.

Encourage

Talk to your group about how this was a sad and serious story, but that it didn't end with the sin of Adam and Eve, nor with the murder of Abel. God already had his son Jesus in mind, who would be the Savior of the world. Remind the students that God's love and grace are greater than any sin. He prepared the way to give us freedom from sin. Sing an appropriate chorus or hymn.

Invite

As the students prepare to depart, tell them something of interest about the next session and encourage them to attend. Remind them to welcome visitors.