

Winter 2010

SMALL GROUP SERIES:

Let There Be Light

Genesis: The Story Begins

Discussion Guide
Week #5

Genesis Series: Sin Grows Up Fast

Genesis 4:1-8 (TNIV)

1 Adam made love to his wife Eve, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Cain. She said, "With the help of the LORD I have brought forth a man." 2 Later she gave birth to his brother Abel.

Now Abel kept flocks, and Cain worked the soil. 3 In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the LORD. 4 But Abel also brought an offering—fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The LORD looked with favor on Abel and his offering, 5 but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast.

6 Then the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? 7 If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it."

8 Now Cain said to his brother Abel, "Let's go out to the field." While they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him.

1 Corinthians 10:13 (TNIV)

13 No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to us all. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.

Facilitator's Guide

Facilitator's Tips

Here are some practical tips to help your group to be real:

As a small-group leader, how you respond to group members' inquiries is important to the life of any discussion. What you say and do when they pose a question either enhances or stifles further group interaction. But responding to their questions is just one of a number of discussion-leading skills you'll need to cultivate. Other competencies have to do with your reaction to their answers to questions.

When you lead quality Bible discussions, people will find fresh, "I've never thought of that before" insights. In response to a study question, participants may notice a truth for the very first time, especially if they're recent converts. Then they verbalize their discovery for others to hear. As a leader, this is the time to reward their participation with positive reinforcement. Express excitement over their discoveries as if each one is new to you.

Here's the flipside of the positive reinforcement coin: Temper your enthusiasm in relation to the quality of a group member's answer. Indiscriminate praise without regard to the quality of their answers backfires because your commendations come across as insincere. Group members hesitate to give serious thought to a question if you treat every answer the same. So reserve the highest praise for the best answers, or for feedback that reveals critical thinking on the issue you're discussing. Also, be sure to praise participants for thought-provoking questions they raise and for input that shows an honest effort to wrestle with the text. One way to show sincerity is to make your positive reinforcement as specific as possible.

-Adapted from SmallGroups.com

START IT

- What's a habit that you just can't break?
- Describe a time when you felt out of control. What does it feel like? What happened?
- [For more developed groups] Share a story of one of the worst things you did when you were a kid. What did you do? Did you get caught? How do you feel about it today?

STUDY IT

- Read the scripture. What's the difference between Cain and Abel?
- Why would they give an offering to God?
- Why do you think did God look on favor for Abel's offering and not Cain's?
- What happened to Cain? What do you learn about God in his interaction with Cain?
- What happened to Abel? Why did Cain attack and kill him?
- What leads people to be violent with others?
- What do we learn from the 1 Corinthians verse about temptation?
- In what ways does God help us through temptation?
- How do we become different kinds of people, the kind who wouldn't sin?

LIVE IT

- In what areas of your life does God want to transform?
- What tempts you to sin?

PRAY IT

- For the vision to become a different kind of person.
- For conviction to pursue transformation through Jesus.