



# GENESIS

## FOUNDATIONS



Studies in the book of Genesis  
PART TWO—Genesis 3:1 —4:16  
Group Applications



FOUR OAKS CHURCH

We would like to thank our pastors and elders for their leadership  
and the following people who contributed to the content and production of this booklet

**General Editor**

Yaacov Petscher

**Authors**

Genesis 3:1-5 ..... Juli Haverlock (Killearn)  
Genesis 3:1-7 ..... Jason Hollister (East)  
Genesis 3:7-13 ..... Sam Verghese (Midtown)  
Genesis 3:14-19 ..... Jeff Main (East)  
Genesis 3:20-4:16 ..... Cori Verghese (Midtown)

**Discussion Questions**

Scott Stake (Killearn) & Hayley Scott (Midtown)

**Copy Editor & Production**

Debbie Tanis (Killearn)

**Proofreaders**

Lori Ivarson (Killearn)  
Jeannie Pierce (Killearn)  
Judy Stringer (Killearn)

Cover Design by Forrest Hughes

Download this study guide at [fouroakschurch.com/guide](http://fouroakschurch.com/guide).

# Genesis 3:1-5

*“You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.”*

*—John 8:44*

## The Father of Lies

By the end of Genesis 2, God had completed His perfect creation. He set His image bearers in Eden to worship Him by filling and subduing the earth. God had clearly communicated to Adam and Eve what their purpose was, and their relationship was unhindered. Everything was good.

Scripture tells us that the evil one disguised himself by inhabiting one of God's most beautiful creations, the serpent. We learn that the serpent was craftier and more subtle than any other created land animal. The serpent initiated his attack by questioning God's authority, “Did God ACTUALLY say...?” Eve willfully engaged the serpent to answer his seemingly innocent question. Her reply about what fruits were allowable and not allowable was met with a devastating lie, “You will not surely die.” The cunning serpent enticed her with the idea that God, Himself, had withheld truth and that God was a liar. Satan's tactics often include twisting the words of God and distorting God's character. Sinclair Ferguson, a Scottish theologian, wrote this about the enemy, “Knowing he (Satan) cannot destroy God, he seeks to destroy his greatest pleasure in creation.... The evil one seeks to attack God's purposes by destroying God's fellowship with these two principal creatures that He has brought into being.”

Satan truly is the father of lies and the master of deception, and the evil one has not changed his scheme since the beginning of time. In Ephesians 2:2, the apostle Paul calls him the “Prince of the Power of the Air”, and his purposes are to 1) blind the mind of unbelievers (2 Corinthians 4:4), 2) tempt believers (1 Thessalonians 3:5), and 3) accuse believers (Revelation 12:10). Brothers and sisters, we must humbly recognize that the evil one is actively present in the world today. It is tempting to entertain the lies of the deceiver because the lies are often subtle and appear to require only minor

compromise, but we should not give in. We have a holy, loving, and faithful God who tells us that we won't be tempted beyond our ability and that He will provide a means of escape so that we can endure that temptation (1 Corinthians 10:13). How do we seek the Lord in the midst of temptation from Satan? We would be wise to earnestly pray as Jesus taught His disciples to pray in Matthew 6:9-13:

*"Our Father in heaven,*

*hallowed be your name.*

*Your kingdom come,*

*your will be done,*

*on earth as it is in heaven.*

*Give us this day our daily bread,*

*and forgive us our debts,*

*as we also have forgiven our debtors.*

*And lead us not into temptation,*

*but deliver us from evil."*



## Group Discussion Questions

1. Share a time when you told a lie. What impact or consequences did it have?

---

---

---

2. Different translations of the Bible describe the serpent as “crafty” (ESV), “cunning” (HCSB), “subtle” (RSV), and “shrewdest” (NLT). How do these adjectives give insight into the character of Satan? (see John 8:44 for further insight)

---

---

3. How did the serpent change God’s words from Genesis 2:9, 16 – 17? How did that impact Eve?

---

---

4. The serpent questioned God’s instructions to man. Are there any parts of God’s Word that you question? If so, what are they and why?

---

---

5. The serpent told the woman that she would know the difference between good and evil if she ate the fruit. How can we, as believers, know the difference between good and evil? Spend some time praying as a group for the grace to discern good and evil.

---

---

---

## Additional Reading

Excerpt from *Enduring Temptation and Overcoming Sin* by Juan Sanchez<sup>1</sup>

Understanding the nature of sin is so important. If we are to endure temptation and overcome sin, we must understand that sin is deceptive, divisive and destructive. The Bible teaches that the temptations we face are common to everyone (1 Corinthians 10:13), and because Jesus understands our temptations (Hebrews 4:14-16), we can go to Him for help in our time of need, for God is faithful and provides a way of escape, so we can endure the temptation (1 Corinthians 10:13). When we choose to sin, we sin against God, disrupting our fellowship with him; we sin against those affected by our sin, hurting them; and we sin against the church, affecting our fellowship with one another. We see every day how sin destroys people's lives. Even for believers, after we have experienced the wonderful forgiveness God offers, the consequences of sin still linger. David's life testifies to this fact (2 Samuel 11-24).

Learning from our past and understanding the nature of sin are helpful defensive strategies against temptation and sin; however, glorifying God in everything (1 Corinthians 10:31) is the most important aspect of Christian living. When our life is consumed by a passion for God's glory, we will delight in Him and nothing else will do. You see, the Christian life is not about a list of don'ts; it's about a gift given to us in which we are to delight: Jesus Christ, the beloved Son. When we get to the point in our lives that Christ satisfies our every longing, then the things of this world will loosen their hold on us. This is what brings glory to God. May Christ satisfy us all!

---

<sup>1</sup>Sanchez, Juan. "Enduring Temptation and Overcoming Sin." The Gospel Coalition, January 29, 2010, [www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/enduring-temptation-and-overcoming-sin/](http://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/enduring-temptation-and-overcoming-sin/)

# Genesis 3:1-7

*“For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.”*

—Hebrews 4:15

## Don't Get it Twisted

In sports and in battle, one rule is universal—know your opponent. You need to know what your adversary's plan of attack is and how to defend yourself if you want to be successful. When it comes to understanding our opponent, Satan, we don't have to go too far into Genesis to learn about his plan of attack. We find in Genesis 3 that Satan twists the words of God to sow seeds of doubt in Eve. He does this so that he can tempt her and draw her into sin. Satan's plan of attack for our first parents is the same one he uses on us: to manipulate us into believing that the momentary pleasures of sin bring us more joy than obedience. Yet Satan seems to less frequently start with a full, no holds barred assault on us, but instead, the tempter usually begins by sowing seeds of doubt in us.

In this passage, the serpent begins to subtly twist the words that God spoke to Adam and Eve. “He said to the woman, ‘Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’” (Genesis 3:1) The serpent is being subtle but lethal with his line of questioning causing Eve to doubt the exact words the Lord God spoke to her and Adam to the point that she even adds to what God actually said. Eve repeats God's exact instructions to the serpent but then adds this phrase, “neither shall you touch it, lest you die.” (Genesis 3:3). Satan takes Eve's words and uses it as an opportunity to infuse more doubt, tempt her pride, and appeal to her desire for pleasure; and the results were disastrous: “So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate.” (Genesis 3:6)

The enemy has not changed his strategy. He continues to sow seeds of doubt by convincing us to question God's goodness, making it difficult to see God as a loving father. When we doubt God's goodness and love for us, we are much less motivated to



obey His commands. Once the enemy has sown doubt, Satan uses what God created and declared good to tempt us and draw us into sin. He uses anything and everything—alcohol, food, sex, children, spouse, work, or leisure—to entice us. These things were created to bring glory to God as we enjoy them in their proper place; however, we are often tempted to make these temporary things our ultimate source of pleasure rather than finding our pleasure and joy in obeying the commands of our good and loving Father.

Brothers and sisters, let us resist the schemes of our enemy as we remind ourselves of the goodness of our heavenly Father. He knit us together in our mother's womb. He sings over us. He gave us His only Son, in love, predestined before the beginning of time that we would be holy and blameless in His sight. He works all things together for our good. He gives wisdom when we ask, without finding fault. He lavishes grace upon us. He holds all our tears in a bottle. He removes our sin from us as far as the east is from the west. He loves us. He keeps His promises and is ever faithful. Let us not doubt His goodness. And let us remember what our good Father promises—when we resist the devil, he will flee.



## Group Discussion Questions

1. Share a time when you felt keenly aware of temptation in your life and you began to doubt God. What were the circumstances? How did you respond?

---

---

2. God did not explain why the man and woman shouldn't eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. They were expected to obey. Why do you think God didn't explain? How do you feel about obeying instructions that you don't understand?

---

---

3. What are three characteristics of the fruit that attracted the woman to it? Were they good or bad things? Why?

---

---

4. Spend some time comparing how the man and woman dealt with temptation to how Jesus dealt with temptation from the Devil. What do we learn about resisting temptation in our own lives?

---

---

5. The man and woman tried to cover themselves with fig leaves, but it was inadequate. What are some ways that we try to cover up and excuse our sin to make it look okay to God and others? Is there any sin you're currently trying to cover that you need to confess? Spend some time praying for one another.

---

---

---

---

## Additional Reading

Excerpt from *When Temptation Holds out Pleasure* by Jackie Hill Perry<sup>1</sup>

Can a dead thing make you happy? Strange question, I know. In the moments when we're vacillating between obeying God or disobeying God, though, the question might help identify who or what we are really believing in for joy. If the experience of a particular sin felt abominable to the sinner, they'd most likely replace it with another sin that felt good. Sinners don't just sin because, being sinners, they have to. Sinners sin because they want to—they enjoy sinning. Being made in the image of God, we were made for joy, but not the shallow and temporary joy we feel when we sin. What Jesus accomplished on the cross has the power to set us free from sin, and set us up for joy. But how?

When Jesus triumphed over death and sin, he finally cleared the path for our feet to walk into joy. He reconciled us to God (Romans 5:10), in whose presence are pleasures forevermore (Psalm 16:11). Jesus himself is the bread of life (John 6:35), the only one able to satisfy the body fully and completely. He is the fountain of living water (John 7:37–38), the one who quenches all our thirsts. He's the good shepherd (John 10:11), the one who leaves the needy without want. Jesus brought us into fellowship with God, and by doing so, he's brought us where real happiness is found (1 Peter 3:18). What Christ has done has made us alive to all that God is. Now we can live as he would have us live, in obedient delight.

Often, our temptations, feel more tangible than his promises. When they do, remember that God is alive (Hebrews 7:25). Since that is the case, his word is also alive (Hebrews 4:12) and so is your hope (1 Peter 1:3). We are not miserable people to be pitied, as if Christ has not risen from the dead (1 Corinthians 15:19–20). We are no longer dead in our trespasses, but we have been made alive together with Christ (Ephesians 2:4–5) — resurrected to live delighting in all that God is and empowered to live delighting in obedience to the one we love.

---

<sup>1</sup>Perry, Jackie Hill. "When Temptation Holds out Pleasure." *Desiring God*, January 10, 2019, [www.desiringgod.org/articles/when-temptation-holds-out-pleasure](http://www.desiringgod.org/articles/when-temptation-holds-out-pleasure).

# Genesis 3:7-13

*“Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man,  
and death through sin, and so death spread to all men  
because all sinned.”* —Romans 5:12

## Origins: Hide and Seek and The Blame Game

The other day I was watching the news about someone going to trial for an alleged criminal act, and it played out with the same familiar scene—the accused hiding his face with his shirt saying, “I didn’t do it!”, “It wasn’t me.” As the story unfolded on TV, I noticed the seemingly comical aspect of it all. Here you have the news anchor trying to describe the events, all the while the photo of the accused perpetrator trying to hide under his shirt is displayed as his name and alleged crimes are being detailed. All I could think to myself was, “Well, that shirt didn’t work too well did it?”

Where does mankind’s intuitive sense to hide in the midst of shame come from? Why do I act like this when I’m caught in sin? It all goes back to Adam and Eve. They were caught. God called out, “Adam where are you?”, and instead of jackets or shirts covering them, they had fig leaves. Instead of hiding behind their lawyers, they hid behind a tree. We can see, from the very beginning, sin drives me to hide (vs. 7-11). The Lord’s footsteps in the garden, which once had been a sound of comfort and hope, became terror and fear—yet this was only the beginning! God asked who was responsible, and the resounding answer was, “It wasn’t me!” Fingers were pointed at each other, and at the serpent, Satan. “He did it!”, “She did it!”, “The devil made me do it!” Sound familiar? You see, sin not only drives me to hide, but it also drives me to blame others (vs. 12-13).

I am more like Adam and Eve than I would like to admit. Even more so, Romans 5:12 reminds me I have a shared fallen nature given from Adam, and I share the same tendencies. But there is good news: that doesn’t have to be the end of the story for me! Jesus, the last Adam, the perfect man, gives me grace and life! (Romans 5:17). He gives me a faith community where I can entrust myself. If I have the riches of grace from Jesus, and the body of believers whom I can trust, I no longer need to run! I no longer need to be afraid to tell the hard, honest truth!

Through Jesus, God has given me many ways to get the truth out in the open. I can pray



## Group Discussion Questions

1. Share a recent example of the fallen nature of man. How does it make you feel to talk about it?

- 
2. What are some ways Adam and Eve reveal their fallen nature in this passage? What do you think that must have been like for them to experience for the first time?

- 
3. What are some ways the man and woman respond to their sin, especially once confronted about it? Why do you think they react in each of these ways? Which of these ways do you relate to with sin in your life?

- 
4. After Adam and Eve sin, God pursues them and asks them a series of questions. Why do you think He responds this way? What does it reveal about His character? (Consider Psalm 139:1-4 as you reflect.)

- 
5. Before the fall, man and woman walked together with God in the garden. After the fall, God pursues His people to restore this relationship. How does it make you feel that God pursues you?

- 
6. Because of the work of Jesus Christ, we do not need to hide from God or each other. Is there anything you are hiding and need to confess? If so, what is keeping you from doing so? What would it look like for you to come out of hiding and walk in the light of the gospel?
- 
-

## Additional Reading

<sup>1</sup>Excerpt from *The Fall of Satan and the Victory of Christ* by John Piper

### God Governs Satan's Every Move

So now back to the question about the origin of Satan's sinfulness. Is God helpless before the will of his own angels? Is there a power outside himself that limits his rule over them? My conclusion is that from cover to cover the Bible presents God as governing Satan and his demons. He has the right and power to restrain them any time he pleases.

I conclude, therefore, that God permitted Satan's fall, not because he was helpless to stop it, but because he had a purpose for it. Since God is never taken off guard, his permissions are always purposeful. If he chooses to permit something, he does so for a reason—an infinitely wise reason. How the sin arises in Satan's heart, we do not know. God has not told us. What we do know is that God is sovereign over Satan, and therefore Satan's will does not move without God's permission. And therefore every move of Satan is part of God's overall purpose and plan. And this is true in such a way that God never sins. God is infinitely holy, and God is infinitely mighty. Satan is evil, and Satan is under the all-governing wisdom of God.

#### Why Not Wipe Out Satan?

Why, then, does God not simply wipe Satan out? He has the right and power to do this. And Revelation 20:10 says he is going to do it someday. Why didn't he cast him into the lake of fire the day after he rebelled? Why let him rampage through humanity for centuries?

The ultimate answer is that "all things were created through Christ and for Christ" (Colossians 1:16). The Son of God, Jesus Christ, will be more highly honored in the end because he defeats Satan through longsuffering, patience, humility, servanthood, suffering, and death, rather than through raw power. And the more highly honored the Son is, the greater the joy of those who love him.

---

<sup>1</sup>Piper, John."The Fall of Satan and the Victory of Christ". Desiring God, August 19, 2007, <https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/the-fall-of-satan-and-the-victory-of-christ>



# Genesis 3:14-19

*“For those whom the Lord loves he disciplines, and he scourges every son whom he receives. It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline?” —Hebrews 12:6-7*

## Judgments and Redemption

In these verses, God pronounces His judgments against the serpent, Eve, and Adam, in that order. His judicial procedure varies with the defendant and, in His judgment against Satan, He provides a promise of redemption to the newly fallen (called the “Protoevangelium”). Throughout the process of executing judgment, what is clear from the text is the prominence of God’s unquestionable authority. His control complete, and the once proud and conversant trio are silent.

God does not bother to interrogate the serpent as He did Adam and Eve (Gen 3:11-13). Once Eve points to the serpent as the deceiver, God immediately renders judgment. He has no need to inquire of the serpent, neither the brute animal nor Satan who animates it. To the animal, His curse is to render it as the lowest of the beasts. The Talmud records that, “According to the greatness of the serpent, so was his downfall.” Animals are created by God for the good of man and must not be involved in his harm (Gen. 9:5). John Chrysostom offered an accurate metaphor for God’s action as that of a father breaking the sword that was used to kill his son. Satan used the serpent against His beloved and its punishment was just.

It is obvious from verse 15 that more than an animal is involved. God punishes the serpent as an everlasting sign to the one who used it for such evil. It is as if God has taken the offending weapon, broken it over His knee, and turned His fearfully righteous attention to the cowering murderer who wielded it. He pronounces enmity, hatred, between Satan and the woman, as well as the woman’s and Satan’s descendants. Thus, a spirit of antagonism begins between Eve and her deceiver and a spiritual hostility is foreshadowed between Christ and His followers and Satan and his lot. That antagonism will end with Christ’s death on the cross (the bruising of the heel) and His resurrection, victory over sin and death and redemption of mankind (the crushing of Satan’s head)—thus, the “Protoevangelium” or first prophecy of Christ.

With this prophecy delivered to Satan, God's attention is now directed toward Eve where He pronounces her punishment for her moral failing and describes the consequences of her sin. Her punishment is pain in child-bearing, and as her sin brought disorder and contention into a peaceful existence, she will no longer find the perfect fulfillment and spiritual peace in her relationship with her husband. That contentment came from her natural inclination to live in accordance with God's will. Now she will contend with unnatural and futile desires for self-fulfillment apart from God.

For Adam's part, the once productive ground that gave fruit through pleasant and rewarding work was now cursed. For defying God, Adam will survive only through great toil, pain, and the sweat of his brow. As with Eve, his desire to live autonomously from God destroys a peaceful and contented existence. Now even after all his effort, he and all mankind will live in sin, die, and return to the ground from which we are taken.

The verses end illustrating the clear need for a redeemer, Adam and Eve's and our only hope: a hope met by God's fulfillment of His promise and the gift of Jesus Christ.

## Side Notes

1. Are these verses literal or allegorical? Fundamentalists are firmly on the literal side, historic orthodox theologians are mostly on the mixed side. This position is similar to Paul's allegorical use of the two mothers of Abraham's sons in Galatians 4:24. Liberal theologians see the verses as purely allegorical.
2. The Douai-Rheim Bible, the first English translation used by Roman Catholics, states that "she" shall crush his head (Gen. 3:15). Although the original Vulgate (Jerome's translation of the OT into Latin) translated the original Hebrew as "he", later Roman Catholic translators seized on the ambiguity of the original Hebrew and changed it to "she" in order to position Mary into the text.



## Group Discussion Questions

1. Share what you imagine it would have been like to live in the garden of Eden.

---

---

2. How are the curses God pronounces fitting for each person involved—for the serpent, the woman, and the man? Do you think this is right or fair?

---

---

3. Based on this passage, how would you define sin? What are some other passages that more fully define sin?

---

---

4. If we did not have the story of Genesis 3, what would that do to the rest of the story of the Bible? How can Genesis 3 help us make sense of our lives and our world?

---

---

5. The brokenness of this world causes many people to react to pain by feeling angry with God. How does the promise found in Genesis 3:15 redirect that anger and provide hope? Spend some time as a group praying for the right response to the pain and brokenness of this world.

---

---

## Additional Reading

Excerpt from *God for Us, or God Against Us?* by Ray Ortlund<sup>1</sup>

God is for us. Romans 8:31.

But I have this against you. Revelation 2:4. See also 2:14, 20; 3:3.

So, which is it? Is God for us, or is God against us? If we are in Christ, the answer is: maybe both. God is certainly for us, and God might also be against us.

God is for us in an absolute sense, in Christ. We have peace with God (Romans 5:1). There is now no condemnation threatening us, none at all (Romans 8:1). God foreknew us, predestined us, called us, justified us and promises to glorify us (Romans 8:29-30). God is for us.

So here is my assurance. I can sin my way out of my marriage, I can sin my way out of the ministry, I can sin my way out of physical health, and a lot more. But I cannot sin my way out of Christ, and neither can you, because the cross of Christ paid the damning penalty for our sins.

God might also be against us at times. Not that he de-justifies us, but he might discipline us (Hebrews 12:5-6). He might oppose us (James 4:6). He might send out wrath against us (2 Chronicles 19:2; 32:25). Not condemning wrath, but purifying wrath, correcting wrath, for a time. Even his disciplines and oppositions are gifts of love. How could it be otherwise? The smile of God is not an all-approving grin. What kind of Father would that be?

Is our understanding of the gospel biblical enough to include a category for the God who is for us also being against us? Is our understanding of the gospel big enough and complex enough so that we feel not only reassured but also solemnized? If the only message we are willing to receive is reassurance that God's condemning wrath has fallen on Another, why? Why block out this other clearly biblical message, warning us that his disciplining wrath can fall on us? If we are in Christ, why deflect anything the Bible clearly says?

Even when God is against us, still, he is for us. His love is burning away whatever keeps us from pressing more deeply into his mighty heart.

“Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent” (Revelation 3:19).

---

<sup>1</sup>Ortlund, Ray. “God for Us, or God Against Us?”. The Gospel Coalition, August 19, 2015, <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/ray-ortlund/god-for-us-or-god-against-us/>.

# Genesis 3:20-4:16

*“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” —1 John 1:9*

## Inside-Out

You can't solve inward problems with outward things. This saying is fairly common and I think it rings true when we consider the case of Cain. Here we have Cain, the older brother. Older siblings can get the raw deal sometimes. There's the pressure to be a good example for the younger siblings, the pressure to do things better, the pressure to take care of their siblings, the pressure to learn and lead first, and in general, to seemingly bear the burden to carry so much hope that is placed in them. I don't know what kind of parents Adam and Eve were, but I can imagine the types of expectations they had are not that different from today's parents.

Older brother Cain finds himself one day, sacrifice not accepted, while little brother's sacrifice is, and God asking, “Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen?” Rather than turning to God, his true loving Father, and answering the hard introspective question of why, he turns his attention to his brother, as if Abel was his biggest problem. But Abel was never his problem. There was clearly something already amiss in the heart of Cain, and God used the rejection of his sacrifice to reveal what was already there. God turned up the fire here. Rather than ignoring the issue, or placating Cain by accepting the sacrifice, He rejected Cain's offering, thus revealing Cain's true heart. You see, God is a loving God who cares more about the internal than the external. His desire was for Cain to be honest with both the Lord and himself about the state of his heart.

I used to feel uneasy about this passage. I felt God was cruel to reject Cain's sacrifice, and that God was both provoking Cain and inviting him to choose wrongly. When I saw his question as an invitation and not an accusation, I realized God's actions toward Cain are consistent with the loving God throughout the Bible. He disciplines those He loves, draws out those things that are already in the heart and invites His children to repent and grow in grace and love. I still have thoughts like Cain had of “I know better what I need than God does,” or that changing other people or circumstances will “solve my problems.”

But now, I can look to Christ, my true older brother. He is the brother that Cain could not



## Group Discussion Questions

1. Share about a time when you were angry. What were the circumstances? Did things get resolved?

---
2. What is Adam's first recorded act after God's curse is declared? (see verse 20) How might this act give hope to the rest of history?

---
3. God makes garments of animal skins and clothes the man and woman. How does this point to the covering that God provides for our sin? Which covering is better? (See Hebrews 10:4-10.)

---
4. Cain and Abel both present offerings to God, but one brother finds favor and the other does not. Why do you think this was so? (Consider other times peoples' sacrifices are seen as acceptable or unacceptable. See Psalm 51:16-17 or Hosea 6:6 as examples.)

---
5. Cain rejected the idea of being his "brother's keeper." As believers, who should we view as a brother or sister? Who is a brother or sister God is calling you to reach out to? What inhibits you from treating them as such and how can you change?

---
6. Currently, how is your heart similar to Cain's? In what ways might you have anger and pride in your heart or not be giving God your best? How can you re-orient your heart towards Him? Spend some time praying as a group for the grace to live this way.

---



## Additional Reading

Excerpt from *The History of the World in a Nutshell*—Genesis 4:1-10 by Dr. Timothy Keller<sup>1</sup>

In verse 7, God, in speaking to Cain, uses a remarkable image. He says, “But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it.” It’s a remarkable image. It’s the image of a leopard or a tiger, a predatory animal, crouching in the shadows, coiled and ready to spring and kill.

God says that’s sin. Sin is predatory. Sin has a deadly life of its own. How is that? Here right away we’re going to see why there is no other set of vocabulary words that we have that deal with the reality of what sin is. How so? First of all, when God uses this image, it’s telling us that sin has an abiding, growing presence in your life. If you commit sin, sin is not over. Sin is not simply an action. It’s a force. It’s a power.

When you do sin, it’s not now over, but it actually becomes a presence in your life. It takes shape, a shadow shape, and stays with you and begins to affect you. Eventually, it can just take you out. You say, “Well, how could that be?” Well, you can start with the psychological concept of habit. You can start there, but you can’t end there. You can start by noticing the things we do become easier to do again and easier to do again and easier to do again and harder to stop doing.

C.S. Lewis some years ago wrote this passage in one of his chapters of *Mere Christianity*. He says, “That explains what always used to puzzle me about Christian writers; they seem to be so very strict at one moment and so very free and easy at another. They talk about mere sins of thought as if they were immensely important: and then they talk about the most frightful murders and treacheries as if you had only got to repent and all would be forgiven.

But I have come to see that they are right. What they are always thinking of is the mark which the action leaves on that tiny central self which no one sees ... but which each of us will have to endure—or enjoy—forever. One man may be so placed that his anger sheds the blood of thousands, and another so placed that however angry he gets he will only be laughed at.”

Do you hear that? Here are two people. They both get angry. One of them, because of the conditions, has the power to kill people with it. The other person, no matter how angry he gets, people just laugh at him. Each has done a little mark on the soul. It’s pretty much the same case in both men.

“Each has done something to himself which, unless he repents, will make it harder for him to keep out of the rage next time he is tempted, and will make the rage worse when he does fall into it. Each of them, if he seriously turns to God, can have that twist in the central man straightened out again: each is, in the long run, doomed if he will not. The bigness or smallness of the thing, seen from the outside, is not what really matters.”

---

<sup>1</sup> Keller, Timothy. “The History of the World in a Nutshell – Genesis 4:1-10.” *Monergism.com Blog*, 25 Jan. 2009, [www.monergism.com/history-world-nutshell--genesis-4-1-10](http://www.monergism.com/history-world-nutshell--genesis-4-1-10).

---





# FOUR OAKS CHURCH

---




## **Killearn Congregation**

4500 W Shannon Lakes Dr  
[www.fouroakschurch.com/killearn](http://www.fouroakschurch.com/killearn)  
@fouroakskillearn   

## **Midtown Congregation**

526 E. 8th Ave  
[www.fouroakschurch.com/midtown](http://www.fouroakschurch.com/midtown)  
@fouroaksmidtown   

## **East Congregation**

650 Trojan Trail  
[www.fouroakseast.com](http://www.fouroakseast.com)  
@fouroakseast   

850.385.0004 | [fouroakschurch.com](http://fouroakschurch.com) | [info@fouroakschurch.com](mailto:info@fouroakschurch.com)

© 2019-2020 Four Oaks Community Church. All rights reserved.