



JANUARY 16 2022
SERMON STUDY GUIDE

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Keeping in Step with Jesus
Genesis 4:2-7

Later she gave birth to his brother and named him Abel.

When they grew up, Abel became a shepherd, while Cain cultivated the ground. 3 When it was time for the harvest, Cain presented some of his crops as a gift to the Lord. 4 Abel also brought a gift—the best portions of the firstborn lambs from his flock. The Lord accepted Abel and his gift, 5 but he did not accept Cain and his gift. This made Cain very angry, and he looked dejected. 6 “Why are you so angry?” the Lord asked Cain. “Why do you look so dejected? 7 You will be accepted if you do what is right. But if you refuse to do what is right, then watch out! Sin is crouching at the door, eager to control you. But you must subdue it and be its master.”

Genesis 4:2-7 NLT

This study guide is intended for the life application of the Sunday Sermon

James 1:22-25 tells us to put into action what we are discovering in God’s word.

REVIEW

- Have you created your spiritual training plan? If so, what does it look like?
- How have you relinquished control and allowed Jesus to direct you this past week?

LESSONS TO EXPLORE

1. Picking up “What’s Been Laid Down”
2. Cain – Abel and Us
3. Transformation = A Heart Transplant

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

Intro: We can hear something hundreds of times, but we can miss the greater meaning if we never take the time to understand it.

a. Who is your favorite musician or band? When did you first hear their music?

b. Reflect on the lyrics that Pastor Mike read. What are those gospel-centric, poetic lines telling us?

c. What is something that you have heard many times but never really absorbed?

1. The same concept can be applied to our walk with Jesus. We often hear life-changing truths and wisdom during our Christian walk, but we do not truly digest them and apply them to our lives?

a. What is a truth that has stuck with you after listening to a sermon or reading a passage of scripture? When you finally applied that truth to your life, what changed inside of you?

b. Where have you found yourself in a transactional or a **karma-based** relationship with God? How has this been a barrier to your spiritual transformation?

2. The first spiritual rhythm of the **Cadence: Keeping in Step with Jesus** series is sacrificial generosity, which we are exploring through the story of Cain and Abel and their relationship with God.

a. God established sacrificial generosity as an important spiritual rhythm for Cain and Abel, who were the children of the first humans on Earth. Why do you think He did that? Who do you identify with more in the story?

- b. Pastor Mike states that the value of our generosity is **not** found in the financial value of our generosity. What is the value of our generosity found in?

- c. The fact that God did not accept Cain's lesser gift reminds us of the significance of Covenants and Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. Describe the relational dynamic between Cain, Abel, and God. How did Jesus' sacrificial generosity change our relationship with God under the New Covenant?

- d. God uses this opportunity to warn Cain that he is too focused on material things, and if he continues on this path, sin will come after his heart and control him. If you are familiar with the story of Cain and Abel, how does Cain respond? What false belief does Cain hold about his relationship with God?

- e. Reflect on a time when God showed you that you were focusing on the wrong thing. How did He work in you to transform your heart?

- 3. Pastor Mike gives an example from his own life of being called by God to be sacrificially generous both toward his family and toward others.
 - a. Sacrificial generosity is not only about money. What are some other resources with which you can be sacrificially generous?

- b. Sacrificial generosity also does not have to be toward only one person or institution. Reflect on the people and causes in your life you can give to and what is required. More importantly, how can you be sacrificially generous toward God?
- c. How do you relate to Pastor Mike's story? Where are you willing change aspects of your life to accomplish what God has called you to do? What will be required of you to experience the transformational power of allowing Him to take control?
- d. If you feel angry or upset at the thought of having to give something up, that is often a sign that it is closer to the center of your heart than it should be. Pastor Mike asks, what is closer to the center of your heart than Jesus? Today, with the help of the Holy Spirit, identify one thing that is higher on the value list than Jesus. What will you do with that one thing taking up space in your heart?

Making it Real

This week, take the time to soak up what God is teaching you and apply it to your life.

- Where will you practice sacrificial generosity toward others and toward God? *Share this with one person who you trust to walk this journey with you.

A place to JOURNAL and REFLECT on your thoughts and prayers:

