

LESSON 4

CAIN AND ABEL

BEFORE YOU TEACH

The Offerings of Cain and Abel: How Were They Different?

Abel's name means "breath" or "vapor," referring to the shortness of his life. Abel was the second son born of Adam and Eve. One day, Abel and his older brother Cain made offerings to God. "Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the Lord. Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the Lord respected Abel and his offering, but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell" (Gen 4:3b-5).

Why was one sacrifice accepted and the other rejected? Generally, it has been concluded that Cain's sacrifice was rejected because he did not, like his brother, offer a blood sacrifice in an effort to atone for his sins. However, in the Bible, it is recorded that "by faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain" (Heb 11:4a). Abel did what God instructed while Cain did not. Cain did not offer the best sacrifice.

In the Book of Isaiah, God said, "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices to Me?" "I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams and the fat of fed cattle. I do not delight in the blood of bulls, or of lambs or goats" (Isa 1:11). Hadn't God commanded those offerings? Yes, He had, and they were blood offerings. Similarly, the book of Micah 6:7-8 records: "Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the Lord require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?" These people had forsaken humility, justice, and a heart of mercy which God deeply desired. It was not the details of the offerings that were being inspected but the heart of the worshippers. It has always been true that "the sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, but the prayer of the upright is His delight" (Prov 15:8).

"Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the Lord respected Abel and his offering" (Gen 4:4). The emphasis here is on Abel's humble heart. The Lord had regard for Abel and his offering, but for Cain and his offering He had no regard.

Now, let us look at Hebrews 11:4 again: "By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks." God bore witness to Abel's righteousness by accepting his gift.

By His rejection of Cain and his offering, God bore witness, not to an improperly detailed ritual of worship, but to the wickedness of Cain. The apostle John recognized Cain's evil nature and urges: "For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another, not as Cain who was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and

BIBLE TEXT

Genesis 4

BIBLE TRUTHS

1. God knows everything, even what is in our hearts.
2. God doesn't want us to hurt others.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. To ask God to help us when we become angry by praying and talking to our parents.
2. To share things with brothers and sisters both at home and in church.

MEMORY VERSE

"A fool vents all his feelings,
but a wise man holds them back."

(Proverbs 29:11)

PRAYER

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we pray. Lord, we come again to worship You and to learn more about You. Please let us understand that we need to help ourselves when we become angry by praying to You and by talking to our parents and our teachers. Hallelujah! Amen.

his brother's righteous" (1 Jn 3:11-12). Cain was evil at heart, and the sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination. John did not say that Cain was evil because he killed his brother, but that he killed his brother because he was already evil. John indicated that Cain did not love. Cain's hatred toward his brother before he had even offered brought God's rejection and was the motivation for his

murderous actions.

Abel did not make an offering to achieve righteousness. He was righteous already because of his faith. God bore witness to that fact by accepting him and his offering. Conversely, Cain evidently sought to achieve righteousness through rituals of worship when he was actually evil at heart.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR STUDENTS

At this young age, it is very difficult for children to describe their thoughts. It is hard for them to tell others when they are angry, sad or happy. Their thoughts usually manifest themselves in the form of something physical. If they are angry, they might hit someone. If they are sad, they will cry. If they are happy, they will giggle or give someone a spontaneous hug. In today's story, the feeling being explored is anger. While the students are not at a point where they will conspire to hurt someone, it is common for them to ignore a friend when they are mad or even hit another out of anger. Therefore, it is important to talk about this issue with them. Rather than focusing on what not to do, we can use concrete examples and talk about what we can do when we are angry. It is critical to let the students know that it is okay to be angry. Children are often told that they should not be angry and that sends them a mixed message when they see adults or their own parents angry. God made us with feelings and it is inevitable that we will get mad sometimes. What the students need to learn is what to do with their feelings when they do get angry.

Luckily, children at this age are also quick to forget their anger and quick to make up with their friends or family, so we don't need to make it too complicated for them. These are just some simple rules to follow when they feel angry:

1. It is never okay to hurt someone [talk about what hurting means, e.g., hitting, spitting, kicking or throwing things]. Calling people names or saying bad words also hurts others emotionally. It is good to tell someone why you are angry with them, but do not do it in a hurtful way (for example, nicely and politely ask them to stop doing something that irritates you).
2. It is always a good idea to talk about your feelings/anger with a grown-up.
3. Teach them strategies to learn to cope with anger, like counting to ten or kneeling down to pray. It is never too early to learn how to manage our feelings, especially one like anger, which can lead to more serious sin when not kept in control.

VOCABULARY

- righteous:** morally upright
delicious: highly pleasing to the senses, especially in taste or smell
firstlings: a first product or result
countenance: the look or expression on a person's face

REVIEW

Last week, we learned what happened to Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden. Boys and girls, do you remember who lived in the garden of Eden? (Adam and Eve, and all of the animals God created for them to take care of.) What did Adam and Eve eat while they were in the garden? God planted all kinds of trees with delicious fruit, and they could eat whatever they wanted except...do you remember? That's right; they were not allowed to eat fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Who gave Adam the fruit to eat? (Eve.) And who told Eve that she would be like God if she ate it? (The serpent.) So when Adam and Eve ate the fruit how did they feel? (Shameful because they were naked.) What did God say to them? (They had to leave the garden, Adam had to work for food from now on, and Eve would have pain when bearing children.)

BIBLE STORY

Adam and Eve Have Children

After Adam and Eve left the garden of Eden, they were very sad. Now, they no longer had animals to play with every day. Now, they could not eat the delicious fruit from all the trees in the garden. Now, when they got hungry, they would have to go and find or plant their own food to eat. Adam and Eve had to work very hard.

After some time, Adam and Eve had two sons. They were happy because they were their children. The first son was called Cain. After he grew up, he became a farmer. The second son was called Abel, and when he was old enough, he took care of the sheep. Just like their mother and father, Cain and Abel worked hard every day, taking care of their crops and sheep.

Cain and Abel Worship God

Remember, Adam and Eve could not live in the garden of Eden because they had disobeyed God. But they did not forget about God. They even taught Cain and Abel who God was. One day, Cain and Abel wanted to worship God by bringing Him a gift. During that time, there was no church, so the brothers probably worshiped God in the open fields.

Cain brought God some of the fruit of the ground. Abel offered to God the firstlings of his flock and their fat portions. God liked Abel's gift very much because he offered his best to God. But God did not like Cain's gift because Cain did not give God the best. What do you think happened next? Abel was glad that God liked his offering. But Cain became very angry. He was mad that God did not like his gift. He became so angry that God had to talk with him. Boys and girls, have you ever had an adult talk to you when you were angry? How did it feel? [Let students share their experiences.] Now let's find out how God talked to Cain and how he felt.

Cain Is Angry

Cain was very angry. In the Bible it says that "his countenance fell." What do you think this means? Can everyone show what it looks like when your countenance falls? [Students should be showing frowning and angry faces.] Have you ever felt this way when you're angry?

God could see that Cain's face looked angry and said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it."

What do you think God was telling Cain to do when He said this? God said these things to Cain because He wanted to help Cain take away his anger. God knows that it is not good to be angry for a long time. It can make people do things they don't want to do, like say mean things or even hurt someone. Well, after Cain heard these words from God, what do you think happened? Did he

stop being angry? No, he became even angrier, so angry that he wanted to find a way to hurt his brother Abel.

Cain Kills Abel

One day, both Cain and Abel were out in the fields. When Cain saw his brother, he became very angry again. Why do you think he felt this way? (It was probably because he couldn't stop thinking about how God did not like his gift and only liked Abel's.) How might our bodies feel when we are angry? (Our hearts might pound faster and faster, and our bodies might get hotter and hotter.) Cain wanted to hurt Abel because he was so mad. And do you know what he did? He got up, hit his brother, and killed him. Now, Abel was dead. He could not talk anymore. He could not laugh anymore. He could not take care of the sheep anymore. His mother and father would not be able to see him alive again.

God Talks to Cain

Cain did not think anyone would find out that he killed his brother. But God knew. He knows everything. God came to ask Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?"

Cain was still a bit angry and he told God, "I don't know! It is not my job to look after him." But Cain knew where his brother was. He had just killed him. But he did not tell God the truth. He did not say he was sorry.

Cain Becomes a Wanderer

God continued to say to Cain, "What have you done? Your brother's blood is crying out to me from the ground. You are a farmer, but because you killed your brother, you cannot be a farmer anymore because the ground will not bear any more fruit for you. You will have to wander the earth for the rest of your life."

Cain was very sad when he heard God's words because it was a harsh punishment. Now, he could not farm or grow plants and fruit anymore. He would have to walk and walk all his life, with no place to call home. Cain was also scared because he thought that people might want to hurt him if they found out that he killed his brother.

Cain said to God, "My punishment is more than I can bear. You have driven me out from Your presence. What if someone finds me and kills me?" Even though Cain had killed his brother, God still showed mercy to him. God put a special mark on Cain so that anyone who saw it would not hurt him. Even though Cain had done something very wrong, God still loved him enough to protect him. But Cain was still very sad because he could not be with his parents anymore and had no real home. But because he had hurt his brother in a moment of anger, God left him and he had to wander by himself.

Control Our Anger

We learned from today's story that it is dangerous to be angry and act out our anger. Cain did something bad by killing his brother because he was mad and could not control it. What are some things that we or others might do if we get angry and do not control our anger? [Let

students respond.]

We all get angry sometimes, but we should not hurt people with our bodies or with our words by saying mean things. We need to ask God to take away our anger and work out our feelings. We do not want to end up like Cain who had to leave his family and God.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

1. **What were the names of Adam and Eve's children?** Cain and Abel.
2. **What did Cain and Abel do to worship God?** They offered special gifts to Him.
3. **Why did God like Abel's gift but not Cain's?** Abel gave God his best but Cain did not.
4. **What does it mean to give our best?** Answers may vary; possible answer: to try our hardest.
5. **How did Cain feel after God did not accept his gift?** He got very angry.
6. **What did Cain do to his brother when he was angry?** He killed him in the field.
7. **Was Cain sorry for what he did?**
No, he wasn't; he did not tell God the truth when God asked him where his brother was.
8. **What did God do to Cain for killing his brother?** He made him wander the earth for the rest of his life.
9. **How should we deal with our anger?**
We should tell people nicely why we are angry with them. We should not hurt others or call them names.

MEMORY VERSE PRACTICE

Please reinforce the memory verse every week.
You can practice the memory verse with your students anytime during class.

"A fool vents all his feelings, but a wise man holds them back." (Proverbs 29:11)

HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY

1. "A fool vents all his feelings, but a wise man holds them back." (Proverbs 29:11)
2. Cain, Abel
3. angry
4. wander
5. B
6. A
7. False; Cain lied and said he did not know where Abel was.
8. True
- 9-10. Answers may vary.

TEACHING IDEAS FOR LIFE APPLICATION

Everyone feels angry sometimes. It is how we work out our anger that makes or breaks us. When anger is left unchecked, it leads to sin, like when Cain killed Abel because God rejected his offering. In fact, God gave Cain another chance, but instead of reflecting upon his life and taking an honest look at himself, he let anger rule over him and he committed murder. While we may not be so angry as to hurt someone physically, we can do just as much damage with our words when we are mad at someone. We need to remember that our words can be like fire if left unchecked. The damage they do cannot be reversed, like a fire that burns out of control. But anger does not have to lead to sin. The Bible has given us examples of what to do when we feel angry. It teaches us not to be angry for long (Eph 4:26). That means we should not hold grudges. We should deal with our anger right away by talking it out or by praying to God about it and then letting it go.

SPIRITUAL TEACHING & LIFE APPLICATION

1. It is wrong to take our anger out on others by hurting them.

A. Discussion

1. What are some ways you can hurt others out of anger? (Physically and verbally.)
2. How do you feel when you hurt others? (Some students might feel sorry, some might feel good.)
3. How do others feel when you hurt them? (They might feel angry or hurt.)
4. When you hurt others out of anger, what might happen to you? (You might get in trouble with parents or teachers, others might not want to be your friend or play with you, you might feel miserable, etc.)
5. How do you think God feels when you hurt others out of anger? (God feels very sad.)
6. The Lord Jesus taught us to love our enemies instead of hurt them. How can you change your mind from hurting someone to loving them when you're angry with them? (Control your anger, etc.)

Make the following testimony and discussion questions into a worksheet. This is meant to be a critical thinking and discussion activity. After reading this story the students should think of their own answers for one or more (depending on time, number of students, etc.) of the discussion questions below and write down their answers. After all of the students have some answers written down the teacher will ask the questions and have the students answer using what they have written down. The teacher may ask if other students have different answers.

B. Testimony

Directions for students: Read along as the teacher reads this testimony aloud. The teacher will assign one question for you to answer below. Then write down your answer and share it with the class when the teacher calls on you.

There was a sister who was really angry with her brother for being dirty and lazy and for never cleaning up the bathroom. She always told him to clean up, but they would get into long, heated arguments about what "clean" really was, and whether or not it really mattered. It was so bad that the brother and sister did not want to talk to each other. The sister was angry because her brother would not listen to her. The brother was angry because his sister kept bossing him around. But it was almost time for SSC, and the sister knew that it was not a good thing to be angry with her brother, or else she would not feel right with God during SSC. Before going to SSC, the sister cleaned up the bathroom for him without him knowing! Instead of yelling at him or saying mean things, she put her energy into scrubbing and cleaning. Her brother noticed it and was thankful and became kind to his sister. Both of them felt better when they went to SSC. They knew that God did not want them not to be angry with each other.

Discussion Questions

1. Why was the sister angry with her brother? Why was the brother angry with his sister?
2. What did the sister do instead of continuing to be angry?
3. Why did the sister think that it wasn't good to be angry with her brother?
4. How did the brother feel about what his sister did?
5. How do you think God feels when we are angry with others?
6. Why do you think it matters to God that we not be angry with others? (ref. Mt 5:21-26)
7. What are some ways we can turn our anger into love?

2. Take control of our anger so that we do not sin against God.

Read the following memory verse together then determine if the children in the scenarios below are foolish or wise.

“A fool vents all his feelings, but a wise man holds them back” (Proverbs 29:11).

A fool gives full vent to his anger. To give full vent to your anger means to keep on being angry and to act it out by hurting others, either by hitting them or by saying something mean. But a wise man keeps himself under control.

1. Abby and her little sister Loretta are always in each other’s way when they play with their dolls. Only one of them can hold the newest Barbie at a time, and they always argue over who gets to hold the doll. Their mom noticed that they didn’t get along whenever they played with dolls. Abby told her mom that she was upset because Loretta was hogging the dolls too much. Her mom told her that sometimes she should let her little sister choose the doll first. So one day Abby decided to let her little sister choose which doll to play with first, and from then on they would take turns choosing first. Was Abby being foolish or wise?
2. Johnny didn’t like Nicky, a bully in his class who teased him a lot. One day Nicky learned that teasing others was wrong, so he came to Johnny and said he was sorry for all the times he had teased him. But Johnny was so angry at Nicky that he would not talk to him or be his friend. He just gave Nicky an angry face whenever they saw each other. Was Johnny being foolish or wise?
3. Every evening Phil and Isabelle’s dad brought home extra cookies from the bakery where he worked. Phil, being quicker, always ate the cookies before Isabelle even got a bite. Isabelle felt angry, but she went to her dad to tell him that she hadn’t been able to eat any cookies because Phil kept taking them all. So, from then on her dad kept an extra special cookie for her. She thanked her dad for doing this for her. Was Isabelle being foolish or wise?
4. Sally was jealous of her sister Danielle because Danielle was more popular. Everyone talked about how Danielle was great at everything—art, sports, music. One day, while Danielle was singing in front of the mirror in the bathroom, Sally couldn’t take it and started throwing hair pins at her. Was Sally being foolish or wise?
5. Danny, Simon, and Larry were on the same soccer team. Sean from the other team kicked Danny so hard during the soccer game that Danny had to go to the hospital because he broke his finger. Simon and Larry decided to take revenge by going over to Sean’s house and kicking him in the shin. Were Simon and Larry being foolish or wise?

Bonus: Can you guess which Bible stories these different stories are related to? (Answers: 1. Abraham & Lot; 2. Jonah & the Ninevites; 3. Isaac & the Philistines; 4. Saul & David; 5. Dinah, Simeon, Levi and Shechem.)

The “How Can We Control Our Anger?” Game

Materials

- One index card per student
- One large sign with a sad face or the word “HURT” written on it

Let’s practice controlling our anger!

What are some ways you can deal with your anger so that you don’t hurt anyone by what you do or say? (Some students might have good suggestions such as counting to 10, praying silently, thinking of a hymn, etc.) Write these on the board.

Setting Up

1. Give each student one (or more, if there is time or if you have few students) index card(s).
2. Have students write on the card a scenario where they might get angry with someone.
3. Collect the cards, mix them up, and distribute them randomly to the students.

Role-playing

1. Let students take turns coming up to the front of the class and reading the scenario aloud. Let students be creative and act out an “angry face.”
2. After the student is finished reading, give him or her about fifteen seconds to act out one of the methods on the board before you put up the sad face or “HURT” sign. If the student is able to act one out within fifteen seconds, he wins. If the student is not, he gets another chance after others have taken a turn.

Explain to the students that if we get angry and do not control it, then we might hurt someone before we know it. That’s why it is important to know all these ways to control our anger. Also, remind the students that God always gives us chances to control our anger because He cares about us.

3. Listen to the counsel of God and your parents.**A. Discussion**

1. Who can you talk to when you’re angry? (Parents, God)
2. Why do you think these are people that are good to talk to when you are angry?

B. Sing a hymn in your heart

Sometimes God reminds us of what we should do through hymns. Do you sometimes have a hymn stuck in your head? When this happens, don’t try to block it out. The Holy Spirit may be reminding you of something!

Let’s sing the hymn “Did You Think to Pray” together (if you are short on time, just sing verse 3).

Did you notice that in verse 3 it says, “When your heart was filled with anger...”? What does this hymn say to do if your heart is filled with anger? (Pray!) You can kneel down to pray in tongue, pray in understanding with your parents, say a silent prayer, or even sing a hymn! A hymn is a kind of musical prayer to God.

What is your favorite hymn? [Let students share. If there is time, let them sing the hymns. Try to help them memorize the chorus of some of these hymns.] Whenever you have a hymn in your heart it will help you calm down if you become angry (cf. King Saul and David’s harp playing).

ACTIVITY**1****Don't Let the Sun Go Down On Your Anger!**

Objective: To learn to forgive and to not hold any grudges after the sun goes down.

Materials

- Activity printouts
- Scissors
- Tape
- Colored pencils, markers, crayons, etc.

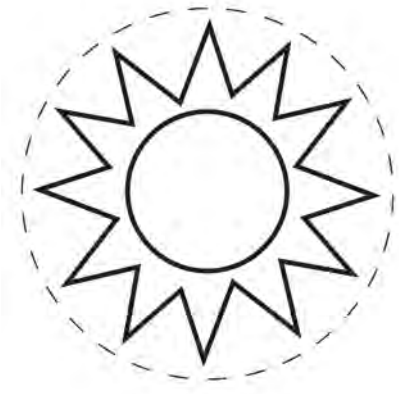
Instructions

1. Write down three ways you can control your anger.
2. Color the sun, the hill, and anything else you would like to decorate.
3. Cut at the dotted lines.
4. Tape the sun on the strip at the indicated place and tuck the strip through the slits.
5. Tape the hill at the indicated place.
6. Move the sun to the top next to the number one. If you get angry, start with number one and do what it says. If you’re still angry, go to two. If you’re still angry, go to three. But remember, don’t let the sun go down on your anger!

Color the hill and cut it out along the dotted lines.



Color the sun and cut it out along the dotted lines.



Tape or glue the sun here after cutting it out.

Cut this slit with the teacher's help

Don't let the sun go down on your anger!

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Cut this slit with the teacher's help

Tape the bottom edge of the hill here. Do not tape down the top of the hill.

E1 Year 1 Book 1 Lesson 4—Cain and Abel

Homework Assignment

Name: _____ Parent signature: _____ Date: _____

Bible Truths: 1. God knows everything, even what is in our hearts.
2. God doesn't want us to hurt others.

Lesson Objectives: 1. To ask God to help us when we become angry by praying and talking to our parents.
2. To share things with brothers and sisters both at home and in church.

Bible Reading: Please put a checkmark in the space when you complete the reading each day.

Prayer: Please put a checkmark in the space on the days you prayed to God.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Bible Reading							
Prayer							

Memory Verse

Please write down this week's memory verse.

(Proverbs 29:11)

What I Learned from the Bible This Week

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Homework Assignment

Understanding What You Have Learned

1. Write down the memory verse for this week.
-

Fill In the Blank

(angry Abel wander Cain)

2. The names of Adam and Eve's children were _____ and _____.
3. Cain felt _____ after God did not accept his gift.
4. God told Cain that he had to _____ the earth for the rest of his life.

Multiple Choice

5. ____ : What did Cain and Abel do to worship God?
- They wrote psalms praising God.
 - They offered special gifts to God.
 - They spoke to God face to face.
6. ____ : What did Cain do to his brother when he was angry?
- He killed him in the field.
 - He stole Abel's sheep and offered them to God.
 - He ran away from home.

True or False

7. Cain was sorry for what he did and told God the truth when God asked him where his brother was. _____
8. God liked Abel's gift but not Cain's because Abel gave God his best but Cain did not. _____

Life Application

9. Pretend you are writing a letter to Cain before he killed his brother Abel about why he should control his anger and what he can do to control his anger. Write at least one sentence every day next week. Here is an example:

Dear Cain, I know that you are very angry with your brother Abel. Here is what I think you should think about before you do something to hurt him.

- _____
- _____
- _____

Sincerely, _____ (your name)

10. Turn this downcast face (or fallen countenance) around!

Work with your mom or dad. First, make up a situation when you would be angry. Pretend you are angry and draw an angry face in the left box. Talk to your parent about your anger. Have your parent talk to you about how you can change your face. Then, in the box on the right, draw what your face is like after you have talked to your parent.

