

**Read: Genesis 4:1-16**

## Love Avoids Temptation

### **Genesis 4:6-7**

Then the Lord said to Cain, “Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? 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.”

*In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

Remember Cain and Abel? Their parents were Adam and Eve. Cain was the older of the two brothers. Cain, a farmer, gave some of his crops to God in a sacrifice. Abel, a shepherd, gave an animal from his flock. God was pleased with Abel’s gift, but not the gift from Cain. So Cain was jealous of Abel and killed his brother in anger. Cain lied about his actions to God and was punished by wandering for the rest of his life. What a sad ending.

The story of Cain and Abel is an important warning if you get angry easily. Long before anger lashes out, you can find it crouching at the door to our hearts. Cain made his sacrifice only because “I had to.” You know that dark feeling too. Someone (a parent or teacher) tells you to stop what you’re playing and help them. You do it because you were made to, not because you wanted to. Cain’s jealousy turned into anger. He couldn’t control it. He didn’t want to. Cain’s anger turned him into a murderer, a liar, and an excuse-maker who only worried about himself.

Cain’s anger separated him from God’s love—not because he felt angry (we all do)—but because he hung on to his anger even after God confronted him about it. He wanted Cain to repent of his sin and see his promised Savior. He even protected Cain when he worried that he might be murdered!

Where do we find the kind of love to help us when we are angry? It is found in another son God promised Adam and Eve who would be our perfect brother. Jesus let all our angry thoughts, words, and actions crush him on the cross. God’s love is so powerful, nothing can separate us from it! It can even crush any anger that tries hiding in your heart!

The next time you feel angry, remember the story of Cain and Abel. Ask God to help you to stop being so angry. Jesus’ power is ready to free your heart from it. Jesus promises to replace it with something far better—love. May his love put a smile back your face today!

*The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.*

### **Questions for Younger Children**

- What did Cain do because he was so angry?
- Why is it important to remember Jesus when we get angry?

### **Questions for Elementary Age Children**

- Agree or Disagree. God liked Abel's offering more because he sacrificed an animal when Cain only gave fruits and vegetables.
- Make a list of things that make you angry. Evaluate how aligning yourself with Jesus' love changes your view of them.

### **Questions for Middle School and Above**

- Give several reasons why God would protect the life of a murderer like Cain.
- Which is more important—that we avoid being angry or that we trust that Jesus has forgiven our sin of anger? Why do you answer the way that you do?

### **Closing Prayer:**

Gracious Savior, you taught us to pray "lead us not into temptation." Help us to avoid temptation, flee when it comes our way, and turn to you as our Savior when it overcomes us. Amen.

### **Hymn: CW 497: 1,4 – This is My Will**

"This is my will, my one command,  
That love should dwell among you all.  
This is my will, that you should love  
As I have shown that I love you.

"You chose not me, but I chose you,  
That you should go and bear much fruit.  
I chose you out that you in me  
Should bear much fruit that will abide."