

Bible Studies for Life: October 13

Cain and Abel: A Family Responsibility • Genesis 4:1-12

By Bobby McKay



McKay

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For several years, it was the most-watched television sitcom in the country. Pe

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Sadly, we have learned in recent years that Bill Cosby and Cliff Huxtable were entirely two different people. The ideal American dad on the screen and the real person off camera were not parallel. Cosby has been accused of abusing and drugging dozens of women. It was shocking that a man who made millions of dollars from portraying a wholesome family person and devoted husband would commit such horrible acts. It should serve as a reminder to all of us that, in real life, there is no such thing as a perfect family.

Genesis 4:1-12

The Bible is filled with stories of families. Their stories read like something from a movie. Murder, adultery, slander, slavery, envy, and a host of other transgressions permeate the experiences of families in Scripture. The original family was not free from problems. As Adam and Eve raised their two sons, Cain and Abel exhibited different skills and abilities. If you have more than one child, you know the same could be said of your children. They are usually different from each other in many ways. Abel's work involved the livestock, and Cain worked on the ground as a farmer. Together, they used their efforts to support the family.

Genesis 4:3-7

From the earliest of days, God's people were expected to recognize the blessings of God and worship Him. It is a matter of having a grateful and obedient heart. Much has been written and supposed about the difference between Cain and Abel's offerings. Why did God accept Abel's offering and reject Cain's? Three prominent beliefs may give you some insight. One was that Cain's offering was not the best he could do. Next, some believe that Cain's attitude was not genuine when he made the offering. Finally, others conclude it's because Abel's offering consisted of blood and his brother's did not. We are not 100% sure, but it makes for a good discussion.

Genesis 4:8-12

The result of Cain's anger was the first murder in history. In his rage, Cain forsook the value of human life and also the love he should have had for his brother. As a pastor, the worst and most challenging conflicts I have attempted to be of help in are those of problems in their own families. There is a level of bitterness and resentment in families that are not seen elsewhere. God gave Cain the opportunity to change His attitude. Instead, he chose to harbor the hate in his heart and act upon it. It is not possible for us to genuinely love God and hate anyone at the same time. Love and hate cannot coexist in the life of an authentic Christian. Who in your family today do you need to forgive? I pray you do so.

McKay is pastor of New Liberty Baptist Church, Morton.