

Discussion Guide

Section #6: LIFE OUTSIDE OF THE GARDEN

Group Questions:

1. What did the two sons of Adam and Eve bring as a sacrifice offering to God?
2. How did God respond to the two different gifts and to the sons, Cain and Abel?
3. Which son showed faith in God and how do we see that faith demonstrated?
4. How do you see Cain's attitude toward God in the gift that he brought.
5. Why do you think Cain would even offer something to God if he didn't respect God enough to obey Him?
6. Explain what you think is the difference between responding to God out of love and respect rather than obligation or selfish pride?

Read to the Group: (Summarize the answers from the list below that your group may have just mentioned when answering the above questions. If they leave out any of the answers listed, tell them the additional ones.)

- Abel showed respect and faith in God by following God's instructions about sacrifice.
- He showed his faith through obedience.
- Abel trusted in God rather than in himself.
- He believed that God would send a deliverer, therefore he offered his sacrifice out of love, respect, and faith. Before Christ, believers brought animal sacrifices as an act of faith in God's promise.
- Cain showed his lack of faith or unbelief in God by following his own idea of sacrifice rather obeying God's instructions.
- People are showing selfish pride, behaving like they are as good as God when they try to substitute their plans for the plan of God.



Show the Following Segment from the *God's Story* video:

“Then Adam's wife conceived” (Adam holding up baby)... through... “The first broken family” (Cain kneeling in sorrow).
2 minutes, 12 seconds



Cain's gift was chosen by his own desire, not as a demonstration of his faith in God. Even if he had brought the right type of sacrifice, his gift would have been rejected if he did not have the right motive. God wants us to be obedient out of love and faith not out of obligation, expecting to get something or trying to impress God with our prideful deeds.

Leader Information: It is important to emphasize that obedience comes out of faith. BELIEVING is the critical issue not just outward actions.

Abel believed that God would send a Deliverer therefore He offered a sacrifice as a picture of that redemption and a demonstration of faith.



Group Questions:

1. Do you feel like Cain had a choice in the way he responded to God's rejection of his gift?
2. How did God reason with him?

Read to the Group: Cain and Abel were both sinners in God's eyes. Cain had a choice to believe or not to believe. God offered Cain another chance to believe and obey because God loved him and wanted to show him mercy and grace. But first Cain had to admit that God was right and that he was wrong.

Cain could never hope to live a perfect life so that he could be accepted by God. He also could not gain God's favor by presenting a sacrifice of his own design, one which did not meet God's requirements. He had to humble himself by following God's will, not his own reasoning. He had to believe that what God told him to do was good, holy, and right because the instructions came from the one true God, His creator.

Group Questions:

1. Cain did not listen when God reminded him that a lamb should be brought for sacrifice. Instead what did Cain do?
2. Why do you think he turned his anger on Abel?
3. Who have we seen so far in the God's Story video of the Bible that tried to blame others for their sin?
4. Do we ever try to blame others when we get caught sinning instead of confessing our sin to God?
5. Why do you think we do that?

Read to the Group: Cain's initial attitude was wrong. His lack of faith led to disobedience. Instead of confessing his sin, Cain's attitude turned to jealousy, anger, and hate. This rebellion became a pattern of evil in his life. God would have been willing to accept his repentance, but Cain made a choice.

Read this Scripture to the Group:

“By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaks” (Hebrews 11:4).

“The LORD searches all hearts, and understands all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee” (1 Chronicles 28:9).

Leader Information, Scripture:

“Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD sees not as man sees; for man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart” (1 Samuel 16:7).

Transition Statement: So far we have observed the lives of the first people God put on earth. Now we will move forward in time and see how their descendants behaved. Since their ancestors ate from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, they do know right from wrong. They have a conscience. Will they learn from their forefathers' experiences and respect God, or will they be rebellious and reject God's leadership? We will see now (*or next time when we meet*).