

Families, getting along

Genesis 4:8-9 Now Cain said to his brother Abel, "Let's go out to the field." And while they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him. Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?" "I don't know," he replied. "Am I my brother's keeper?"

Genesis 27:35-36 But he said, "Your brother came deceitfully and took your blessing. Esau said, "Isn't he rightly named Jacob? He has deceived me these two times: He took my birthright, and now he's taken my blessing!"

James 4:1-3 What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? 2 You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God. 3 When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

Luke 10:38-42 As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!" "Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."

James 4:4 You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.

From the very beginning the Bible has stories of families not getting along.

Genesis 4 tells the story of two brothers, Cain and Able. Cain was upset that God had accepted Able offering and not his. What events in your home make you jealous or envious of your siblings?

Is killing your sib an acceptable solution?

What does Cain's answer to God's question tell you about Cain's feeling and attitudes?

With the help of his mother Jacob tricked his brother Esau out of his inheritance and father blessing (Genesis 27). He had to flee for his life. Jacob was kind of a sneaky dude but God blessed him. Read the whole story to find our why (Genesis 26:34 -30:24).

What other stories of families can you recall from the Bible?

Families can be rationally messy. There are lots of stories but the basic motive is directly explained in James 4:1-3. What is the common reason people don't get along?

Why don't people have blessings from God?

What are the wrong motives mentioned?

Deep down inside, what do people really want (see Colossians 3:12)? _____

Take a look at the sisters in Luke 10:38-42. Martha just wanted to make Jesus a great meal. What was Martha most concerned about?

What was Mary doing at the time? In her heart, what did Mary want?

The key thing: The common thread in these stories is that God accepted the person who wanted (passionately sought after or followed) _____ the most.

James 4:4 simply states the two choices you can be loyal to as:

_____ and _____

When a man is unfaithful to his wife this is called: _____

When a person chooses worldly things over God,

God views this as _____ too.



Matthew 12:46-50 While Jesus was still talking to the crowd, his mother and brothers stood outside, wanting to speak to him. Someone told him, “Your mother and brothers are standing outside, wanting to speak to you.” He replied to him, “**Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?**” Pointing to his disciples, he said, “**Here are my mother and my brothers. For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.**”

John 1:12: Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God—

Hebrews 2:11 Both the one who makes men holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers.

Colossians 3:12-13 Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

1John 3:11-15 This is the message you heard from the beginning: We should love one another. Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own actions were evil and his brother’s were righteous. Do not be surprised, my brothers, if the world hates you. We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death. Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life in him.

1John 3:16 This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers

There are a few verses that deal directly with family members in the Bible. One of the more famous ones is: Ephesians 6:1 “*Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.*” But hardly anything else.

There aren’t any verses that say, “Stop picking on your little sister or I’ll pull this car over this minute.” To find out how God wants us to treat our siblings we need to understand God’s view of our family.

In Matthew 12: 46-50, When Jesus’ biological family came to take him home, thinking he was off his rocker. Who did Jesus say his family members were?

From John 1:12, who else are our brothers and sister? _____

Who else is our brother? _____

(Hebrews 2:11)

Once we realize that all believers are our brothers and sisters we find tons of stuff in the Bible concerning how we should treat our siblings.

What are the attitudes expressed in Colossians 3:12 that we should have towards our siblings?

What does it mean to “bear with each other”?	My little sister keeps going in my room.
I hate that little twerp.	If he pokes me again I’m going to...
I just want a little time to myself.	Fine, I’ll baby sit one more time!
I’ve seen every game my brothers played.	He follows me everywhere.

From 1 John 3:11-15, how serious does God feel about how we treat our brothers and sisters?

They say you can pick your friends but you can’t pick your family. It seems like family members can be the greatest source of anger and emotional pain in our lives. That’s the worlds way.

Isn’t it interesting that the apostle John uses an analogy of a brother to be the very definition of love (1 John 3:16).

How can we be like Jesus in our relationships with our brothers and sisters?

Lesson Plan: Families, getting along.

The Goal: The goal of this lesson is to help the kids get along with their siblings.

Pre-Lesson Activity:

Divide the class into two teams. Put two folding tables on the floor. Hand each team a roll of duct tape. Instruct them to tape one team member to the table. Make sure to leave the victims hands and arms free. Do not tape their head. Give them 5-10 minutes to work then stand the tables on end to test their taping job. Sometimes we get crazy and turn the table over, then carry them around the room with the kid dangling underneath. Set the kids/tables in the corner and start the lesson. Cut them down after they complain.

Leading the lesson:

Spend some time in prayer the day before, going over the verses and questions in your mind. Write possible answers on your copy of the worksheet along with additional notes of things you'd like to bring up.

If your group is younger junior-high age encourage them to fill in the blanks with the correct answers and hand in their papers at the end of class. For older kids, especially high-school age, just use the questions as discussion starters.

Have a kid read the first set of verses and then go thru the questions of the matching color. Give them time to answer. Listen to what they say and lead the discussion with additional questions of your own to lead them to the correct answers.

Note: When reading, kids will frequently stumble on words they do not know. Explain the meaning of the words so they can fully grasp the concept of the Bible verse. Sometimes you must restate the passage in your own words for them to get it.

Read the entire story of Cain and Able to the kids before asking the questions (Genesis 4:3-15). You'd think the question of killing your sib is a no-brainer but it happens. Discuss how kids get jealous when their sibs get more of their parents attention, approval, better presents, less punishments. Mention that Cain's snotty answer wasn't a good way to talk to God. He got punished but even in the punishment you could tell God still cared about him. God accepted Able's offering and sneaky Jacob over Esau because like Mary they wanted the same thing: God.

Other stories of families could be Joseph getting sold into slavery by his brothers, possibly mention David's son Amnon raping his sister Tamar (2 Samauel 13). King David's family was really a mess but he was still one of Gods chosen favorites because David was passionate for God.

One the second page of the worksheet we shift the conversation to the relationships with our brothers and sisters. The Bible shows that all believers are our brothers and sister (in Christ). Apply the verses about Christian life to our family life situations. Finish by noting how serious God is about loving our siblings and noting that the very definition of love is what one brother did for another.

Summary:

Review the questions and answers quickly.

Always ask the kids for prayer requests. Write down their requests so you can check how things are going at the next group time.