

Lesson 173: Walking With Jesus, Part 5

Scripture: Genesis 4 and Genesis 42-46ish

Memory Verse: This is my command... love one another. John 15:7

Today's lesson involves two stories that teach us about the sixth commandment: **Do Not Murder**. The Bible tells us that we are fearfully and wonderfully made. (Psalm 139) God cares about His created ones, and strictly forbids anyone to take a life unlawfully.

The first story is about a brother who rebelled against God; his name was Cain. Remember that he was Adam and Eve's son, and Abel's older brother.

When they grew up, Abel became a shepherd, while Cain was a farmer. When it was time for the harvest, Cain presented some of his crops as a gift to the Lord. Abel also brought a gift—the best portions of the firstborn lambs from his flock. The Lord accepted Abel and his gift, but he did not accept Cain and his gift. This made Cain very angry, and sad.

"Why are you so angry?" the Lord asked Cain. "Why do you look so sad? You will be accepted if you do what is right. But if you refuse to do what is right, then watch out! Sin is crouching at the door, eager to control you. But you must subdue it and be its master."

And sure enough God was right. Cain gave into his jealousy of Abel and killed him! Even though God warned him, Cain chose not to obey, and instead rebelled against God's good nature.

The second story which occurred many years later, is about a brother who trusted and lived according to God's nature. Remember Joseph who was hated by his brothers, and was sold into slavery in Egypt? Through God's provision, Joseph not only survived, but eventually became very powerful – second in command over all of Egypt. Some time later, his brothers came to Egypt looking for food because there was a famine in the land. Joseph recognized them right away, but they didn't recognize him. Joseph could have easily taken revenge on them; he was powerful enough that he could have had them all killed! But instead, Joseph followed God's heart. He had compassion and mercy on his brothers, and they were reunited! Joseph recognized that life comes from God and that it is a grave sin against God to take a life.

God gave us the command not to murder because He IS LIFE, and He IS LOVE. And when Jesus came to earth, he brought new clarity to the law and commandments. In His sermon on the Mount, Jesus taught that to commit murder means more than just killing someone, it means having an angry and unforgiving attitude towards them. (Matthew 5:21+)

And John put it this way in his letter to the churches in Asia Minor:

We should love one another. We must not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and killed his brother. Anyone who claims to love Jesus must also love his brothers, and anyone who hates his brother is a murderer! Jesus came so that we could know what true love is: Jesus Christ laid down His life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters! (1 John 3:16).