

## A Question for Each of Us

### Scripture Reading — Genesis 4:2-12

*The Lord said ... "Where is your brother ... ?" ... [Cain] replied, "Am I my brother's keeper?" Gen. 4:9*

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What causes breakdown in conversations?

Blame and shame entered this world through Adam and Eve's sin. Breakdown within the family continued with their children, Cain and Abel. What should have brought two brothers together--their worship of God--became a setting for comparison and jealousy.

The smallness of Cain's heart for God contrasted starkly with Abel's devotion in his gift to God. Instead of looking to God for redirection, Cain looked to settle the score with Abel. Taking matters into his own hands, Cain killed Abel, and his blood cried out to God.

Comparison and jealousy still exist as root causes of family breakdown today. Maybe you know of someone who is part of your family but is currently "in exile." How did it all begin? How will it end?

There's a moment in God's conversation with Cain that makes us wonder if there could have been a different ending to this story. Could forgiveness have won out over exile? God asked a question for which he already knew the answer, and instead of coming out of the shadows of death Cain shrouded himself with the defense that he was not now--and would not be--his brother's keeper. The conversation turned from the potential for confession to the pronouncement of judgment. Are you a brother or sister's keeper?

### Prayer

*Merciful Father, help us to know that loving you and loving one another are the most important things in life. In the name of our Brother, Jesus, we pray. Amen.*

**Devotion topics:** [Life](#), [Christian Life](#), [Seeking God](#)

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