God can help us handle angry feelings.

Bible Verse
“And ‘don’t sin by letting anger control you.’ Don’t let the sun go down while you are still angry, for anger gives a foothold to the devil” (Ephesians 4:26-27).

Growing Closer to Jesus
Students will
- explore what the Bible says about angry feelings,
- see how angry thoughts can sometimes lead to inappropriate actions, and
- learn appropriate responses to anger.

Teacher Enrichment

Bible Basis
Cain kills his brother, Abel.

Genesis 4:3-16
Some have suggested that God accepted Abel’s sacrifice because it involved the shedding of blood and rejected Cain’s because it didn’t. However, nothing God had told humans to that point required blood sacrifice. It’s more likely that God accepted or rejected the sacrifices based on the attitude of the heart. Abel’s sacrifice came from true gratitude for what God had done for him; Cain’s apparently came from a feeling of obligation to maintain God’s favor. Abel offered the best he had; Cain offered simply a sampling of his fruits.

God knew Cain was at a dangerous junction. In Genesis 4:7, God’s response to Cain was a loving warning—be careful what you do; sin can get the best of you. Cain proceeded with his planned deception and murdered his younger brother, Abel.

As with Adam and Eve, Cain’s sin in killing Abel was followed by a second sin: lying to God. When God said, “Your brother’s blood cries out to me,” the word for blood is plural—indicating the inclusion of Abel’s would-have-been offspring in the cry. Abel’s premature death snuffed out an entire line of descendants, and God was holding Cain responsible.

When God pronounced judgment upon Cain for his sin, Cain finally came to his senses and realized that separation from God would mean his own death. As with Adam and Eve, God was merciful, providing protection for Cain even though he didn’t deserve it.

Another Scripture used in this lesson is Proverbs 14:16.

Prayer
- Read Ephesians 4:26-27.
- How do you handle anger? Is there some anger issue you need to resolve? What will you do?
- Pray: Dear Lord, please help me obey your Word and not let the sun go down while I’m angry. Help me give my students a good example of how to resolve anger issues.
## Before the Lesson

- Collect the necessary items for the activities you plan to use, referring to the Classroom Supplies and Learning Lab Supplies listed on the chart.
- Make photocopies of the “Hands-On Fun at Home” handout (at the end of this lesson) to send home with your students.
- Pray for your students and for God’s direction as you teach the lesson.

## This Lesson at a Glance

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Welcome

As kids arrive, ask them how they put what they learned last week into action. Ask questions such as, “What choices did God help you with?” and “How did your family look to God to make good choices?”

Remind kids that whenever you honk the Harpo horn twice, they are to respond by clapping twice and focusing on you.

Explain that it’s important to respond to this signal quickly so the class can do as many fun activities as possible.

Attention Grabber

Hiding Places

SUPPLIES: none

Have kids form two groups. Call one group the Hiders, and give each group member one of the linking hearts and stars. Call the other group the Seekers, and ask kids to cover their eyes.

Give the Hiders two minutes to hide their hearts and stars in the room. If Hiders have trouble finding hiding places, suggest one or more of the following examples: under a table, behind a supply cabinet, in a corner, behind a book.

When the hearts and stars are hidden, honk the Harpo horn twice and wait for kids to respond. Have the Seekers open their eyes. Tell them they have one minute to find the hidden items. After one minute, honk the Harpo horn and wait for kids to respond. Collect the linking hearts and stars, including those the Seekers may not have found.

Ask:
- **Hiders, how difficult was it to hide the hearts and stars? Why?** (Not hard at all because everyone helped; it was hard to think of good hiding places so fast.)
- **Seekers, how difficult was it to find the hearts and stars? Why?** (Not hard in such a small area; it was hard because some people thought of good hiding places.)
- **Have you ever tried to hide what you were feeling? Explain.** (Yes, sometimes I don’t want people to know I’m mad; no, people can tell what I’m feeling by the look on my face.)
- **Which is easier to hide—small hearts and stars or your thoughts and feelings? Explain.** (It’s easier to hide your thoughts because people can never really tell what you’re thinking; it’s easier to hide hearts and stars because you don’t have to pretend anything.)

Pair Hiders with Seekers to discuss the following questions.

Ask:
- **What kind of feelings do you sometimes try to hide?** (Angry feelings; sad feelings; happy feelings if I’m trying to surprise someone.)
- **When do you hide your feelings?** (When I’m really sad and I don’t want anyone to see me cry; when I want to handle a situation by myself; when I’m mad at my parents and I don’t want to get in trouble.)
- **What happens when you try to hide your feelings from others?** (Nothing, they just don’t know how I feel; I can’t talk to them as much; sometimes I want to explode.)

It’s important to say the Bible Point just as it’s written in each activity. Repeating the Bible Point over and over throughout the lesson will help kids remember it and apply it to their lives.

If you have an uneven number of kids, join the Seekers. Kids will enjoy your participation in the activity, and you’ll be able to help them keep their eyes covered if necessary.

If your classroom is small, you might want to do this activity in a large fellowship hall or outside if the weather’s nice.
Lesson 3

• Do you think God knows your feelings? Why or why not? (Yes, God knows everything; God can see inside my mind and heart.)

• What happens when you try to hide your feelings from God? (God probably knows my feelings anyway; God feels like I’m ignoring him; I sneak around away from God.)

Honk the Harpo horn twice to bring everyone together. Wait for kids to respond, and then invite them to share the insights they gained in their discussions.

After kids have shared what they learned from their partners, say: Although we may be able to hide our thoughts and feelings from other people for a while, we can never hide them from God. God knows when we’re feeling happy and when we’re feeling sad or angry. If we let him, God can help us handle angry feelings. Our Bible story today is about a man who got very angry and refused to let God help him. Let’s see how he handled his angry feelings on his own.

Bible Exploration & Application

■ Cain and Abel

SUPPLIES: Bibles, “How NOT to Handle Anger” handout (p. 39), CD player

Have kids form pairs. Distribute Bibles, and help kids find Genesis 4:3-16. Have kids read the story with their partners. Encourage them to take turns reading the verses.

After kids have finished reading the story, honk the Harpo horn twice and wait for kids to respond. Then say: Now that we’re familiar with this story, let’s act it out together. Follow along with your own actions as we listen to the CD.

Refer to the “How NOT to Handle Anger” handout. Play “Cain and Abel” (track 3) on the CD, and lead the class in the actions on the handout.

After the skit, put the CD and handout out of sight. Have kids form trios to discuss the following questions.

Ask: • Why was Cain so angry? (Because God liked his brother’s offering better; Cain was jealous.)

• How did Cain handle his angry feelings? (Cain killed his brother; he let his angry feelings get out of control; he didn’t listen to God.)

• How did God know that Cain was angry? (God knows everything; God could tell by what Cain was doing.)

• Why do you think God warned Cain about his feelings? (Because God knew how angry and jealous Cain was; God wanted to help Cain handle his angry feelings.)

• Why do you think Cain ignored God’s warning? (Because all Cain could think about was how angry he was; Cain didn’t care what God wanted—he just wanted to get even with his brother.)

Blow the Harpo horn to bring everyone together, and wait for kids to respond. Then invite them to share insights from their discussions.

After kids have shared what they learned from their discussions, say: God knows how dangerous angry thoughts can be, so he warned Cain. Cain let his angry feelings get out of control, and he ended up killing his brother. But

Bible Insight

Cain’s banishment after the murder of Abel was to the land of Nod (Genesis 4:16), or the land of “wandering.” This place was probably located somewhere in the Babylonian plain of Shinar, now southern Iraq.
God can help us handle angry feelings. God knows that our angry feelings can turn into inappropriate or sinful actions. Today we’re going see what the Bible says about how to handle angry thoughts.

Alternatives

**SUPPLIES:** Bibles; paper; pencils; tape; red, yellow, and green construction paper

Say: I’d like all of you to stand up and spread out around the room. Now think about the last time something made you really angry. When I honk the *Harpo horn*, show me your angriest face.

Honk the *Harpo horn*, and let the kids show you their angry faces. Allow them to take turns explaining what made them look so angry.

Say: Wow! I’m glad you’re not angry with me! Let’s see what the Bible says about anger. Quickly form trios with the people around you. Once you’ve formed a trio, sit down. Choose one person to be the Reader, one person to be the Recorder who writes your ideas, and one person to be the Encourager who makes sure everyone contributes to the discussion.

Distribute Bibles to the Readers. Open your Bible to Ephesians 4:26-27, and show kids the passage. Have the Readers find the passage and read it aloud with you: “And don’t sin by letting anger control you. Don’t let the sun go down while you are still angry, for anger gives a foothold to the devil.” Have kids repeat the verses with you several times.

Ask: • What is this passage saying about anger? (Not to let it get control of you; not to stay mad; not to let Satan get the upper hand.)
• When are you most likely to lose your temper? (At home with my sister; on the school bus; when I’m tired and cranky.)

Say: Sometimes it’s hard to control our anger, but the Bible says that we should try. This next activity might help!

Give each Recorder a piece of paper and a pencil.

Say: You’ve got three minutes to brainstorm about different ways people handle anger—both good ways and bad ways.

As trios are working, tape a sheet of red construction paper to one wall, a sheet of yellow construction paper to another wall, and a sheet of green construction paper to a third wall.

After three minutes, honk the *Harpo horn* twice and wait for kids to respond. Have Recorders give you their lists.

Gather kids in the center of the room. Point out each color of construction paper on the walls as you explain this activity to the kids.

Say: We’re going to use the colors of a traffic light to talk about ways to handle our angry feelings. A red-light response to angry feelings should be stopped right away. You might want to think before responding to angry feelings with a yellow-light response. Green-light responses are usually the best way to handle angry feelings.

As I read through your lists, decide whether each action is a red-, yellow-, or green-light way to handle angry feelings, and then hop to that color of paper. When I honk the *Harpo horn*, return to the center of the room, and I’ll read the next action on the list.
When most kids think an action is a green-light way to handle anger, circle that action on the paper. After you’ve read all the responses, ask:

- **What made you decide if a response was a red-light response? a yellow-light response? a green-light response?** (If it would hurt someone or break something, I thought it should be a red light; if it was just a little bad, I thought it should be a yellow light; if it would make good things happen, I thought it should be a green light.)

  Say: **God knows when we’re feeling angry, and God can help us handle angry feelings.** If we stop to remember that God is with us when we’re angry, he’ll help us handle our anger in green-light ways.

### Practice Makes Perfect

**SUPPLIES:** Bibles, lists from the “alternatives” activity

Say: **Re-form your trios.**

I’m going to read our green-light anger responses. Each time I read a response, practice it in your trio. For example, if I say, “Talk to a friend about it,” you might say to a trio member, “Something made me really mad, and I need to talk to someone about it. Is it OK if I talk to you?” If we practice our green-light responses now, we’ll be able to remember to do them when we’re really angry later. Ready? Here we go.

Read the first green-light response you circled, and then pause for trios to practice it. After about 20 seconds, honk the Harpo horn twice. After kids have responded, read the next green-light response. Continue until trios have practiced each of the green-light responses.

Honk the Harpo horn to bring everyone together, and wait for kids to respond. Say: **It’s important to practice these green-light responses to anger. Let’s look in the book of Proverbs to learn why.** Help kids look up [Proverbs 14:16](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs+14%3A16&version=NIV). After all the kids have found the verse, ask a volunteer to read it aloud.

Ask: • **Would a wise person have red-, yellow-, or green-light responses to anger? Why?** (Yellow, because a wise person would think about it first; green, because a wise person would ask God for help.)

  • **Why is it important to follow this advice from the Bible?** (Because it helps us stay out of trouble; because God wants us to think instead of yelling or getting mad.)

  Say: **God can help us handle angry feelings.** The next time you’re angry, remember these green-light responses we practiced today. Use a green-light response so your angry feelings don’t turn into red-light behavior.

Let’s face it: We all blow it sometimes—our tempers that is. Sometimes the only way that God can help us handle angry feelings is by forgiving us after we’ve messed up. That’s why God sent Jesus to save us from our sins! Jesus was willing to take the punishment for our sins—including the sins we commit in anger. The Bible tells us that if we confess our sins to God, he’ll forgive us. That’s good news!
Hands-On Bible Curriculum—Grades 3 & 4

Cain Kills His Brother, Abel

**HANDS-ON BIBLE**

Give each student a cup of water and a straw. Place a large pot of water on a towel. Make sure kids have their Hands-On Bibles.

Have students turn to Psalm 103 in their Hands-On Bibles and complete the “Slow to Boil” activity found there. When kids are finished, ask:

- **How does it make you feel to know that God is slow to anger?** (Good; happy; relieved.)
- **How can you be more like God when it comes to anger?** (We can be slower to boil over with anger; we can be quicker to forgive others, like God does.)

**Closing**

**Fly Away Angry Thoughts**

**SUPPLIES:** scissors, “Butterfly-Away Anger” handouts (p. 40), pencils

Give each person a pair of scissors and a photocopy of the “Butterfly-Away Anger” handout. Have kids cut out their butterflies.

Together, read the verse printed on the butterfly. Help kids practice saying it together several times.

Ask: **What advice does this passage give us about handling our angry feelings?** (Be careful when we get angry; don’t sin or do bad things just because we’re angry; don’t let our angry feelings take control of us; get over being angry before we go to sleep at night.)

Distribute pencils. Have kids write one green-light response on their butterflies that they’ll try the next time they’re angry. Then ask them to fold their butterflies in half.

Have kids form two lines facing each other. Point to one line, and say: **This line is the “Don’t sin by letting anger control you” line. Let’s say that part of the verse together.** Lead kids in repeating the first half of the verse.

Then point to the other line, and say: **This line is the “Don’t let the sun go down while you are still angry” line. Let’s say that part of our verse together.** Lead kids in repeating the second half of the verse.

Then, one at a time, read the anger-causing situations listed below. After you read the first situation, have kids in the first line toss their butterflies into the air and say, “Don’t sin by letting anger gain control over you” before they catch the butterflies.

Read another situation. Have kids in the other line toss their butterflies into the air and say, “Don’t let the sun go down while you are still angry” before they catch their butterflies. Continue to have kids alternate responses as you read the following situations.

- You have a lot of homework.
- You’re being called names.
- You’re getting blamed for something your brother or sister did.
- You have to do chores during your favorite TV program.
- You’re the last one picked on a team.
- You’re being ignored by your best friend.
After you’ve read all the anger-causing situations, ask:

- **What will you do differently this week because of what you learned today?** (I’ll think before I get angry; I’ll use a green-light response.)

Close with a prayer similar to this one: **God, you can help us handle angry feelings. Help us handle our anger in green-light ways. Help us get rid of our anger before the end of each day. Amen.**

**Growing closer to Jesus extends beyond the classroom.**

Photocopy the “Hands-On Fun at Home” handout (at the end of this lesson) for this week, and send it home with your kids. Encourage kids and parents to use the handout to spark meaningful discussion on this week’s topic.
How NOT to Handle Anger

Later, Cain brought some food from the ground as a gift to God.

Abel brought the best parts from some of the firstborn of his flock.

The Lord accepted Abel and his gift,

But he did not accept Cain and his gift.

So Cain became very angry and felt rejected.

The Lord asked Cain, “Why are you angry? Why do you look so unhappy?

“If you do things well, I will accept you,

“But if you do not do them well, sin is ready to attack you.”

Cain said to his brother Abel, “Let’s go out into the field.”

While they were out in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him.

Later, the Lord said to Cain, “Where is your brother Abel?”

Cain answered, “I don’t know. Is it my job to take care of my brother?”

Then the Lord said, “What have you done? Your brother’s blood is crying out to me from the ground.

“Now you will be cursed in your work with the ground, the same ground where your brother’s blood fell

“and where your hands killed him.

“You will work the ground, but it will not grow good crops for you anymore,

“and you will wander around on the earth.”

Then Cain said to the Lord, “This punishment is more than I can stand!

“Today you have forced me to stop working the ground,

“and now I must hide from you.

“I must wander around on the earth,

“and anyone who meets me can kill me.”

The Lord said to Cain, “No! If anyone kills you, I will punish that person seven times more.”

Then the Lord put a mark on Cain warning anyone who met him not to kill him.

So Cain went away from the Lord and lived in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

(New Century Version)
Butterfly-Away Anger

Ephesians 4:26

“Don’t sin by letting anger control you.”

The next time I’m angry, I’ll try this green-light response:

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

“Don’t let the sun go down while you are still angry.”

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

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God can help us handle angry feelings.

Bible Verse: “And ‘don’t sin by letting anger control you.’ Don’t let the sun go down while you are still angry, for anger gives a foothold to the devil” (Ephesians 4:26-27).

Faith Walk: Cut large circles from red, yellow, and green construction paper. Tape the circles to the refrigerator so they look like a stoplight. Place a pen and a pad of stick-on notes beside the refrigerator.

Just before you go to bed at night, use notes to write about times you had angry feelings during the day and how you handled those feelings. Use one note for each angry feeling. Share your notes with another family member. Decide together whether the way you handled each situation was a red-, yellow-, or green-light response. Stick each note on the color you chose.

At the end of the week, if you have more green responses than red or yellow ones, plan a family celebration, such as playing your favorite board game together.

Check It Out

- **Read Psalm 4:4.**
  Why is it important to get rid of angry feelings before you go to bed at night?

- **Read Proverbs 21:23.**
  Tell about one time you “mouthed off” and later felt bad about it.

Talk It Over

Sometimes it helps to know when we’re most likely to experience angry feelings so we’ll be prepared when they hit.

- When are you most likely to be easily angered?
- Can you avoid putting yourself into those situations?
- How can you best respond in those situations?