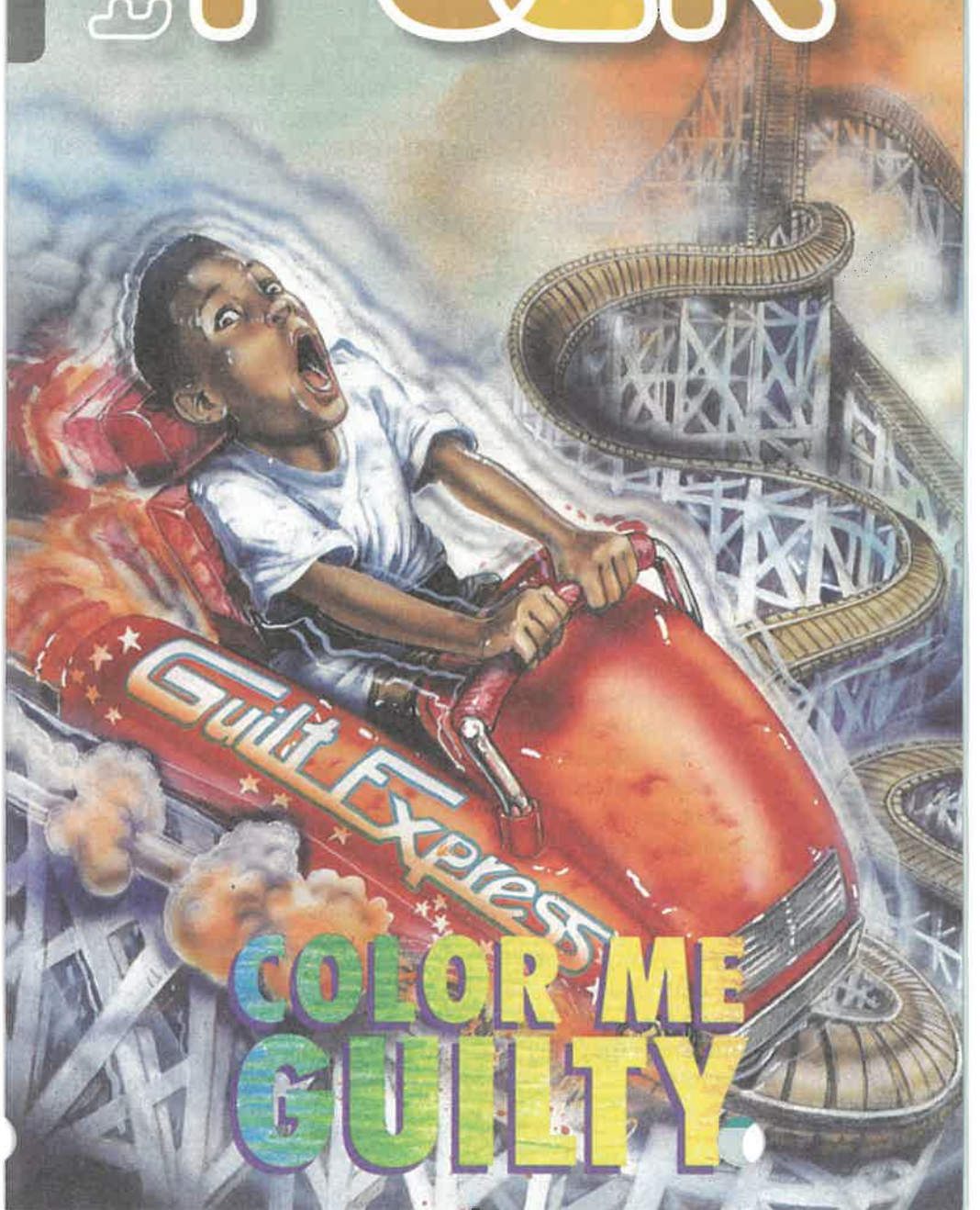


# the rack



# COLOR ME GUILTY

I want to introduce you to two people who you may or may not be familiar with. Or maybe you are better acquainted with one of them than with the other. Meet Connie and Cornelius.



Both of them are in their early teens, and they are pretty typical for their age. They like sports. They are beginning to discover that they have an attraction toward the opposite sex, and they like to dress in the latest fashions when their families can afford it (sound like anyone that you know?). Here's the deal. Both Connie and Cornelius are struggling with trying to be accepted by the crowd at school. Some of the kids at King Middle School are into stealing, drugs and alcohol, gangs, sex, and other harmful activities. Connie and Cornelius are curious about some of these things because others are seemingly having so much fun. Oddly enough, both of them have an opportunity on the same day to explore some areas that they haven't tried before.

Connie has been longing to go to one of Zanetta's parties. She tells her mother that she has basketball practice but goes to Zanetta's instead.



When Cornelius arrived home from school, his book bag looked normal. From the outside no one could tell that a graphic movie was in it. He waited until he thought his parents were in bed before he played the DVD.



Neither Connie's nor Cornelius's folks were aware of what had happened. As far as they knew, all was okay with their children. They

had gotten away with their disobedient acts, right? Wrong! Though Connie and Cornelius had laid and executed their plans well, there was one thing that they hadn't counted on—**GUILT!**

It was as if they had made an escape from a jail, but the chains on their ankles were making noise against the pavement as a constant reminder of their sin.

Have you ever felt guilty before? Guilt can be a pain, can't it? There is a way to deal with it, though.

I introduced our two characters, Connie and Cornelius, but I didn't give them last names. I wonder if you could help me with that. You have two choices. You can make them a part of the same family, or you can put them in different families. It is up to you. Here are the choices.

The last name can be either Confessor or Coverer. The choice is yours, but you have to make each of them live up to the name you give them. Read Proverbs 28:13 (King James Version) for additional guidance in making your decisions for the names.

**If you choose the last name Confessor for Connie and/or Cornelius, what will each person's behavior look like? (What will he or she do?)**

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**If you choose the last name Coverer for Connie and/or Cornelius, what will each person's behavior look like? (What will he or she do?)**

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Reread Proverbs 28:13 again and fill in the blanks: The best way to deal with guilt when you blow it

is to \_\_\_\_\_ your sin rather than \_\_\_\_\_ your sin.

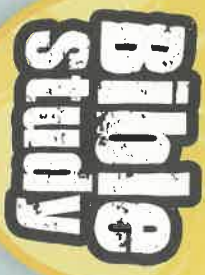
Which pattern is more normal for you? (In other words, do you confess or cover your sin?) If you are one who covers your sins, what steps will you take to break that pattern and start confessing your sin?



## Where Is Your Brother Abel?



## CAIN AND THE CURSE



### BACKGROUND READ GENESIS 4:1-7.

1. What was the difference between the sacrifice Cain offered and the sacrifice Abel offered?

2. What do these sacrifices show about Cain's and Abel's different attitudes toward God?

### MURDER!

### READ GENESIS 4:8-16.

3. What do you think motivated Cain to kill his brother?

4. Why was this murder such a hideous deed?

5. Discover the results of Cain's evil action. In the passage printed here:

- underline each word or phrase that describes the results of Cain's sin.
- write a synonym or descriptive phrase for each thing you've underlined.

6. Finally, summarize how Cain felt as a result of his sin.

### TODAY'S SCRIPTURE

#### Genesis 4:1-16

<sup>1</sup>Adam made love to his wife Eve, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Cain. She said, "With the help of the Lord I have brought forth a man."<sup>2</sup> Later she gave birth to his brother Abel.

Now Abel kept flocks, and Cain worked the soil.<sup>3</sup> In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the Lord.<sup>4</sup> And Abel also brought an offering—fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock.<sup>5</sup> The Lord looked with favor on Abel and his offering, but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast.

<sup>6</sup>Then the Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast?<sup>7</sup> If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it."

<sup>8</sup>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.

<sup>9</sup>Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?"

"I don't know," he replied. "Am I my brother's keeper?"

<sup>10</sup>The Lord said, "What have you done? Listen! Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground."<sup>11</sup> Now you are under a curse and driven from the ground, which opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand.<sup>12</sup> When you work the ground, it will no longer yield its crops for you. You will be a restless wanderer on the earth."

<sup>13</sup>Cain said to the Lord, "My punishment is more than I can bear."<sup>14</sup> Today you are driving me from the land, and I will be hidden from your presence. I will be a restless wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me."

<sup>15</sup>But the Lord said to him, "Not so; anyone who kills Cain will suffer vengeance seven times over." Then the Lord put a mark on Cain so that no one who found him would kill him.<sup>16</sup> So Cain went out from the Lord's presence and lived in the land of Nod, east of Eden.



# Just Who Is My Brother?

**O**n the surface, everything looks fine. Many of our churches are diverse. Still we don't always love one another as Christ has loved us. Afraid of being labeled, we sometimes reject others out of fear of what someone else might think.

Surely, if we are worshipping the same God, believing on the same Lord, reading the same Bible, then we are of the same household of faith and family of God.

If the body of Christ is ever going to impact this world, it must be united in faith and love. Jesus said, "For whosoever shall do the will of my Father is my brother, and sister, and mother" (Matt. 12:50, KJV). On the other side of that, we are warned, "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer. . ." (1 John 3:15a, KJV). Most people don't realize how dangerous hatred can be. Before Cain slew Abel, he first hated his brother. As a teen, you've probably experienced rejection and hatred, or you have rejected or hated someone without reason. For Jesus' disciples, love is a commandment—not an option.

**W**hat are some of the reasons that people hurt and reject one another?

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**W**hat can you personally do to be a part of the solution to end hatred and rejection, and not a part of the problem?

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**W**hy not take some time right now to pray that God would bring healing in our churches and communities and bring about a spirit of true brotherhood and love? Only God can change our hearts so that we see others the way He sees them, that we forgive as we have been forgiven, and that we love as we are loved.

## now

I have only **THIS MOMENT**, Lord.

I can't do anything in the past.

I can't forget, can't change it,

Can't take back things said or done.

I'm not there.

And I can't do anything in the future.

I can't make future decisions now—

Be a heroine, enjoy a husband and children,

Be a perfect Christian.

I'm not there.

Lord, You put me here, **NOW**; in this place,

in this time, and with these people.

If I'm ever gonna praise You, love You,

serve You, enjoy You, learn from You,

I need to do it **NOW**.

Thank You, Lord

For knowing that more than a moment was

too much for me to handle.

Help me to remember

I'm not meant to live past, present, and

future all at once.

**THANK YOU FOR THIS MOMENT.**

by Anneke DeVries (16)  
missionary kid in Kenya, Africa

# every day devos

# SLOW TO ANGER QUICK TO FORGIVE

## MONDAY

Read Psalm 103:8. How does it make you feel to know that God is “slow to anger”? This week, try to be slow to anger with your family.

## TUESDAY

Read Psalm 103:11-12. Think of a sin in your life and ask God for His forgiveness. Think about how far apart east and west are. (They never meet!) That’s how far from you God has removed your sin.

## WEDNESDAY

How does it feel to forgive someone? To be forgiven? Write a short story or draw a cartoon about forgiving someone or being forgiven.

*The LORD is  
compassionate and  
gracious, slow to anger,  
abounding in love.  
Psalm 103:8*

## THURSDAY

Read Psalm 103:13. Think about a time when one of your parents bailed you out of a messy situation you created. Write a note to that parent saying thanks.

## FRIDAY

Read the parable of the prodigal son in Luke 15:11-27. What does this story say about what God is like?

## SATURDAY

Write a psalm praising God for being compassionate and slow to anger.

*How do you  
picture God? Lots  
of people see Him as a  
mean judge just waiting  
to catch them doing  
something wrong. This  
week’s verse tells the  
real story.*

