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# ABEL'S FIELD

DISCUSSION GUIDE

SOMETIMES  
THE HEROES ARE ON  
THE SIDELINES.

# ABEL'S FIELD 2012

## CREW OVERVIEW

Gordie Haakstad (Director)  
Aron Flasher (Writer: screenplay)

## CAST OVERVIEW

Kevin Sorbo (Abel Adamson)  
Samuel Davis (Seth McArdle)  
Richard Dillard (Coach Chalmers)  
Nicole Elliott (Katie)  
Elizabeth Duff (Cary McArdle)  
Catie Duff (Mary McArdle)  
Devin Bonn e (Netty)  
Joe Ward (Keith McArdle)  
Trent Moore (Pastor Daniels)  
William Buchanan (Billy Hodges)

## USING THIS DISCUSSION GUIDE

Intended for use after viewing the film, this study guide provides catalysts for biblically based discussion of various themes found in *Abel's Field*. The guide features three themes from the movie and is structured in such a way that groups can choose to discuss the entire guide at once or can focus on one or two themes at a time.

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## FILM OVERVIEW/NOTE TO GROUP

Set in the small town of Sinai, Texas, *Abel's Field* tells the intersecting stories of Seth McArdle (played by Samuel Davis), a high school student struggling with sole responsibility for family and home, and Abel Adamson (Kevin Sorbo), a fiercely private groundskeeper with a secret past. As familial, financial and social pressures wear on Seth, he finds help and wisdom in an unlikely friendship with Abel. But, when Seth faces a desperate decision with potentially devastating consequences, will he remember Abel's advice about struggle, choice and redemption?

The first several scenes of the film demonstrate Seth's demanding life, including his role as single parent to his young twin sisters, Cary and Mary (Elizabeth and Catie Duff, respectively); fights with starting quarterback Billy Hodges (William Buchanan); and the unrelenting stress of working two jobs to barely pay the bills. After a brawl with Billy – one in a longstanding series – Seth has two choices: accept Coach Chalmers' (Richard Dillard) punishment and help Abel install the football field's new sprinkler system, or follow in his father's footsteps and drop out of school. Wanting to avoid his father's lackluster legacy, Seth grudgingly accepts the task.



Circumstances would be more manageable with a support system, but Seth's reality is an absent father, a deceased mother and an estranged brother, Keith (Joe Ward). And now Seth has to work for silent, somber Abel, a man whose only communication is with his sketchbook. To make matters worse, Seth receives notice from the bank that the house payments are past due, and phone calls to his long-haul trucker father result in nothing but voicemails. Sundays aren't much better; when Pastor Daniels (Trent Moore) asks Seth if he's considered praying for guidance, Seth answers bitterly that his most recent prayers – for his mother's health – went unanswered.

One day, Abel unexpectedly covers for a tardy Seth with Coach Chalmers, and what follows is a burgeoning friendship – a lifeline for both men. At the same time, Seth starts noticing Katie (Nicole Elliott), a popular, artistic acquaintance at school, and Katie notices him, too. These good moments are short-lived, though; soon after, an intoxicated Keith shows up to tell Seth that their father is dead. With the full financial weight now squarely on Seth's shoulders, he's certain to lose the house unless he can meet with the bank in hopes of securing an additional loan. Seth's friend, Netty (Devin Bonn e), has a different plan, though, and it involves criminal activity.

(Warning – spoilers mentioned below.)

As Seth wrestles with his conscience over the impending robbery, he has several soul-searching conversations with Abel about making the right choices, the importance of being honest and the reality of God's forgiveness. After a disastrous meeting at the bank, Seth visits Abel and finds him preparing to skip town. Confused and devastated by Abel's hypocritical actions, Seth agrees to Netty's plan to steal from the school safe. But, mid-robbery, Seth remembers his young sisters, and knows he can't forsake them by leaving their futures to the state – or worse. Abel, feeling called back to the school, secures Seth's escape, and finally tells Seth the truth.

Abel is actually the name of Abel's brother, whom he killed in a moment of rage and jealousy. Ever since the incident, Abel has been a transient – moving from town to town, finding part-time or under-the-table work, staying sober and sketching. Abel and Seth say goodbye, and when Seth gets home, the girls are gone. He finally falls to his knees in earnest prayer. As the film concludes, Seth gets his sisters back with Pastor Daniels' help, and finds a new home to lease. Seth also receives a package from Abel – it's his sketchbook with a note saying that Seth's friendship has reminded Abel of God's presence and emboldened him to face his past.

## THEME ONE: STRUGGLE

**Guiding Scripture:** 1 Peter 5:7 (NIV): "Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you."



## SCRIPTURES REFERENCED

- Psalm 46:1–3 (NIV): "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging."
- Psalm 145:18–19 (NLT): "The LORD is close to all who call on him, yes, to all who call on him in truth. He grants the desires of those who fear him; he hears their cries for help and rescues them."
- Proverbs 18:10 (NLT): "The name of the LORD is a strong fortress; the godly run to him and are safe."
- Isaiah 12:2 (NIV): "Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid. The LORD, the LORD himself, is my strength and my defense; he has become my salvation."
- Jeremiah 29:11 (NLT): "'For I know the plans I have for you,' says the LORD. 'They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.'"
- Romans 5:3–5 (NIV): "Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us."
- Romans 8:1–2 (NIV): "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death. For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering."
- Romans 8:28 (NLT): "And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them."
- 2 Corinthians 12:9–10 (NIV): "But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong."
- Philippians 4:6–7 (NIV): "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."
- James 1:2–4 (NIV): "Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."
- James 1:12 (NIV): "Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him."
- 1 Peter 5:7 (NIV): "Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you."

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## MOVIE SCENES TO REVIEW

- Church Luncheon (00:19:29–00:21:36, Chapter 4)
  - “Are We Okay?” (00:24:59–00:27:05, Chapter 6)
  - Keith’s News (00:31:35–00:34:56, Chapter 7)
  - Pastor’s Visit (00:39:10–00:40:58, Chapter 8)
  - Honesty With God (01:05:21–01:10:19, Chapter 14)
  - Seth’s Prayer (01:31:39–01:35:48, Chapter 19)
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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Romans 8:28 captures the beauty of God’s perfect will and plan: “And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.” As you begin this theme discussion, take some time to think about Romans 8:28 in light of life’s demands and trials. How does this verse offer hope amidst struggle?

For Seth McArdle, life is a constant struggle. He spends most of his time treading water, barely able to manage the circumstances he’s inherited. And because of his bitterness toward God over his mother’s death years before, Seth relies on his own abilities and trusts in his own understanding when it comes to single-handedly shouldering the burden of his situation.

## SCENES TO REVIEW

**Church Luncheon (00:19:29–00:21:36, Chapter 4)**

**“Are We Okay?” (00:24:59–00:27:05, Chapter 6)**

- Pastor Daniels quotes Romans 8:1–2 (see Scriptures Referenced) in his sermon. What is the significance of these verses in the *Church Luncheon* scene and the film as a whole?
- When Pastor Daniels tells Seth that it’s okay to ask God for help, Seth becomes defensive and bristles at the idea. How has his past influenced his willingness to trust God?
- Have you ever experienced the same kind of frustration that Seth feels toward prayer?
- In the second scene (“*Are We Okay?*”), what evidence do you see that clearly demonstrates Seth’s need for help? Why does he choose to struggle on his own?
- Notice that Seth’s sister’s sweatshirt has a hole, yet Pastor Daniels offered to give Seth clothes for the girls. What is Seth’s response? What prevents him from accepting help?

Take a look at 2 Corinthians 12:9–10 and James 1:2–4 (see Scriptures Referenced).

- How does 2 Corinthians 12:9–10 explain the importance of suffering? According to the Apostle Paul, what process does suffering lead us through and what is the end result?
- In James 1:2–4, what does the “testing of your faith” produce? Why is this characteristic a necessary part of faith? How does it lead to maturity and completion?

Despite increasingly stressful circumstances, Seth continues to struggle on his own. Even after hearing of his father’s death, Seth remains obstinately opposed to asking anyone for help. When Pastor Daniels reaches out to the struggling 17-year-old and

once again encourages Seth to accept outside help, he’s met with stubbornness, frustration and – ultimately – a closed door.

## SCENES TO REVIEW

**Keith’s News (00:31:35–00:34:56, Chapter 7)**

**Pastor’s Visit (00:39:10–00:40:58, Chapter 8)**

- What is your reaction to the first scene (*Keith’s News*)? How would you feel to learn not only of your father’s remarriage and death, but also of your brother’s contempt for you?
- In Seth’s defense, he does ask Keith for guidance. But, tragically, Keith is perhaps the only person who refuses to help. Does this relationship shed light on Seth’s struggle?
- Pastor Daniels reaches out to Seth during a sensitive time, but instead of welcoming the visit, Seth pushes the pastor away. Why hasn’t Keith’s visit changed Seth’s attitude?
- When pressed, Seth blurts out, “Can God make my house payments?” What do you think of this question? How does Seth’s bondage to struggle hinder his relationship with God?

Read Psalm 46:1–3; Romans 5:3–5; and James 1:12 (see Scriptures Referenced).

- Describe Psalm 46:1–3 in your own words. What does this passage say about responding to struggle and calamity? What does God’s presence mean to someone who is suffering?
- How do Romans 5:3–5 and James 1:12 address perseverance? What is the relationship between struggle and perseverance? Can one exist without the other? Why or why not?

As Seth and Abel grow in friendship, Seth looks more to his quiet, mysterious mentor for advice on spiritual issues. It is Abel’s honest assessment of prayer – perhaps layered on Pastor Daniels’ conversations with Seth – that causes Seth to reconsider asking God for help and direction. And when Seth comes to the end of his ability and power, he falls to his knees and cries out to God.



## SCENES TO REVIEW

**Honesty With God (01:05:21–01:10:19, Chapter 14)**

**Seth's Prayer (01:31:39–01:35:48, Chapter 19)**

- What does the opening of the first scene (*Honesty With God*) – in which Abel angrily confronts Seth about looking at the sketchbook – suggest about Abel's own struggles?
- Seth has strong character, but he is also extremely vulnerable in many ways. How does this scene at his mother's grave show the depth of his vulnerabilities?
- Why is it important to be honest with God in prayer? How does an honest assessment of our circumstances help us to better understand our need for God?
- Why does Seth finally pray? What is your reaction to this powerful moment in the film?
- Can you speak to your own experiences with struggle? Have you been on a journey similar to Seth's during which you resisted reaching out to God, but eventually did?

Read Psalm 145:18–19 and Philippians 4:6–7  
(see Scriptures Referenced).

- Take a few minutes to think about the wonderful promises contained in Psalm 145:18–19. How does this passage offer hope and encouragement to those who are struggling?
- What is the message of Philippians 4:6–7? How does it emphasize the importance of prayer and thanksgiving no matter the type of circumstance at hand?

In concluding this theme discussion, take some time to read Proverbs 18:10; Isaiah 12:2; Jeremiah 29:11; and 1 Peter 5:7 (see Scriptures Referenced). How do these verses relate to struggle? What encouragement can we draw from these verses regarding the power to overcome life's trials through faith in Jesus? It's important to note that victory as defined by God is often vastly different than victory as defined by man. As you close, take some time to reflect on the refining work that God has done in your life through any difficult circumstances you have faced.

## THEME TWO: CHOICE

**Guiding Scripture:** Matthew 7:13–14 (NIV): “Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.”

## SCRIPTURES REFERENCED

- Deuteronomy 30:15–16 (NLT): “Now listen! Today I am giving you a choice between life and death, between prosperity and disaster. For I command you this day to love the LORD your God and to keep his commands, decrees, and regulations by walking in his ways. If you do this, you will live and multiply, and the LORD your God will bless you and the land you are about to enter and occupy.”
- Joshua 24:15 (NLT): “But if you refuse to serve the LORD, then choose today whom you will serve. Would you prefer the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates? Or will it be the gods of the Amorites in whose land you now live? But as for me and my family, we will serve the LORD.”
- 1 Kings 18:21 (NIV): “Elijah went before the people and said, ‘How long will you waver between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him.’ But the people said nothing.”
- Proverbs 3:5–6 (NIV): “Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.”
- Proverbs 4:27 (NIV): “Do not turn to the right or the left; keep your foot from evil.”
- Proverbs 14:12 (NLT): “There is a path before each person that seems right, but it ends in death.”





- Matthew 7:13–14 (NIV): “Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.”
- Luke 11:23 (NIV): “Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.”
- Romans 8:7 (NLT): “For the sinful nature is always hostile to God. It never did obey God’s laws, and it never will.”
- Galatians 5:1 (NIV): “It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.”
- Philippians 4:8 (NLT): “And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise.”
- 1 Timothy 6:11 (NIV): “But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness.”

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## MOVIE SCENES TO REVIEW

- Disciplinary Meeting (00:08:41–00:10:59, Chapter 2)
- The Narrow Way (00:55:08–00:58:33, Chapter 12)
- Abel’s Choice (01:14:32–01:18:49, Chapter 15)

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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

What comes to mind when you think of choice? Take a few moments to consider the various aspects of the concept of choice. What difference does choice make? Are smaller choices insignificant compared to their larger counterparts? What does the Bible say about choosing? Can you think of people or stories from the Bible that highlight or embody the idea of choice?

Choice plays an important and fascinating role in *Abel’s Field*. In this first Scene to Review, for example, Seth meets with Coach Chalmers to receive a consequence for fighting with members of

the football team. When presented with a choice, Seth makes a decision that may seem immaterial at first, but ultimately reveals his sense of commitment and depth of character.\*

*\*During this scene, Seth is fairly combative and disrespectful in the way he addresses Chalmers. If possible, look beyond this behavior – which ultimately reflects the tainted, bitter history between these two characters – and consider the real motivation behind the choice Seth makes.*

## SCENE TO REVIEW

### Disciplinary Meeting (00:08:41–00:10:59, Chapter 2)

- How would you describe the interaction between Seth and Chalmers?
- What is Seth’s emotional arc throughout this scene? What subject finally stifles his antagonistic attitude toward Chalmers, forcing him to consider greater implications?
- What are Seth’s choices? What considerations is he likely weighing as he makes his decision? Why does Seth try to downplay his “family situation,” as Chalmers calls it?
- Given all of Seth’s responsibilities, how tempting might it be to leave school? How does his decision to stay emphasize his commitment to family – primarily, his sisters?

Take time to look at Proverbs 4:27 and Philippians 4:8 (see Scriptures Referenced).

- How does Proverbs 4:27 caution against making unwise choices? What is the danger in choosing to stray from the proper path? How does this verse relate to Seth’s situation?
- According to Philippians 4:8, on what should we fix our thoughts? Why is it vital to keep these things in mind as we are presented with endless choices?

After his date with Katie ends in a bitter reminder of social stratification, a pensive Seth shares the news of his father’s death with Abel and begins asking him if he believes in God. From there, the conversation turns to forgiveness and a discussion of the narrow way. Abel then explains his interpretation and understanding of choice, indicating that the right one is usually the hardest.

## SCENE TO REVIEW

### The Narrow Way (00:55:08–00:58:33, Chapter 12)

- Why does Seth ask Abel about mistakes and forgiveness? What is the relationship between mistakes and choice? Why might Seth be thinking about these things?

At one point, Abel says, “We all make mistakes, Seth, and most of the time we don’t feel we have a choice, but you *always* have a choice.”

- Do you agree with Abel that we always have a choice, no matter the circumstance? Why or why not? Why do we feel that we don’t have a choice? What causes that feeling?
- Abel references Matthew 7:13–14 (see Scriptures Referenced) in his mention of the narrow way. Take a moment to read that passage and consider the concept of choice.
- Why is the right choice usually the hardest? Can you point to a time in your life when you made the right, difficult choice? If so, what happened?

Read Deuteronomy 30:15–16; Joshua 24:15; and 1 Kings 18:21 (see Scriptures Referenced).

- How do these three Old Testament passages address choice?
- Go through each verse and identify the choices presented to the people. How do these verses underscore the importance of living in obedience to God?

When the sprinkler system is done, Coach Chalmers offers Abel a full-time job as permanent groundskeeper. Since Abel’s name and Social Security number aren’t in the system, Chalmers tells Abel to head to the sheriff’s office for fingerprinting, a requirement for full-time work. Suddenly, Abel’s past is catching up with him, making him believe he has no choice but to leave.

## SCENE TO REVIEW

### Abel’s Choice (01:14:32–01:18:49, Chapter 15)

When Seth confronts his friend about leaving, Abel says, “I don’t have a choice,” which directly conflicts with Abel’s earlier statement: “... you *always* have a choice.”

- What has changed for Abel that he no longer thinks he has a choice in the matter? What compels him to flee rather than stay and face the consequences of his past?
- Seth says that Abel preaches honesty, but spends his life running from the truth. How does Abel’s decision to leave undermine the value of what he’s taught Seth?
- This is a powerfully dramatic and tense scene. Why does Seth react with such frustration? Why does Abel overreact with defensiveness and physical rage?
- What does this scene suggest about fear’s power to sway people’s convictions? How can we stand firm in what we believe, even when the past catches up to us?

Read Romans 8:7 and Galatians 5:1 (see Scriptures Referenced).

- What does Romans 8:7 say about the sinful nature? How does the sinful nature affect the choices we make – and our ability to choose wisely?
- Galatians 5:1 commands us not to return to “a yoke of slavery.” What does this phrase mean? Have you been delivered from a yoke of slavery? If so, what happened?

As you conclude this theme discussion, read Proverbs 3:5–6; Luke 11:23; and 1 Timothy 6:11 (see Scriptures Referenced), and consider the way each verse uniquely addresses the idea of choice. What do these verses recommend for making healthy, God-centered choices? And as you finish discussing the film in relation to this theme, do you recall additional scenes that deal with choice and its consequences, good or bad? Spend some time tracing your own journey as you’ve navigated countless choices, and think about the ways that God’s grace has covered you in each.



## THEME THREE: REDEMPTION

**Guiding Scripture:** Psalm 130:7 (NLT): “O Israel, hope in the Lord; for with the Lord there is unfailing love. His redemption overflows.”

### SCRIPTURES REFERENCED

- Genesis 4:6–7 (NIV): “Then the LORD said to Cain, ‘Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? 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.’”
- Psalm 103:1–5 (NIV): “Praise the LORD, my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name. Praise the LORD, my soul, and forget not all his benefits – who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion, who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s.”
- Psalm 130:7 (NLT): “O Israel, hope in the LORD; for with the LORD there is unfailing love. His redemption overflows.”
- Isaiah 43:1 (NIV): “But now, this is what the LORD says – he who created you, Jacob, he who formed you, Israel: ‘Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine.’”
- Lamentations 3:58 (NIV): “You, Lord, took up my case; you redeemed my life.”
- Romans 6:18 (NIV): “You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.”
- 1 Corinthians 10:13 (NLT): “The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure.”
- Galatians 2:20 (NIV): “I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”
- Ephesians 1:7–8 (NIV): “In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace that he lavished on us.”
- Titus 2:11–14 (NIV): “For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say ‘No’ to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope – the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.”
- Hebrews 11:4 (NIV): “By faith Abel brought God a better offering than Cain did. By faith he was commended as righteous, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith Abel still speaks, even though he is dead.”
- 1 Peter 1:18–19 (NLT): “For you know that God paid a ransom to save you from the empty life you inherited from your ancestors. And the ransom he paid was not mere gold or silver. It was the precious blood of Christ, the sinless, spotless Lamb of God.”

### MOVIE SCENES TO REVIEW

- Discussing the Past (00:44:49–00:47:46, Chapter 9)
- The School Play (00:58:34–01:01:27, Chapter 12)
- Abel’s Admission (01:24:55–01:31:38, Chapter 18)
- Heading Home (01:37:40–01:40:25, Chapter 20)

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

For the Christian, the ultimate form of redemption is that of Jesus Christ’s salvific work, as exemplified in Ephesians 1:7–8: “In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace that he lavished on us.” Life is filled with opportunities for redemption, and those opportunities – from the smallest to the greatest, whether success or failure – testify to the beauty, meaning and truth of Christ’s life-changing sacrifice.

Both Seth and Abel are on trajectories toward redemption, though the latter is more aware of his journey than the former. For Seth, the idea of redemption is hardly on his radar; he’s too busy surviving. But, when Billy Hodges and several members of the football team corner Seth in an empty school hallway, Seth fights for his chance at redemption – just not with his fists.



### SCENES TO REVIEW

**Discussing the Past (00:44:49–00:47:46, Chapter 9)**

**The School Play (00:58:34–01:01:27, Chapter 12)**

- How would you describe Coach Chalmers’ tone as he tells Abel about Seth’s history with football? Does Chalmers seem sympathetic to Seth’s plight? Why or why not?
- Do you agree with Chalmers that Seth has had every chance in the world? List some reasons why you either agree or disagree with this assessment.
- Seth takes Abel’s advice and doesn’t fight back when Billy instigates. How does this decision gain Seth redemption – even to a small degree – where Chalmers is concerned?

- How about you? Can you think back to your most recent moment of redemption? What were the circumstances? Describe the experience.

Read Psalm 130:7; Lamentations 3:58; and Romans 6:18 (see Scriptures Referenced).

- What do Psalm 130:7 and Lamentations 3:58 say about redemption? Take some time to think about the meaning of redemption in each of these verses.
- According to Romans 6:18, from what have we been set free? The last part of the verse mentions righteousness – how is righteousness related to redemption?

When the school robbery takes an unexpected turn, Seth scrambles for an exit, and Abel arrives just in time to help. In the moments that follow, Abel finally confesses to Seth the full truth of his past and explains why he needs to leave town – not to flee, but to return home to face the consequences of his actions. In the end, Abel’s countenance reflects the relief that accompanies his confession, and his active pursuit of redemption takes shape for, perhaps, the first time.



## SCENE TO REVIEW

### Abel’s Admission (01:24:55–01:31:38, Chapter 18)

- Even though Seth helped Netty with the break-in, how does the attempted robbery end in a redemptive way for Seth? What does Abel say to affirm Seth?

Read Genesis 4:6–7 and Hebrews 11:4 (see Scriptures Referenced).

- How do these brief glimpses of the biblical story of Cain and Abel compare to and contrast with Abel’s admission?

In Genesis 4, Eve named her third son Seth.

- How does this modern adaptation of Cain and Abel demonstrate Abel’s (Kevin Sorbo’s character) redemption? How does Seth play a part in it? (Think back through the film.)
- Do you have any other thoughts, comments or questions relating to this pivotal scene or to the corresponding scriptures mentioned?

Read 1 Corinthians 10:13 and Psalm 103:1–5 (see Scriptures Referenced).

- How does 1 Corinthians 10:13 speak to Seth’s situation with

Netty? What encouragement can we draw from this verse regarding temptation and, hopefully, redemption?

- What does Psalm 103:1–5 say about redemption? How does this passage speak not only to Abel’s history, but also his future?

At the end of the film, Seth and the girls walk home to their newly leased house, genuinely content to be together. Meanwhile, Abel walks toward his home, too, though his destination is a bit farther along. But, Abel’s content as well, knowing that he doesn’t walk alone. He walks with God, and the knowledge of His presence is Abel’s redemption, whatever comes his way.

## SCENE TO REVIEW

### Heading Home (01:37:40–01:40:25, Chapter 20)

- At this point in the film, how have both Seth and Abel found redemption? What does redemption look like to each man?
- What is the significance of Abel giving Seth his sketchbook? What reason does Abel cite for not needing to rely on drawings any longer?
- Even though Abel faces uncertainty when he arrives home, what gives him the courage to make the trip and face his past?
- The soundtrack for this final scene in the film is *Amazing Grace*. Why is this an appropriate choice for a man who has found redemption?

Read through Titus 2:11–14 and 1 Peter 1:18–19 (see Scriptures Referenced).

- Titus 2:11–14 is overflowing with beautiful visuals and promises. As you read this passage, what draws your attention?
- 1 Peter 1:18–19 says, “God paid a ransom to save you from the empty life you inherited from your ancestors.” How can we fully embrace the new life that God has given?

As this theme discussion comes to a close, read Isaiah 43:1; Galatians 2:20; take another look at the Guiding Scripture, Psalm 130:7 (see Scriptures Referenced); and feel free to point out any additional scripture that may have come to mind during this theme discussion. Think about your own experiences with the process of redemption – can you point to specific examples? How has redemption served to grow your faith or given you a greater appreciation for Christ’s sacrifice? Consider concluding by sharing your testimony; what a beautiful example of God’s redemption!

## FINAL THOUGHTS

- Throughout the film, Abel and Seth install the football field’s new sprinkler system. How might the sprinkler system serve as a metaphor for the overarching story in the film?
- What do you think of Seth and Katie’s friendship? How do their different social circles influence the way they interact? Ultimately, how do they overcome this obstacle?
- What are your thoughts on the character of Billy Hodges? On Seth and Billy’s constant fighting? Do Billy’s actions constitute bullying? Why or why not?
- Which character in the film do you most identify with? Why?
- The closing credits contain drawings from Abel’s sketchbook. Take a few minutes to look at the sketches and discuss both their artistry and their relation to Abel’s character.

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