

Beginnings 6 - Not as Cain

We looked at The Fall of Man in Genesis 3. In chapter 4 we are going to see that it didn't take long for the effect of sin on mankind to take place.

1. The foundation of sin.

Gen 4:1-5 And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD.

2And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

3And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD.

4And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering:

5But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.

Although the emphasis of the history of Cain and Abel is on covetousness and murder, there is an underlying principle that actually sets the stage for this sin. It is based on the relationship *not* that the brothers had with each other, but the relationship that each brother had with God.

Cain was a farmer and Abel was a rancher, so to speak. Cain tended the ground and Able tended sheep. As such, they each brought the fruit of their labors as a sacrifice. **Cain brought the fruits of the ground, but Abel brought a blood sacrifice.**

Now, there is nothing actually wrong with an offering from the fruits of the ground. When you look at the offering system in Leviticus, there were a number of times and ways to bring such an offering. **However, when it came to the sacrifice for sin, a blood offering was required.** We have every reason to understand that they believed that.

Heb 9:19-22 For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people, 20Saying, This *is* the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you.

21Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry.

22And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; **and without shedding of blood is no remission.**

Cain demonstrated that he was

missing an understanding of what it meant to be forgiven. To forgive does not mean to merely overlook, ignore, or forget an offense that is made. If someone were to kill my child, how satisfying do you think it would be if they offered my \$100 for my loss? What price *would* be satisfactory to compensate me for the loss of her life forever? To be *fair*, they would have to pay with their life *forever*. To satisfy God's judgment for us for being a sinner in rebellion against Him could not be satisfied by offering the fruits of our labor as Cain did. God's wrath would not be satisfied by a tomato, carrot, or a rutabaga. The blood offering that Abel made when he sacrificed that sheep was not actually sufficient in itself either. The difference is that that blood offering was a testimony of what Abel knew was required and that it foreshadow and represented the offering that Jesus would provide on the cross in due time. When Jesus did offer up Himself on the cross, He offered up Himself to be a payment *forever* for each of *us* and He could do this because *He* is infinite. The life-blood of Jesus became the payment for our sinfulness. This is why Noah was told not to eat the blood of any flesh and why blood must be shed for the shedding of blood.

Gen 9:3-6 Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things.

4But flesh with the life thereof, *which is* the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.

5And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man.

6Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.

Moses explained further why the blood was not to be eaten.

Lev 17:10-11 And whatsoever man *there be* of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, that eateth any manner of blood; I will even set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people.

11For the life of the flesh *is* in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it *is* the blood *that* maketh an atonement for the soul.

Cain had the wrong relationship with God founded on an the fruits of his labor, but Abel had the right relationship founded on the blood of the sacrifice. By being made righteous because of the

blood of Christ we come into a right relationship with God.

Cain should have understood this from the history of Adam and Eve. They had made aprons of fig leaves for their covering, but God had shed an animal's blood to provide a covering for them.

2. Resentment.

The murder and cover up that follows is founded on the fact that Cain was in rebellion against God and was envious and resented Abel. I don't think he understood what it was that Abel even had. Instead he was resentful. You can see this in what happens next.

Gen 4:5-6 But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.
6And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?

Cain was jealous, covetous, envious. He wanted what his brother had and did not take into consideration how he came to that.

How does envious covetousness work? First, there is nothing wrong if you see your neighbor's lawnmower and you want one of your own. However, it is envy when you can't stand to see your neighbor blessed with that lawnmower. Also, there is nothing wrong with having a contract or an agreement where you get paid what you deserve for your labor. But it is still possible to be envious even when you get paid. This would be true if you resent that your employer or coworker has more than you do. The classic example of envy is the child who is angry that he doesn't have an ice cream cone simply because it is "not fair." It doesn't even *have* to be because he was promised one. It doesn't even have to be because he saw someone else have one, or even that he worked hard to get one. It is simply just "not fair." Envy can be when you are unhappy when someone gets a blessing that you *don't even* want for yourself. The child who calls "not fair" and the adult who can't stand to see someone get blessed have the same thing in common: they are self-centered.

Cain resented the standing that Abel had. He did not consider God's righteousness. He essentially called out, "No fair!"

3. Grace rejected.

The truly sad about this is that he *could* have had what Abel had. He could have offered a blood sacrifice, too. To show how gracious God was in all of this, Cain didn't even have to go and get the sacrifice. He didn't deserve to have a sacrifice, but God provided one for him anyway. That's what grace is, if you deserved it, it wouldn't be grace. A popular acronym for grace is God's

Riches At Christ's Expense. Here, at God's own expense, was a symbol of Christ that God was providing out of His riches.

Gen 4:7 If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee *shall be* his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.

Sin lieth at the door is a reference to a *sin sacrifice*. We see this in Exodus where the word *sin* is translated a number of times as *sin offering*. For example:

Exod 30:10 And Aaron shall make an atonement upon the horns of it once in a year with the blood of the **sin offering** of atonements: once in the year shall he make atonement upon it throughout your generations: it *is* most holy unto the LORD.

By telling him that sin lieth at the door, God was saying , "Here. Here is a sacrifice for you to use that I *will* accept. It's right there in the doorway. All you have to do is take it and make the right sacrifice." God, Himself, had provided a sacrifice for Cain. In due time, God not only Himself provided the ultimate sacrifice for our sin, but He provided Himself *as* the sacrifice for our sins. If Cain had tried to claim that he didn't understand this before, there was absolutely no excuse now. God told him outright that he needed a sacrifice and provided it for him. There was nothing more that could be done. In Cain's day, all he had to do was accept it. The sacrifice was there to serve any desire Cain had to get right with God.

1Cor 10:13-14 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God *is* faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear *it*.

14Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry.

4. Sin begets sin.

Rejecting God's offer of salvation is bad, but things can get worse. When you think of how someone hits rock bottom, you are surprised that people often find a trap door to go even lower.

Gen 4:8-14 And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.

9And the LORD said unto Cain, Where *is* Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: *Am* I my brother's keeper?

10And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.

11And now *art* thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand;

12When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.

13And Cain said unto the LORD, My punishment *is* greater than I can bear.

14Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass, *that* every one that findeth me shall slay me.

Cain rejected God's grace and found a trap door to go even lower. Cain's envy ate away at him like a cancer until he was hyped up enough to carry out what was in his heart. You can be sure that the murder was committed way before he struck the blow that killed his brother.

Matt 15:19 For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:

1John 3:15 Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.

Cain hated his brother and found another trap door to go lower. He rose up in the field where not even God could see him, or so he might have thought, and slew his brother. But he found another trap door.

God came looking for Abel and Cain found another trap door to go even lower. He hardened his heart without natural affection. Rom 1 describes this ultimate hardening of the heart and being without natural affection is just *one* of the symptoms:

Rom 1:28-32 And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;
29Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,
30Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,
31Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:

32Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

When God asked him where his brother was, his answer was "Am I my brother's keeper?" He felt no sense of responsibility for others. This is an awfully cavalier attitude for someone who had just slain his brother! This is so totally the opposite of what we are supposed to feel as Christians. We are supposed to see ourselves as debtors, we *owe* it to the world to love them. God pronounced His judgment and Cain found another trap door. Instead of repenting in the face of his complete exposure, his response was "My punishment is greater than I can bear."

Could things get any lower? Yes! As you come to the end of the story of Cain, it closes with his great-great-grandson Lamech. The effect of sin can be lasting. God had promised Cain that he would be protected from vengeance seven fold.

Gen 4:15 And the LORD said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the LORD set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him.

Several generations later, Lamech, Cain's descendent, committed a murder.

Gen 4:23-24 And Lamech said unto his wives, Adah and Zillah, Hear my voice; ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech: for I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt.

24If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold.

His murder was evidently worse because he bragged that since if anyone hurt Cain, Cain would be avenged sevenfold, his murder was so bad that he was worth seventy and seven fold.

5. Love one another.

The apostle John took a lesson from this history from the beginning, from Genesis.

1John 3:11-12 For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.

12Not as Cain, *who* was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.

1Cor 10:11-12 Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom

the ends of the world are come.
12Wherefore let him that thinketh
he standeth take heed lest he fall.

The lesson from Cain and Abel is clear. We need to be take precautions lest while we think we are doing great in our service to God we end up stumbling and falling because we didn't attend to our brother. You cannot be right with God without being right with each other.

Matt 5:23-24 Therefore if thou
bring thy gift to the altar, and
there rememberest that thy
brother hath ought against thee;
24Leave there thy gift before the
altar, and go thy way; first be
reconciled to thy brother, and
then come and offer thy gift.

1John 4:20-21 If a man say, I
love God, and hateth his brother,
he is a liar: for he that loveth not
his brother whom he hath seen,
how can he love God whom he
hath not seen?

21And this commandment have
we from him, That he who loveth
God love his brother also.

The phrase "one another" appears in many places in the New Testament and speaks of our brotherly relationship.

- We already read in 1John 3 that we should love one another.
- The whole body suffers when we don't care one for another:

Rom 12:5 So we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

1Cor 12:25-26 That there should be no schism in the body; but *that* the members should have the same care one for another.

26And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.

- We should have peace one with another.

Mark 9:50 Salt *is* good: but if the salt have lost his saltness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another.

- We should humbly serve on another.

John 13:14 If I then, *your* Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet.

- Our love for one another will be a testimony to the world of God's grace.

John 13:34-35 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one

another.

35 By this shall all *men* know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

- We are to be kindly affectionate, *preferring* one another.

Rom 12:10 *Be* kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;

- If we needed anything more...we are *commanded* to love one another.

John 15:17 These things I command you, that ye love one another.

[The rest of the verses in this list to be read personally later]

Rom 13:8 Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

15:7 Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.

15:14 And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.

16:16 Salute one another with an holy kiss. The churches of Christ salute you.

11:33 Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another.

16:20 All the brethren greet you. Greet ye one another with an holy kiss.

Gal 5:13 For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only *use* not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.

6:2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

Eph 4:2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;

4:25 Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.

32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

Col 3:13,16 Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also *do* ye.

16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

Heb 3:13,10:24-25 But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

10:24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

25 Not forsaking the assembling of

ourselves together, as the manner of some *is*; but exhorting *one another*: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

Jam 5:9,16 Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door.

16Confess *your* faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

1Pet 1:22 Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently:

3:8 Finally, *be ye* all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, *be* pitiful, *be* courteous:

4:9,10 Use hospitality one to another without grudging.

10As every man hath received the gift, *even so* minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

5:5,14 Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all *of you* be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.

14Greet ye one another with a kiss of charity. Peace *be* with you all that are in Christ Jesus. Amen.

1John 4:7,11,12 Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.

11Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

12No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. Before services were available online, Nancy once posted this on social media:

Does someone at your church get on your nerves? Go anyway. You probably get on someone else's nerves now and then. Does someone at your church sing off key? Then sing louder than them ON key. Are there hypocrites at your church? Go anyway. There is always room for one more. Did someone at church neglect to greet you? Go back and be twice as friendly. Does someone at church seem distant and preoccupied? Pray for them and reach out to them. Perhaps they are going through a terrible trial. Do you have trouble finding a place to park near your church? Leave earlier to find a space, or become part of a car pool.

When you stay home from church, you not only miss the message from God's word. You also miss congregational worship, prayers and singing, answers to prayers, updates,

testimonies, making contributions, receiving blessings, witnessing, working together, as well as fellowshiping and eating together! In the mean time, Christians in other countries have to meet secretly because they are being murdered for their faith. Don't believe the enemy's lies and sit at home. Christ gave His life for the church! Doesn't that show us how valuable the church is to God?

How have you shown your love to the brethren lately?

1. The foundation of sin. Gen 4:1-5, Heb 9:19-22, Gen 9:3-6, Lev 17:10-11
2. Resentment. Gen 4:5-6
3. Grace rejected. Gen 4:7, Exod 30:10, 1Cor 10:13-14
4. Sin begets sin. Gen 4:8-14, Matt 15:19, 1John 3:15, Rom 1:28-32, Gen 4:23-24
5. Love one another. 1John 3:11-12, 1Cor 10:11-12, Matt 5:23-24, 1John 4:20-21, Rom 12:5, 1Cor 12:25-26, Mark 9:50, John 13:14, John 13:34-35, Rom 12:10, John 15:17, The following verses are for private devotions – Rom 13:8, Rom 15:7, Rom 15:1, Rom 15:7, 15:14, 16:16, 1Cor 11:33, 16:20, Gal 5:13, 6:2, Eph 4:2,25,32, Col 3:13,16, Heb 3:13, 10:24-25, Jam 5:9,16, 1Pet 1:22, 3:8, 4:9,10, 5:5,14, 1John 4:7,11,12