

Case Study: Cain – Take What I Offer

Description

2And [later] she gave birth to his brother Abel. Now Abel kept the flocks [of
9Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" And he [lied and] s

Genesis 4:2-9

The story of the first murder is also a story that gives us a glimpse of the effect that sin had on the world in a very short amount of time. People typically focus on the fact that Cain murdered Abel and stop there, but I feel it is more important to study the reasons why a person did something, and explore how they got there so that we can do our best to avoid the same pitfalls that have so greatly derailed others.

- Cain became extremely angry – this fact may seem small and normal for someone to become angry when they have been rejected, or are disappointed, but it would be better if we took a moment to analyze why the person has become mad in the first place. Why did Cain become angry? Was it not because God had rejected his offering? Indeed, God's rejection of Cain's offering was the source of his anger in this moment, but Cain's anger was the fruit/manifestation of a deeper issue that he had not addressed, or possibly wasn't even aware of. Cain's reaction to God's decision exposed the true issue underneath. Instead of choosing anger, Cain should have, and could have chosen to humble himself before God in an effort to understand God's decision. The moment could have been used for Cain to develop a deeper understanding and connection with God that could have led to a more fruitful life and relationship for Cain, but he chose pride in the moment.
- Cain was jealous- Cain's thoughts and attitude towards Abel in this moment reflected a longer standing issue between he and his brother. Strong feelings of hate and anger don't appear spontaneously, and are usually the result of deeper issues with a person that have not been addressed healthily. Many people today talk about sibling rivalries, and its often talked about how the firstborn will feel like younger children are more loved, or have it easier than they did. If you look at their roles, Cain was a gardener, and Abel a shepherd. If you remember God's curse to Adam that from the ground would he produce a harvest with sweat and labor, one could imagine that Cain experienced much grief and toil through farming the land. It may have appeared that Abel was given an easier role in the family, and that God was appearing to favor him more in this moment; possibly as Cain felt that his parents felt about Abel. It is important to check your feelings and emotions about how you feel or compare yourselves with others, to include siblings.
- Am I my brother's keeper- Cain felt no responsibility for his brother. This is a very dangerous state of mind. Don't read what I'm not writing. We are NOT responsible for the actions of others, no matter our relationship with them, everyone makes their own decisions. However, we do have a responsibility to engage in community and provide accountability and support with those that God has entrusted to us. God already knowing what Cain had done, aske this question as a test of Cain's heart and character. Cain's anger at this point was so deep that it prevented him from feeling remorse for his actions, or the desire to ask God for forgiveness. Cain instead chose to absolve his responsibility of loving and living in fellowship with his brother, to instead murder him

out of hate and in an effort to remove the image of how he should be living his life.

- Sin is crouching at the door- it's amazing, because God's words to Cain here are similar to Jesus' warning to Peter in Luke chapter 22. God being aware of Cain's heart and thoughts was warning him to be on guard because his current state of mind created a vulnerability that satan could exploit. Cain did not know what lay ahead of him, yet he held the power of choice to prevent his own demise. Sin crouches on the others side, just out of sight of every thought and decision that we make outside of the will of God. God aware of our shortcomings and predispositions warns us to be on guard so that we allow the enemy a way to cause us to stumble, and for every situation, God provides us a way of escape. Cain was provided a way of escape, it was in the form of a divine call to a self assessment.

Reflection Time

What is your response to the voice of God? Is there an area of your life that is vulnerable to satan's attacks Do you give God anything less than your best? I challenge you to take a real inventory of your life and heart to determine what you have been presenting before God. What is your view of what God is asking of you, and how are you going about meeting that standard?

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