

CREATION MATTERS AND THE SANCTITY OF LIFE

Genesis 4:1-16

I. _____ Matters Because Of Everyone Is A Procreation And A Divine Creation (1-2a)

II. _____ Matters Because Redemption Is Significant (2b-5a; cf. Heb 11:4, Jd 11)

III. _____ Batters Because "Self" Matter More Than "Others" (5b-7)

A. The Counsel For Anger – God's Counsel:

1. **Asked Cain The Root Of His Anger** – *"Why are you angry?"*
2. **Acknowledged Cain's Hurt Feeling** – *"Why has your countenance fallen?"*
3. **Analyzed Cain's Options** – *Do best for the Lord and resist sin or allow oneself to be dominated by sin.*

B. The Reasons For Anger:

C. The Response When Angry

1. Slow Down The Anger Process (James 1:19-20; Prov 19:11)
2. Seek to understand the other person's point of view (Prov 14:29)
3. Remain "cool" as you gather the facts (Prov 17:27; 29:20)
4. Decide whether this is a righteous reason to be angry. Are your expectations biblical?
 - Idolatry (1 Kings 11:9-10), Injustice (John 2:14-17), Insensitivity (Mark 3:1-5)
5. Ignore minor disagreements or offenses (Prov 19:11; 17:14)

IV. _____ Shatters Because Life Is Precious To God And Man (8; cf. 1 Jn 3:10-15)

V. _____ Matters Because God Is Just (9-14)

Wrong Responses To Our Sin:

- Lying Instead Of Admitting The Truth: "I do not know"
- Redirection Instead Of Dealing With Truth: "Am I my brother's keeper?"
- Denial Instead Of Acknowledging God's Sovereignty: "your brother's blood is crying to me"
- Self-Focus Instead Of How Reality Affects Everyone: "My punishment is greater than I can bear"
- Blame-Shifting Instead Of Taking Personal Responsibility: "You have Driven Me Away"

VI. _____ Matters Because God Gives Second Chances (15-16)

Conclusion:

1. The sin of humanity demonstrates how much we need the **forgiveness** and **righteousness** of God through Christ.
2. The turmoil in our world demonstrates how much we need the **peace** of Christ.
3. Our personal struggle with God demonstrates how much we need the **grace** of Christ as our Savior.

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CREATION MATTERS AND THE SANCTITY OF LIFE

Genesis 4:1-16

Genesis 4:1-16 [1] Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, "I have gotten a man with the help of the LORD." [2] And again, she bore his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a worker of the ground. [3] In the course of time Cain brought to the LORD an offering of the fruit of the ground, [4] and Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and his offering, [5] but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his face fell. [6] The LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? [7] If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is for you, but you must rule over it." [8] Cain spoke to Abel his brother. And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him. [9] Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" He said, "I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?" [10] And the LORD said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground. [11] And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. [12] When you work the ground, it shall no longer yield to you its strength. You shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth." [13] Cain said to the LORD, "My punishment is greater than I can bear. [14] Behold, you have driven me today away from the ground, and from your face I shall be hidden. I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me." [15] Then the LORD said to him, "Not so! If anyone kills Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold." And the LORD put a mark on Cain, lest any who found him should attack him. [16] Then Cain went away from the presence of the LORD and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

Introduction:

1. During the Vietnam War, singer Marvin Gaye wrote the musical lament:

Mother, mother

There's too many of you crying

Brother, brother, brother

There's far too many of you dying

You know we've got to find a way

To bring some lovin' here today,

Picket lines and picket signs

Don't punish me with brutality

Talk to me, so you can see

Oh, what's going on

What's going on

Yeah, what's going on

Ah, what's going on

2. That question lingers today as our country reels with trying to understanding violence in recent police shootings

- Our goal is not to advocate any political agenda but to see what God says
- There are lots of opinions motivated by emotion, experience and agendas
- But if there is going to be any progress, there needs to be an effort to seek **not WHO is right** but **WHAT is right**.

- But we won't know WHAT is right until we agree on a baseline of what is True, Good and Evil.
- America has abandoned God's Word, as demonstrated in denying the 10 commandments and the principles of being created equally by GOD.

Proposition: We will look at Genesis 4:1-6 today because Genesis has the foundational principles for mankind – men and women are created in the image of God, life is sacred, sin rebels against God's Word and way, sin brings judgment and redemption is found in the blood of Christ. The recent tragedies in America point to how the ultimate answer is going to be found in the righteousness of Christ, the peace of Christ and the Gospel of Christ.

I. Life Matters Because Of Everyone Is A Procreation And A Divine Creation (1-2a)

1 Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, "I have gotten a man with the help of the LORD." 2a And again, she bore his brother Abel.

- Cain = *qayin*
- Word play with Heb. *qaniti* = "brought forth" (NIV)
- A footnote on one of Josephus' translations of *Antiquities of the Jews* (Whiston) suggests that Adam and Eve had 33 sons and 23 daughters.
- Life matters because Cain and Abel are a product of a **family** who cares for them
- Life matters because **God helped Adam & Even bear children**
- **God is involved**
- **Family is involved**
- **God's Creation Matters** – every human being is created in the image of God
 - Every life matters because we are image bearers of God
- Black lives matter
- Policemen matter
- Unborn lives matter
- Aged lives matter
- Poor lives matter
- Sinful lives matter – that's why God sent Christ into the world to die for sinners

II. Sacrifice Matters Because Redemption Is Significant (2b-5a)

2b Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a worker of the ground. 3 In the course of time Cain brought to the LORD an offering of the fruit of the ground, 4 and Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and his offering, 5 but for Cain and his offering he had no regard.

- Cain's **religion** is everything Christianity is not
- Abel represented faith, Cain represented works
- **The problems with Cain's offering:**
 - not a blood offering
 - effort of work and not faith
 - about the presenter and presentation, not about God
 - Possibility: from the ground (ground cursed in Gen 3:17)
 - Another Possibility: Abel offered the first of the flock and fat – Cain is not mentioned as offering his first fruit

- Prov 3:9-10 – honor the Lord with your possessions, and with the firstfruits of all your increase

Hebrews 11:4 By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, through which he was commended as righteous, God commending him by accepting his gifts. And through his faith, though he died, he still speaks.

- Cain **interpreted** his own sacrifice, Abel followed the animal sacrifice pattern
 - **1 John 1:7** “The blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin”
 - Gen 3:21 – clothed with garments of skin infers an animal sacrifice right after the pronouncement of judgment
 - Personal interpretation instead of God’s reality gets an individual and society into danger
 - Vigilantes take justice into their own hands
 - A rogue officer puts himself above the law
 - A pastor chooses his personal interpretation instead of letting Scripture interpret Scripture
 - Do we play the **Race Card** or the **Right Card**
 - What’s **right** over **who’s right**?
 -

Jude 1:11 Woe to them! For they walked in the way of Cain and abandoned themselves for the sake of gain to Balaam's error and perished in Korah's rebellion.

The Way Of Cain (Gen 4)

- Rejected God’s Way (Jn 14:6)
- Error of false religion
- He tried to make offering to God his way instead of God’s way
- He employed human effort, not faith
- He rejected the right way (of Abel)

The Error Of Balaam (Num 22-25)

- Rejected God’s Truth
- When Israel was ready to enter the Promised Land, the King of Moab (Balak) wanted to thwart Israel, so he hired Balaam, an Israelite, to come to curse Israel
- God sent a donkey to tell him not to sell out
- But Balaam went for the money and sold God out and Israel out
- He worked out a plan where Moabite women would seduce Israelite men to compromise God’s purity of faith

1 Peter 5:2 ²Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly;

2 Peter 2:3 ³By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber.

The Rebellion Of Korah (Num 16)

- Rejection Of God’s Authority

- Korah was a privileged Levite, Kohathite, keeper of the Tabernacle, but he led 250 leaders in rebellion against Moses
- Cain sought to please God through his own efforts, the Bible teaches salvation by faith alone (Eph 2:8-9)
 - Cain may have spent more time on his offering and it may have been more pricy
 - Ie/ Making a bouquet or a fruit salad can cost more than bringing the meat dish to a potluck
 - It may have had the most beautiful flowers and crops, but it didn't have an ounce of blood
 - It may have been his best effort, but God isn't asking for our effort
 - It's better to obey than to sacrifice

III. Sin Batters Because "Self" Matter More Than "Others" (5b-7)

5b So Cain was very angry, and his face fell. 6 The LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? 7 If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is for you, but you must rule over it."

- Cain's flesh fanned his pride
- His anger forced him to see only his view, not God's view
- His anger drove him to take out his anger by striking against a victim
- Anger caused him to kill his brother
- E.g. Anger can cause misbehavior in a police officer or a parent
- E.g. Anger can be aroused by mobs leading to mob violence
- Anger throws reason to the door
- Individual acts of sin must be dealt with and judged – vigilantism, mob violence are not the answer
- I'm not discounting the right to a peaceful protest – but when individuals take matters into their own concept of justice and we forsake a just court, we violate Jesus' command to turn the other cheek
- God gives an antidote to anger

A. The Counsel For Anger – God's Counsel:

- 1. Asked Cain The Root Of His Anger – "Why are you angry?"**
 - "If we become angry it's because we had anger already within us, and we allowed someone else to pull it out of us. But no one can *make* us angry." (David Jeremiah, *Slaying the Giants in Your Life*, p. 112)
- 2. Acknowledged Cain's hurt feeling – "Why has your countenance fallen?"**
- 3. Analyzed Cain's options – Do best for the Lord and resist sin or allow oneself to be dominated by sin.**
 - V. 7 **Do well** – reasonable expectation from God, but Cain refused
 - Refusing to "do well" before God is "sin"

B. The Reasons For Anger:

1. Disappointment

- We can get angry when we are disappointed with someone not meeting our expectations
- We can get angry when relationships fail – breakup, divorce, betrayal of a friend
- We can get angry with God when we are upset with His direction in our lives or we have different expectations of God than who He is

2. Frustration

- The perfectionist gets mad when execution of plans doesn't occur the way they plan it
- Disciplined athletes might lose their temper towards the end of the sporting event when they are frustrated with losing
- Children get mad when they are frustrated with their toy or art work
- The golfer gets mad when his shot ends up in the rough or trap

- Six Levels From Frustration To Anger
(by Paul Hauck, quoted by Paul Wilson, *How To Stop Being Your Own Worse Enemy*, p. 100)
 - "I want something."
 - "I didn't get what I wanted and am frustrated."
 - "It is awful and terrible not to get what I want."
 - "You shouldn't frustrate me! I must have my way."
 - "You're bad for frustrating me."
 - "Bad people ought to be punished."

3. Pain

- "If you see anger, look for the pain." (R. C. Sproul)

4. Fear

- Fear causes us to feel out of control and we get angry to try to bring control or dominance over the situation.

C. The Response When Angry

1. Slow Down The Anger Process (James 1:19-20)

James 1:19-20 So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

Proverbs 19:11 The discretion of a man makes him slow to anger, And his glory is to overlook a transgression.

2. Seek to understand the other person's point of view

Proverbs 14:29 He who is slow to wrath has great understanding, but he who is impulsive exalts folly.

Ie/ When the husband comes home from work and snaps at the wife, instead of the wife reacting back with reverberating insults, she could say, "Rough day at work, huh?" or "Did I do something to make you angry?"

Ie/ Find the reason for your teen's anger. They are being emotionally stretched by their raging hormones and yet lack the experience in life to handle the anger. They get upset at the slightest thing – a comment from a parent, the appearance of betrayal by a friend, the work load from the teacher...etc. When they come home angry, ask the why.

3. Remain "cool" as you gather the facts

Proverbs 17:27 He who restrains his words has knowledge, and he who has a cool spirit is a man of understanding.

Proverbs 29:20 Do you see a man hasty in his words? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

Ie/ You can blow up at a bad report card or you can assess the facts as to why your child got a bad report card. If it's the school work, you can talk to the teacher about getting your child help. If it's the Game Boy or the telephone, you can get righteously angry and remove those distractions until the results improve. The goal is to stay school so you can assess.

Ie/ A coworker is labeling you as a liability to the team. Your first result is to hurl and insult back. A biblical response is to not act on hearsay, but go assess the accuracy of the information.

4. Decide whether this is a righteous reason to be angry. Are your expectations biblical?

- Idolatry (1 Kings 11:9-10)
- Injustice (John 2:14-17)
- Insensitivity (Mark 3:1-5)

5. Ignore minor disagreements or offenses

Proverbs 19:11 A man's discretion makes him slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook a transgression.

- Ephesians 4 calls this forbearance (4:1) and longsuffering. It will take a long time to make you suffer.
- Forgiveness (4:32)

Proverbs 17:14 The beginning of strife is like letting out water, so abandon the quarrel before it breaks out.

- Ie/ A boy asked his father how wars are started. His father replies that in World War I the Germans invaded Belgium. Mom, who was listening while washing the dishes, interrupted and said, "Why don't you tell him the truth, the war started because somebody got murdered." The father reacted to the mother's interruption and said "Who's answering the question, you or me?" The mother reacted angrily, slamming the dishes into the sink, slamming the kitchen door behind her. There was an awkward silence between the father and son. The son then said "Never mind dad, I think I know how war is started."

IV. Murder Shatters Because Life Is Precious To God And Man (8)

8 Cain spoke to Abel his brother. And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him.

v.8 – Cain spoke to Abel – I wonder what the conversation was like

- Maybe he expressed his frustration
- "Look all I had done and God wasn't pleased" (frustrated)
- "He liked your offering more than mine" (jealous)
- "All you did was sacrifice one of your flock" (comparison)
- "Remember that time you knocked over my Lincoln Logs – I'm still mad about that" (bitterness)
- Cain allowed anger to over come him and turned from the Lord
- Cain killed his brother (8)
- Cain was investigated by God (9a)
- Cain lies and pleads "not guilty" (9b)
- "brother's keeper" is a sarcastic term related to Abel being the "keeper of sheep"
- "One controls his anger best when he is *solution-oriented* rather than *problem-oriented*. Christians who are problem-oriented tend to talk about the problem, feel sorry for themselves, start up blameshifting operation, and focus their energies upon who is at fault. Solution-oriented Christians size up the problem, try to fix responsibilities, and then *turn as quickly as possible* toward solving the problem biblically." (Adams, p. 354)
- The Apostle John adds his sad commentary on this tragedy:

1 John 3:10-15 [10] By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother. [11] For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. [12] We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous. [13] Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you. [14] We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death. [15] Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

V. Judgment Matters Because God Is Just (9-14)

9 Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" He said, "I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?"
10 And the LORD said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground.
11 And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. 12 When you work the ground, it shall no longer yield to you its strength. You shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth." 13 Cain said to the LORD, "My punishment is greater than I can bear. 14 Behold, you have driven me today away from the ground, and from your face I shall be hidden. I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me."

Wrong Responses To Our Sin:

A. **Lying Instead Of Admitting The Truth:** "I do not know"

- How often do we lie when we get caught
- 1 John 1:9 – confess (to say the same thing – *homologeo*)
- Saw what God already knows

B. **Redirection Instead Of Dealing With Truth:** "Am I my brother's keeper?"

- Another tactic in our lying – not dealing with the truth but, like a magician, trying to redirect attention
- E.g. a basketball fake move

C. **Denial Instead Of Acknowledging God's Sovereignty:** "your brother's blood is crying to me"

Hebrews 4:13 And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

D. **Self-Focus Instead Of How Reality Affects Everyone:** "My punishment is greater than I can bear"

- Cain knew he alienated himself from God and felt that God's presence and protection would no longer be with him
- Sin does alienate
- But to feel that God is going to abandon you is a wrong assumption
- He wants a relationship with us even in sin

E. **Blame-Shifting Instead Of Taking Personal Responsibility:** "You have Driven Me Away"

- Cain is judged (10-12)
- Cain's hardened heart complains to the Lord instead of complying to the Lord (13)
- Cain didn't have any remorse nor repentance – he only focused on himself
- He didn't feel sorry for Abel, he felt sorry for himself
- In our personal struggle with sin, we must take responsibility for our actions against God and others
- In our collective struggle, a national repentance is in order – it happened with Nehemiah and Ezra's time, it will happen when Israel is ready to receive Christ as Messiah
- E.g. Our society isn't taking personal responsibility – we are casting blame

- We focus on perception and spin, rather than dealing with truths of the condition of the human heart
- We've joined the political game where we don't see the politicians or candidates for who they are, but what we perceive them to be or a mere alternative to what we don't want them to be
- Like Cain, we are taking matters into our own hands in how to express our frustration
- We live in a day like the days in the book of Judges where everyone did what was right in their own eyes. God's justice didn't matter. The

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- God demonstrates His mercy
- Cain went away from the presence of God
- But God protects Him – that's God's grace – 7x judgment on whoever attacked Cain
- "Nod" in Heb. means "wandering" or "exile"
- Fulfilling Cain's statement about himself: *I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth*

Conclusion:

1. The sin of humanity demonstrates how much we need the **forgiveness** and **righteousness** of God through Christ.
2. The turmoil in our world demonstrates how much we need the **peace** of Christ.
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