

Sermon Outline

The Battle Begins: In Adam or In Christ?

Genesis 4:1-16

Introduction

- What battle is that?
- Ephesians 6:12, *“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.”*
- Jude 11, *“Woe to them! For they walked in the way of Cain.”*
- 1 John 3:12, *“We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And for why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother’s righteous.”*

1. The characteristics of unbelievers.

- a. Unbelievers appear, very often, to have hopeful beginnings (vs 1-2).
 - Cain means: to obtain as “gotten” (in ESV, KJV, NASB), or “gain” (in New Jewish Publication Society), or “brought forth” (in NIV).
 - Eve is saying that the LORD has given her Cain as a gift to the fulfilment of the promise.
 - Abel means “breath” or “vanity.” Abel’s life was just a mere breath according to Eve.
 - Unbeliever seems to “overcome” the righteous (v 8).
 - Proverbs 16:25, *“There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.”*
- b. Unbeliever is characterized by an unbelieving heart to God’s Word (v 7).
 - Lev 2:1, *“When anyone brings a grain offering as an offering to the LORD, his offering shall be of fine flour. He shall pour oil on it and put frankincense on it.”*
 - Hebrews 11:4, *“By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain.”*

- The Lord expected Cain to know how to do it right (“*If you do well, will you not be accepted?*”).
- Deut 12:31,32, “*You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way, ...Everything that I command you, you shall be careful to do. You shall not add to it or take from it.*”

c. Unbeliever exhibits an appearance of righteousness and spirituality (vs 3-5).

- Cain too was a worshipper and religious.
- A person’s good works may exhibit an appearance of righteousness and spirituality to the person, but true righteousness and the acceptance of a person by God is by faith.

d. Unbeliever resents godliness (vs 6-7).

- Cain was angry with Abel for the way he worshipped God and ultimately he was angry with God.

e. Unbeliever has an unrepentant heart (vs 6-7).

- 1 Pet 5:8,9, “*Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith, ...*”
- No excuse for Cain not to do right. He has to repent.
- God warns Cain that sin is like a lion, ready to kill, lying just outside the door.
- Cain has to come to God in God’s way: in repentance.
- We know which way Cain chose: He refused to repent.

f. Unbeliever has an ungodly or sinful heart (vs 8-9).

- The lost sinner is a slave to sin and Satan.
- Cain’s condition of the heart determined the course of his life.
- He refused to admit his sin and tried to hide his sin by lying to cover it.
- He gets deeper and deeper into sin because his heart is sinful and he is a slave to sin.

2. The consequences.

- a. He committed sin and was indicted by God and placed under a curse (vs 10-11).
- God sees and knows everything.
 - Psalm 51:4, “*Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment.*”
 - This is the first occasion in Scripture where a human is cursed.
- b. The sin is not only against God, but also against creation (v 12).
- Cain will never be able to survive as a farmer. His life has become meaningless.
- c. Sin brings guilt and fear of the punishment (vs 13-14).
- Sin brought guilt to Cain in front of the Holy God (v 14).
 - Cain protested that his penalty is too harsh.
 - He expressed no inkling of remorse, only self-pity, and resentment.
 - God’s abundant grace: Cain was given the free gift to return to God.
 - The curse is not a sentence of damnation.
 - But Cain, the reprobate, fails to appreciate God’s grace.
- d. Cain cannot stand the presence of the Lord (v 16).
- Cain settled defiantly outside the presence of God.
 - He loves the world.

Conclusion

- The faithful and gracious God has given you opportunity to repent and come back to Him: “*Come to me, all who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*”
- There is only one way to be **in Christ**: “*I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*”
- Come to Jesus that you may have life.