

Sinner's Tragedy (Part 1)

Genesis 4:1-16

January 1, 2017

Every year, at New Year's Day, we start out with new hope for the year. I want to start the New Year by looking at the Bible's warning and God's marvelous grace. First, the warning

Genesis 4:1-5 *Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, and said, "I have acquired a man from the Lord." 2 Then she bore again, this time his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. 3 And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the Lord. 4 Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the Lord respected Abel and his offering, 5 but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.*

I. The Warning (1-5)

1 *Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, and said, "I have acquired a man from the Lord."*

- Knew
 - Adam knew his wife
 - Knew = intimate relationship
 - Knew = sexual relationship
- Birth to Cain
 - Cain—first person to be born
 - Adam made from dust, Eve from Adam
 - Cain means craftsman
 - Hopeful birth
 - Eve knew that the Lord provided her with a child
 - Adam and Eve thought Cain would be their deliverer
 - Based on God's promises

Genesis 3:15 *And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; He will crush your head, and you will strike His heel.*

- The first family was full of hope

2 *Then she bore again, this time his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.*

- Abel
 - Means vapor (breath)
 - Brief life
- Two different jobs
 - Abel = shepherd
 - Cain = farmer
 - Focus is not that one job is better than the other (or more worthy than the other)
 - Many godly men have been farmers
 - Boaz (**Ruth 2:3**)
 - Both are necessary jobs for survival

3-4a And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the Lord. **4a** Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat.

- Process of time
 - Some time has passed
 - Holy Spirit does not specify how old these men were
- Worship
 - How did they know that they needed to worship God with offerings?
 - Holy Spirit does not tell us, so two possibilities
 - God told them and/or
 - Adam and Eve told them (based on what God told them)
 - They both bring offerings
 - They both believe in God
 - They are both very religious
 - They both were offering their worship to God
- Worship offering
 - Cain offered the fruit of the ground
 - Abel offered the best firstborn of his flock to God

4b-5 And the Lord respected Abel and his offering, **5** but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.

- God's reaction to their offering
 - Abel – God accepted
 - Cain – God rejected
 - Why?
 - Was it because Cain offered the fruit of the ground?
 - No
 - God accepted grain offering **Leviticus 6**

Leviticus 6:14, 17 These are the regulations for the grain offering: Aaron's sons are to bring it before the LORD, in front of the altar. **17** It must not be baked with yeast; I have given it as their share of the offerings made to me by fire. Like the sin offering and the guilt offering, it is most holy.

- What is the issue?
 - The heart

1 Samuel 16:7 But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

- Two types of worshippers
 - True and false worshippers
 - True worshippers

John 4:23-24 Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. **24** God is spirit, and His worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.

- They are the people whose faith is real
- They believe God and believe His promises and provisions
- False worshipper
 - All their actions are external
 - They have no faith
 - They go through the motions of worshipping God but not obey Him

1 Samuel 15:20-22 *"But I did obey the LORD," Saul said. "I went on the mission the LORD assigned me. I completely destroyed the Amalekites and brought back Agag their king. 21 The soldiers took sheep and cattle from the plunder, the best of what was devoted to God, in order to sacrifice them to the LORD your God at Gilgal." 22 But Samuel replied: "Does the LORD delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of the LORD? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams."*

Hosea 6:6 *For I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgment of God rather than burnt offerings.*

Matthew 15:7-9 *You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you: "These people honor Me with their lips, but their hearts are far from Me. 9 They worship Me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men."*

- Differences in attitude in worship
 - Abel brought the best of his flock

1 John 3:12 *Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own actions were evil and his brother's were righteous.*

- Was Abel righteous because of his offering?
- No, it was because of his faith

Hebrews 11:4 *By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By faith he was commended as a righteous man, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith he still speaks, even though he is dead.*

- Cain brought fruits of the field—no description
- Cain's true self
 - Cain became angry (he was red in the face)
 - Why?
 - Cain was evil

1 John 3:12 *Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own actions were evil and his brother's were righteous.*

- He did not honor God at all
- Instead of being humbled by Him
- He was consumed by rage that he was rejected
- It was all about himself
 - Interesting—there are many angry people out there raging against Christians

- They are mainly mad at God

John 15:18 *If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated Me first.*

Revelation 16:8-9 *The fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and the sun was given power to scorch people with fire. 9 They were seared by the intense heat and they cursed the name of God, who had control over these plagues, but they refused to repent and glorify Him.*

Coram Deo

God was gracious to Cain by confronting Cain in his sins. He told Cain exactly what he needed to do and how to restore that relationship back with Him. Even as we enter 2017, God still speaks and still extends His hand to those who will listen.