

Bitterness will break you.

Cain & Abel

- Cain and “Cain’s brother” – Genesis 4:1-2 *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.*
- Cain and Abel both bring offerings to God – Genesis 4:3-5 *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.*
 - Abel’s offering was accepted, but Cain’s was rejected.

Q: What made the difference?

A: Faith – Hebrews 11:4, 6 *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...⁶ And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.*

- Abel trusted his first and best to God. Cain tipped God with leftovers.

- God warns Cain – Genesis 4:6-7 *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 contrary to you, but you must rule over it.”*
- Instead of killing sin, Cain falls prey to bitterness, and kills his very own brother – Genesis 4:8-14 *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.”*

Application

- Remember that we all have something crouching at the door of our hearts, but you’re able to defeat it.
- Dealing with bitterness:
 - Deal with bitterness quickly. Don’t let it fester.
 - How to combat the lies of bitterness:
 - Lie #1 “Your happiness is found in their destruction.”
 - When has this ever worked?

- Truth: Psalm 73:26 *My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.*
 - Lie #2 “If you can tear them down, they’ll no longer be a threat...For you to win, they have to lose.”
 - By whose rules? Satan’s or God’s?
 - Truth: 1 Thessalonians 5:11 *Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.* Romans 12:15 *Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.*
 - Lie #3 “God got it wrong. You deserve what they have more than them.”
 - Do I have absolute knowledge? Am I seeing the situation clearly? Could my hurt or sin be obstructing my vision?
 - Truth: Do I have absolute knowledge? Could God be building something that I don’t see?
- Keep moving forward when you encounter “Cains” – 1 John 3:12-13 *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.*