

The Man That Cain Was Never Able

Gen 4:1-16

So sometime during last week, I sat down and flipped through the whole bible and wrote out our series for the year. And I am honestly super excited to be teaching through it.

If you were not here last week, I told everyone that our ministry is offering 2 plans this year, first, the JV plan: Which means you are dedicated in coming to church every Sunday with your physical bible, and following us in your notes, so that you can hear God's complete story unfolding each week, like the episodes of the Walking Dead, release each Sunday night, at 5 on AMC. We are on season 10.

The second plan is called the Varsity Plan: Which means you are following us in your daily bible reading plan, and keeping up with your small groups discussion questions. This is so beneficial since I can't physically teach through every story in the bible in a year. So, I would encourage you to take that offer seriously.

Enough with housekeeping, today we will be looking at the direct result of the fall of man. The first offspring of the curse. **Recap on what you missed on last week's episodes of The Bible**: Adam and Eve have been banished to the east of Eden, from the presence of God. Now Adam must labor and work the ground, as Eve is in labor and gave birth to 2 sons. Cain and Abel. Now, I can't wait to ask Adam in heaven his thoughts on "birth", because he probably was not prepared for what he witnessed that day. Lucky, we know that Adam and Eve was not alone, Because in Gen.4:1 Eve said, "**With the help of the Lord I have brought forth a man.**" Even though God banished them from the garden, he was still with them.

Could you imagine Eve holding her first son, Cain, and thinking this must be the one God promised, the offspring that will crush the head of the serpent. Cain's name means "acquired" or "possession". Adam must have thought, "*This is it! This is our way back to Eden! We have acquired the savior.*" Cain must have been the favored one, the spoiled one, the one that possessed everything he wanted. Abel, means "breath" or "spirit". We are not told a lot about them, but what we are told is very important. They are brothers, they both offer to God an offering, but **God accepted Abel's, but not Cain's**. Here is the twist in the story, while they thought they were holding the deliverer, they were actually raising a murderer.

In this lesson, I want to show you the contrast between these two siblings.

Between the **Religion of Cain and the Faith of Abel**.

- Cain came with an inadequate offering; Abel came with an acceptable sacrifice.
- Cain responded in humanity; Abel in spirituality
- Cain approaches in pride; Abel approaches in humility
- Cain offers less than what's required; Abel offers the best of the best
- Cain comes in his own strength; Abel comes knowing he needs the strength of a savior.

The title for our story today is "**The man that Cain was never Able**" because the religion of Cain is the religion of self-righteousness, it's the prideful spirit that says, "*I don't need to listen to you, I'm in control of my own life, and I can do whatever I want.*" If your life is characterized by self-righteousness, thinking, "*I got myself here, I can be my own God, I am self-made.*" Then **you possess the Character of Cain**, and the reality is, you are only half-made. Not the man God is creating you to be. **The man that you were never able.**

I have 6 titles of Cain for you today, that maps out his life choices.

6 characters that marks a Cain.

1. A Worker (v1-2)

We know that Can and Abel had different occupations.

It says in v2, “... *Now Abel kept flocks, and Cain worked the soil.*”

This defines their jobs, one was a farmer, and the other a shepherd, and they were both hard workers, we know that because they don’t have any friends or coworkers. I mean, if they don’t work, they don’t eat. Am I right?

Both jobs are honorable and necessary. Work is a **good** thing, in fact, work was not the curse of the fall, it was a blessing that **God still allows man to help cultivate his creation**. The curse was pain in laboring, I guess for man and woman, just in different ways.

- I want to make a big point of their **Work**, because I think it ties to their **Worship**.
- His **occupation** is his basis for his **adoration**.
- Your work right now, what you do, matters to God, because it reveals who you are.
- You will reap what you sow, and if you don’t reap good works, you will not bear good fruits from it.

We will see in verse 3-5 the results of their work, and God’s response

In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the Lord. 4 And Abel also brought an offering—fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The Lord looked with favor on Abel and his offering, 5 but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast.

2. A Worshiper (v3-5)

An offering to God was their way of worshiping. it’s to say, “*God, we want to put you first in everything, so we want to give you our first and our best.*”

And it would seem that God had his way of showing approval or disapproval, of receiving or rejecting. I would imagine maybe it was like fire from heaven that consumed the sacrificed, like when Elijah made an offering. We were not told how, because it’s not important.

But the question that everyone should asked is **Why did God accept one, but reject the other?**

A lot of people would say, “*Oh because one is meat, and the other is vegetables.*” No... Kids be like “*See, God don’t even like vegetables.*” That’s not true... eat your greens everyone. And you can’t use this story to convince your vegetarian, and vegan friends to eat meat. Ok?

This is an important question, **why did God not accept Cain’s worship?**

I think, it’s because of **the quality of the offering**:

- Notice in verse 4 there is detail in Abel’s offering.
- *And Abel also brought an offering—fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock*
- **Ex:** If you ever cooked stake before, you would know that the best part is the fatty part, in the food world we call that fat in the meat, marble, and it’s more expensive. It’s the best part.
- Abel not only gave the best part; he gave his firstborn. Which means a perfect lamb without any bruise or scratches.
- Maybe this is in contrast with Cain’s offering, he probably gave the bruise and mushy bananas, and gave what’s left over from the field. He didn’t care.

And why is the Quality so important? Because **The Quality of the offering, reveals the character of the offeror.**

I'm going to jump down to (v7) to show you what God said, "If you do what is right, will you not be accepted?" You see, Cain was mad about the offering, but here, God was addressing the offeror. They are connected, because **God doesn't see worship apart from the worshipper**. So, if you are corrupt, so is your gift.

- That's why Jesus says, "if you have a problem with a brother or sister, in this case, with an **Abel**, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift." (Mat.5:24)
- God cares so much more about you being right with him, than giving to him what you think is right.

You have to see that what you bring to God, says something about YOU, when you give your time, your money, your work ethics, your worship, reveals your faith.

- I'm going to be honest, if you are only giving to God your left-over time, producing low quality work, slacking in your ministry responsibility, and being stingy with your money, if that's how you are worshiping God, **it the fruit of your faithlessness**.

This is the contrast between the **Religion of Cain** and the **Faith of Abel**.

Hebrew 11:4 NLT, is like an explanation of this story, "it was by faith that Abel brought a more acceptable offering to God than Cain did. Abel's offering gave evidence that he was a righteous man, and God showed his approval of his gifts. Although Abel is long dead, he still speaks to us by his example of faith."

In other words, Cain had no evidence of a righteous man. He was just going through the motions, another box to check of his to do list. That's what religion does.

- So what this means is, If you think you can live a Godless life Monday through Saturday, and come here in worship, and God will accept that, you're wrong. That shows the lack of Faith in your life.

So, 2 out of 6 characters of Cain, Worker, Worshiper.

3. A Waverer (v6-7)

Wavering means now he's debating back and forth to listen to God, or the sin that is crouching at his door. God knows Cain is struggling inside, wavering what to do. So he tries to talk Cain out of it, like any good father. (btw again, Adam is nowhere to be found...)

6 Then the Lord said to Cain, "Why are you so pissed? Why art thou so bummed out? 7 If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it."

I love how God always gives us a warning before we are about to sin, have you ever felt that in your life? Like in the garden, God told them exactly what's going to happen, before they sinned.

Cain's anger has already made his decision for him. Before Cain was a murderer with his hands, he was a murderer in his heart. The seed of anger always leads to murder. That's why Jesus says, "you heard it said; you shall not murder, if you do then you will be judge, but I tell you, if you hate your brother in your heart, you will be judge." (Matt 5)

Let me tell you something about the character of Cain;

- Cain hates his sibling, because of their relationship with God
- Cain is jealous of the change he sees in his brother
- Because Cain doesn't have faith, Cain can't stand his brother.
- Cain is pissed, because he can never be the man his brother was able.

I'm going to tell you, don't be surprised when your Cain, your own sister and brother in Christ, will try to kill your faith, take your joy, and hurt your feelings, because "sin is crouching at their door; it desires to have them." They are wavering. Struggling, our job to pray for them.

In the garden sin is described as a slippery serpent, now in the wilderness sin is personified as a crouching lion ready to devour it's pray.

4. A Wrongdoer (v8-9)

This leads us to the next point; Cain was a Wrongdoer.

8 *Now Cain said to his brother Abel, "Let's go out to the field." While they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him.*" BTW, if you know your sibling is mad at you, and out of the blue, they act all nice, and asked if you want to hang out, turn it down!

Not every good message, has a good motive. "*Let's go out to the field... And pick flowers... braid our beards...*" (kill)

We don't know how Cain attack his brother or how he killed him, maybe it was a club, or a rock, maybe Cain used Abel's sacrificial dagger and bleed him out like a lamb. "*If God wants a sacrifice here it is!*" This is **vengeance!**

So instead of Cain **ruling** over his sin, sin **consumed** him. In the ESV it says, "*Cain rose up against his brother and killed him.*" Again, humanity was given 2 choices, to rule over sin, or to rise up against each other.

And that's what happens when we allow sin to take root in our hearts, the devil doesn't want us to **stand together and fight sin**, he wants us to **stand apart and fight each other**, that's why there is division within our body. **If you don't become the victor of your sin, you will become its victim.** If you don't exterminate sin, sin will exterminate you.

Thinking back, a handful of people that have left our ministry and never join our church, is because of the sins of some of us. Me included. And the reality is, we might have been their only chance of hearing the gospel, and if they die today, they will be separated from God, eternity in damnation for their sins, but their blood will be on our hands. Because **our religiousness has killed their faith in God.**

Again... God shows up in the story... Not to **condemn** his children, but to **confront**.

9 *Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?" "I don't know," he replied. "Am I my brother's keeper?"*

I love it when God ask question... because it's not for his understanding, but for our response. In this question, he was asking about Able, but he was looking for Cain. This echoes back in the garden when God called out, "*Adam where are you?*" Again, God is calling us out of hiding from hatred and sin.

Cain's reply was one of the rudest responses to God, I think in the bible. But that's honestly how we feel sometime? We hate God. I think Cain killed his brother, because he was more mad at God than Able.

"Am I my brother's keeper?" In other words, "*God, I thought YOU were supposed to watch over him, YOU where his keeper, YOU liked him more than me anyways. God, this is YOUR fault.*"

Isn't that what Adam said to God? "*Because the woman YOU put here with me...*"

How many times have you blamed God for consequences that you created? That's our sinful nature, we are naturally **wrongdoers**.

God already gave Cain a warning now this is his wrath.

5. A Wanderer (v10-12)

10 The Lord said, "What have you done? Listen! Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground. 11 Now you are under a curse and driven from the ground, which opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. 12 When you work the ground, it will no longer yield its crops for you. You will be a restless wanderer on the earth."

This might not seem like a big deal, but you have to realize that Cain was a farmer, his whole life was about working the ground. Sometimes, God will not allow an area of our lives to bear fruit, because of our sin. And because of that, you are mad at God.

Again, humanity is lost in the wilderness, farther from Eden.

This is also a pattern we see when Moses murders an Egyptian, he became a **wanderer**. And at Mount Sinai, when Israel sinned against God, they also **wandered** for 40 years in the wilderness.

And maybe you feel like you are wandering in the wilderness. You don't know your purpose, or direction, how you are feeling, how you feel about yourself. You are emotionally confused and lost. You are wandering.

But let me remind you that **just because you're in the wilderness don't mean you are completely lost**. Even when Israel felt like God has abandon them, they were not forsaken.

This week, my friend, who is struggling with dating, sent me a message, "*Sometimes God puts you in places alone, because he needs you to realize all you need is HIM.*"

God is able to work in the wilderness. So if you felt like you wandered in here today, there is hope for you, because here, is where you can be found.

This leads us to the end of the story, our last point.

6. A Whosoever 13-16 (rom.10:13; Gal 6:17)

13 Cain said to the Lord, "My punishment is more than I can bear. 14 Today you are driving me from the land, and I will be hidden from your presence; I will be a restless wanderer on the earth, and whosoever finds me will kill me."

15 But the Lord said to him, "Not so.; anyone who kills Cain will suffer vengeance seven times over." 16 Then the Lord put a mark on Cain so that no one who found him would kill him. 17 So Cain went out from the Lord's presence and lived in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

Cain was a liar, a deceiver, a murderer, but he fell on his knees before the Lord, and recognized the punishment of his sins. He confesses, "This is more than I can bear." Cain knew that because he lived by the sword, now he **deserves** to die by the sword.

But instead (v15), **God showed him Mercy**, why, (Rom. 10:13) "For whosoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Doesn't matter who you are or what you have done, if you repent of your sins, and put your faith in God, you will be spared. **whosoever calls, shall be received! Whosoever calls, shall receive the mark of mercy.**

This story of Cain and Abel was written by Moses, while Israel was wondering in the wilderness awaiting their Promised Land that was occupied by their enemies the Canaanites.

Now, I'm not saying that they correlate genetically, but I am saying they correlate symbolically. In the book of Joshua chapter 2, Joshua sends 2 spies into Jericho, one of the big cities of Canaan, and they were helped by a Canaanites woman, Rahab the prostitute, who hid them and help them escape the city. She knew that God was going to judge her city, so she begged them to spare her and her family from death. And they told her to hang a red cord on her door, as a mark, that God would spare her in his coming judgment on her people. **God gives to these who repent a Mark of mercy.** Doesn't matter if you are a prostitute or a murderer.

God was able to redeem rehab the Canaanites woman and she was brought into the family line of Jesus in Matt 1. *"Therefore, whosoever believes in me shall not perish but have eternal life."*

Again, like in the garden, **God initiated the plan of salvation to Cain** and **that was through Christ**.

- Because God is a just God; he must punish sin. So, when God place the **mark of mercy** on Cain someone else must be murdered.
- Because Cain spilled Abel's blood, blood is demanded, that's **justice**. Someone else must **bear the punishment that Cain was never able**.

- And that someone was Christ, its recorded in Isaiah 53, *"5 But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds/marks we are healed."*

Like Cain we have been born with the heart of murder, and it was by the sins of our hands and hearts that we killed Jesus, and **his blood cries out louder than the blood of Abel**.

Heb. 12:24, "to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel." While Abel's blood cries out in AGONY AND VENGEANCE, Jesus' blood cries out FORGIVE THEM!

If your life has been characterized by Cain, there is hope, because in Christ you could be **Marked with Marcy**. So that we can say with confidence, *Galatians 6:17, "From now on, let no one cause me trouble, for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus."*

So that we can truly worship God in singing that truth!

There is a fountain filled with blood
drawn from Emmanuel's veins;
and sinners plunged beneath that flood
lose all their guilty stains.