

Seeing Only Jesus

3) The Way of Cain and the Faith of Abel

'Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain'

(Jude 11)

'By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks'

(Heb.11:4)

- ✓ **The immediate consequence of partaking of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was that mankind would substitute human reason for divine revelation**
- ✓ **This was especially so regarding salvation**
- ✓ **After the Fall God replaced the fig leaves of Adam and Eve with skins of slain animals, followed by the promise of the Saviour, *'I will put enmity between you and the woman. And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel'* (Gen.3:15)**
- ✓ **This sets the scene for Genesis 4**

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

(Gen.4:1-5)

- ✓ **This passage does not focus on the two men, but on the way they sought to approach God**
- ✓ **The Bible speaks of 'the way of Cain', but not 'the way of Abel'. Because Abel did not approach God in his own way, but in God's way, i.e through the shedding of blood**
- ✓ ***'By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks' (Heb.11:4)***
- ✓ **So the Bible speaks of the faith of Abel by which he offered a more excellent sacrifice, to which God gave witness**

- ✓ **Cain displayed pride and rebellion by inventing his own way of approach to God, offering the fruits of his labour**
- ✓ **This looked better than Abel's sacrifice. But it was fruit from the wrong tree**
- ✓ **This is 'the way of Cain' - a bloodless religion. It is the characteristic of all religion**
- ✓ **There was no approval from God. Cain rejected the grace of God, and God rejected Cain. Had Cain first offered a burnt offering to the LORD, his offering of the fruit of the ground would have been accepted. His mistake was to attempt to offer something to God without first being under the blood**

- ✓ **The true gospel has a 100% focus on the blood of Jesus. It proclaims nothing except Jesus Christ and Him crucified**
- ✓ **The gospel today has become a doorway into the law. It brings us to the law with a Christian flavour. Show God your faith by loving Him more... loving others... making Jesus Lord... dying to self... proving you are saved by your sacrifice, your fruit and by renouncing sin. This is the way of Cain**
- ✓ **Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ has been replaced by a fruit-checking exercise, all made to seem do-able**

- ✓ **But sin is not just the immorality but morality of the old Adam, not just lawlessness but lawfulness, which in fact is worse**
- ✓ **The gospel kills the old Adam, the doer, and brings us to Christ to rest in Him and Him alone, *'I through the law died to the law that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me'* (Gal.2:19-20)**
- ✓ **When asked if grace will cause us to continue in sin, Paul doesn't takes us to the law but reminds us of our death**

'What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin...'

'...Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace'

(Rom.6:1-14)

- ✓ **We will never experience the power of the resurrection in our lives, until we believe in the finality of the cross**
- ✓ **It is this gospel to which the Spirit bears witness**
- ✓ **And this gospel bears fruit which remains because it is fruit produced by the Vine, not the branch**
- ✓ **When our gaze is fixed on ourselves the result is dead works. But when it is fixed on Him it results in the fruit of the Spirit**

'And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell. So the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it"'

(Gen.4:5-7)

God appealed to him to make the transition we have all had to make...

...from self-righteousness to His righteousness

- ✓ **Here is the fountainhead of the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman. By these two seeds the human race is divided**
- ✓ **Abel is the first in a long line of those who have faith in the Seed of the woman. Cain is the first in a long line of the serpent's seed**
- ✓ **Both seeds empty themselves into heaven and hell respectively**
- ✓ **Jesus characterized these two seeds in the parable of the publican and Pharisee. Cain is the father of the Pharisee, who boasted in his self-righteous deeds. Abel, is like the publican, not trusting in his works, but in the grace of God**

- ✓ *'Now Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him' (Gen.4:8)*
- ✓ **Cain was angry with God, and because he could not attack God directly he attacked the one who was made righteous by grace**
- ✓ *'This is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another, not as Cain who was of one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous' (1 Jn.3:12)*

- ✓ ***'Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you' (Matt.5:11-12). Abel was a prophet***
- ✓ ***'Therefore the wisdom of God also said, 'I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they will kill and persecute,' that the blood of all the prophets which was shed from the foundation of the world may be required of this generation, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah who perished between the altar and the temple. Yes, I say to you, it shall be required of this generation' (Lk.11:49-51)***

- ✓ **The enmity between the serpent and the woman's seed begins here, and continues until this day. Every Abel has his Cain**
- ✓ **The main persecution of Christians comes from the religious world. Who persecuted the prophets? Isaiah, Jeremiah, Jesus, Peter, Paul?**
- ✓ **When religion is confronted by God's way of righteousness, it is offended**
- ✓ **Jesus was, and still is, the enemy of religion. The Pharisees could see that if He continued, they would be redundant. So they killed Him. But by His death, Satan's head was crushed**

'Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" He said, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?" And He said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood cries out to Me from the ground. So now you are cursed from the earth, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. When you till the ground, it shall no longer yield its strength to you. A fugitive and a vagabond you shall be on the earth." And Cain said to the Lord, "My punishment is greater than I can bear! Surely You have driven me out this day from the face of the ground; I shall be hidden from Your face; I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth, and it will happen that anyone who finds me will kill me." And the Lord said to him, "Therefore, whoever kills Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold." And the Lord set a mark on Cain, lest anyone finding him should kill him. Then Cain went out from the presence of the Lord and dwelt in the land of Nod on the east of Eden.'

(Gen.4:9-17)

✓ **God came to Cain to elicit a confession. When Cain avoided this, God could not deal with him in mercy, but in judgment**

✓ **Cain went out from the presence of the LORD**

✓ **What is the worse sin ever committed? The crucifixion? No, there is one thing worse than crucifying Christ and that is to crucify Him again**

✓ **The first mention of sin alludes to this, *'If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it'* (Gen.4:7)**

This was the danger the Jews in the book of Hebrews faced

'It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame'

(Heb.6:4-6)

'For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?

(Heb.10:26-29)

✓ *'And Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch. And he built a city, and called the name of the city after the name of his son—Enoch' (Gen.4:17)*

✓ **Cain built a city and named it after his seed. He is still seeking glory in his works**

✓ **God set a mark on Cain so that others would not kill him. God in His mercy is patient with Cain and gives him time to repent**

✓ **This He does with all who choose to be His enemies**