

(Genesis #6) This Side of Eden

by J. Glyn Owen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of having a right relationship with God in order to offer a sacrifice that is acceptable to Him.

Duration: 50:02

Scripture: Genesis 3:15, Genesis 4:1-24, Matthew 6:33, John 19:16-18, Romans 3:23

Topics: "Garden Of Eden"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on the story of Cain and Abel from Genesis 4. The main theme is the differences in worship between the two brothers, despite being children of the same parents and supposedly devoted to the same God. The speaker emphasizes that seeing two people worship together does not necessarily mean they are of the same spirit. The sermon also highlights the practical relevance of sin spilling over into the second generation and the power of sin to condemn. The speaker concludes by emphasizing the need to proclaim the power of Christ to change and serve to the utmost.

Transcript

Well, it's good to see you all again this evening. Nice and warm for you, isn't it? We don't need much heating in the church today. Warm welcome to you, therefore, as we turn again to our evening studies in the Book of Genesis.

Now, unless there should be someone here this evening who has not been with us over previous Sunday evenings, let me say what will become obvious as we proceed, but which needs to be said, I think, at this stage, that what we are attempting to do in this short series, in the early chapters of Genesis, is this. We're attempting to let Genesis speak for itself. I have been reiterating over and over again that we're not altogether ignorant of the kind of onslaught that is made upon this first book of the Bible, by so-called scientists of one kind or another.

There's a whole battery, a whole battalion of critics, who, from one point of view or another, vie with one another for the destruction of this creature, of this phenomenon, this first book of Holy Writ. Now, we're not totally ignorant of that. But what we are trying to do is this.

We are trying to let the book speak for itself. And therefore, we are not really addressing ourselves to these problems and these criticisms that are levelled, but we are asking primarily, what is the book saying? What is its message? What does it say to us? And I trust that as we do so prayerfully, we shall

find that it is not without a message. It has something to teach us intellectually.

It has something to say to us morally and spiritually. Indeed, it offers a key to an understanding of the kind of thing that is going around in the world in which we live tonight. I was a little puzzled when it came to the title for tonight's meditation.

We actually put in the press and in the calendar, This Side of Eden. But that's a very general title. I didn't like to advertise the one I wanted to.

Because the real title to our message tonight would be this, Murder After Worship. You'll see the reason why I didn't want to put it in the press. Murder, rank, satanic, fiendish, brackish murder of the most fiendish order of coming in the wake of worship.

Genesis 4 makes painful reading. Gone now is the original innocence and bliss that marked man's early life. Gone is that glorious sensitivity to the voice of God bringing with it pleasure.

Each time the voice of God breaks the silence now, it brings pain, not pleasure. The only star in the horizon at the moment is the one that we were dwelling upon last Sunday evening. Everything else is pitch black.

And that pitch blackness is only relieved by that one solitary star of Genesis 3.15. Where God breaks into the abysmal tragedy and says, All right, but I'm still sovereign over the whole situation. And I want you to know that there is coming a day when I shall, through the seed of the woman that was deceived, bruise the very head of the serpent, even though in process of so doing, his own heel shall be bruised. But the sky is dismally dark when we turn over into chapter 4 here.

In fact, in the ongoing relations of fallen man with his maker and his brother, the pattern of events becomes uglier and uglier. And I suppose this is part of the strategy of the divine writer, which is ultimately the Holy Spirit. The lesson that must now be imprinted upon the consciousness of the race is this.

Things have gone so wrong that only God can put things right. And if I understand the meaning of the Old Testament, it took a few thousands of years for God to rub home that lesson. But sin is such a destructive phenomenon that it not only ruins an individual and a family, but a race.

And though God may bring in a flood and a deluge that disperses the whole race and starts again, sin comes into the new world. There is no water that can keep out sin. And so the lesson is brought home to us until, in the fullness of the time, the Savior comes.

And we see that sin will crucify the incarnate Lord. But this is the lesson. And Genesis 4 begins to teach that lesson.

Only begins, but it does begin. Now, there are some four main scenes here. We shall look at them, and we must be brief with each.

But the first of them is this. It tells us that there are differences of worship. Though children of the same parents and ostensibly devoted to the same God, Cain and Abel represent two irreconcilable approaches to God.

The fact that you see two people worshipping together does not mean to say that they are necessarily of the same spirit. This is very challenging, isn't it? See two people on their knees. See two people closing

their eyes in prayer.

See two people bending the neck before God, going through all the formalities of sacrifice. But the one may belong to one camp and the other to the other, and they will never meet beyond this life. Now, look, first of all, at their acts of ostensible worship.

I think it is very significant that at this point in history, the two of them were worshippers. You see, this proves one thing. Though I can't dwell upon it, it is one of the fundamental and the basic issues of Scripture that originally man was so intimately related to God that he can't throw the Almighty on one side just with one slap.

Even though Adam and Eve have sinned and they've come under the judgment of God and the curse of God is upon the soil and upon the serpent and the condemnation of God upon Adam and upon Eve, notice that children cannot shrug off the Almighty. That will come with the next generation or the generation after that. Because they were nurtured for however long, but they were nurtured, as it were, in the arms of their Maker.

Their parents knew God. And because their parents knew God, the two of them tried to worship. Cain and Abel, the first two children of Adam and Eve, were worshippers.

Their acts of ostensible devotion were, however, discernibly different. Three times over, will you notice, three times over, the narrative refers to the acts of worship and devotion carried out by these two as an offering. Both brought offerings to the Lord.

Now, the Hebrew word that is used here simply means a gift or an offering of any kind. It can mean a sacrifice. It doesn't necessarily mean that.

It can mean a serial offering. And later on, in the Old Testament, you will find that this one word is used for both. I might just give you two references and you can follow them through the whole of the Old Testament.

It means both. You have the sacrifice, the bloody sacrifice, referred to under this title in 1 Samuel 2 and verse 17. In the book of Leviticus, chapter 2 and verse 1, the same word refers to a serial offering, a thank-offering.

Cain then goes to his own particular field, to his own area. He's a tiller of the soil, and he brings an offering of the fruit to the ground. That is, in chapter 4, verse 3, the end of it.

Abel, on the other hand, he goes to the flock. He was a shepherd. And he brings of the firstlings of the flock and of the fat portions of what he's going to offer.

That means, of course, that he's going to offer a sacrifice. Each man brought what was produced by him in his own particular sphere. Cain was a tiller of the soil, and Abel was a shepherd.

But their ostensible acts of devotion, which were discernibly different, were divinely discovered to be wholly incompatible with the character of God, or with one another in the first place, and one of them with the character and the nature of God. Look at the second part of verse 4 and the first part of verse 5. And the Lord had regard for Abel and his offering, but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. Now, I don't know how you would put that in modern parlance.

I suppose we would put it something like this. God couldn't care less for what Cain offered, but what Abel offered pleased him very much. God had nothing to do with what Abel brought, but God had everything to do with what Abel offered him.

Cain, no. Abel, yes. Now, you would be tempted, I'm quite sure, as I am tempted when I read this word, to ask the question, uh, how did they know that God accepted the one and did not accept the other? And I have to tell you, I just don't know.

Now, I'm not the only one that doesn't know, because I've read as much as I could on it and I can't find anyone that can answer that question for you. But it is important, very important, to notice these two fellows knew that Abel's sacrifice was acceptable to God. Cain's was not.

They knew that. There was no question about it. And because of that, as we shall see in a moment, Cain became terribly angry, while Abel had a sort of peace and calm composure in the knowledge that what he had brought was acceptable in the sight of God and God had received it.

Differences in worship. My friends, let us not miss the challenge of it. It is possible in the prayers that we have offered tonight, in the hymns that we have sung, as well as in our attitude of soul to the end of this particular service and beyond it, it is possible that two people sitting together come into this very category of representing a worship that is unacceptable on the one hand and a worship that God receives on the other.

The mere fact of our going through the routine of external worship does not guarantee the acceptance of the worship and the worshipper. Differences of worship. The next thing I want you to notice is the divine warning arising out of Cain's violent reaction to God's rejection of his person and his sacrifice.

God saw something that occasioned his direct intervention in warning. Is it necessary for me to pause to say this? You know, God's warnings are invariably tokens of his mercy. If God didn't love us, there would be no need to warn us.

Now, I know we often take it the other way around. We say, oh, that's a warning, that's God thundering, and therefore we dislike that. My dear friend, I'd like you to notice tonight the logic of it.

God only warns the object of his love. And he warns this boy here because he loves him, he's his creator. Even though Cain has all the hatred and bitterness of his soul burning within him at this moment in anger, God still loves him and comes to warn him.

Now, let's look first of all at the anger that occasioned this warning. Look at verse six. Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.

The Lord said to Cain, why are you angry, and why is your countenance fallen? Now, behind that explosive anger of Cain's, there is a fire of hot resentment and of jealousy and of envy. It seemed bad enough that his own offering was rejected, but it made it doubly harsh when Abel's was received, evidently received by God. You know, the Hebrew puts it like this.

Hebrew is a very pictorial language, as some of you know. And it burned for Cain. There was a burning for Cain.

It's a very graphic picture, and it's beyond my power to try and bring it up, but the whole thing is this. His anger raged within him. It was like a burning, searing, sizzling fire in his soul, so much so that he couldn't look anyone in the face.

He had enough sense to look down to the ground rather than let anybody see the skull of bitterness on his countenance. Have you ever known anger like that, when you were afraid that somebody would see you? Cain's quarrel, of course, is with God, with God in the first place, because God has rejected his offering. His offerings were his sacrifice.

And the same God, how could He? The same God has received the offering of His brother. Are things all wrong? Weren't they brothers? Weren't they children of the same parents? Did both of them not bring of the very best they could, each from his own sphere? The whole thing is unjust, he thinks. It was a smack in the face to Cain's self-image, and it made him livid with anger.

Have you ever been angry with God? The anger that occasioned it. Now, the announcement that solemnized this warning. God comes to speak to him, and there's a reasonableness about all this, as there always is in the divine conversation with man.

Says God to this man, Cain, If you do well, He says, will you not be accepted? If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not well, sin is couching at the door. Its desire is for you, but you must master it. Now, that's a text in itself, and we can only glass over it.

This announcement adds solemnity to Cain's anger, and was a tremendous challenge to his pride. God would have Cain realize that acceptance or rejection by himself is determined according to principle, not caprice. There's reason for this.

Look, Cain man, if you do well, will you not be accepted? Of course you will. And if you do well, let me warn you, there's some tragedy lurking on the very doorstep of your house. Most graphic picture of this.

I want to come back to it someday. If you don't do well, He says, then sin is couching, or better still, crouching like a lion at the door. It seems as if this whole community of beasts described in this one act, crouching outside the door of his house, and their sin is crouching.

This sin, or that sin, a whole multitude of them, pictured like beasts, waiting to catch their prey. They're all waiting for you, says God to this man. If you don't do well, they're waiting for you to get a going with your sin, and they'll pounce on you.

But you must master them, or master it. I accept or reject someone, says God, to Cain on the basis of principle, and the principle is described here in well-doing. Now, we shall come to that in a moment.

An offering is not acceptable with God when the offerer is not given to well-doing. Now, that is doubly stressed. Can I read again? And the Lord had regard, will you notice, for Abel and his sacrifice.

But for Cain and his sacrifice, He had no regard. Now, will you notice what's repeated there? It isn't simply the offering or the sacrifice that was displeasing to God. The man and his sacrifice are in the same category.

Cain and his offering or sacrifice, rejected. Abel and his offering or sacrifice, accepted. Now, will you notice what's happening? A man and his sacrifice stand or fall together.

In other words, my friend, let me put it to you and put it to myself tonight. The quality of your offering depends upon what you are, and mine upon what I am. And if God cannot accept my person, then my offering is in vain.

Person and offering are so bound up, what I give and what I do on the one hand, and what I am on the other. They're so intricately bound together that either both are received or both are rejected. Now, this is a tremendous challenge still, you know.

There are people who still believe that they can do a few kindnesses for the Almighty, when they themselves are still lost and grovelling and rebelling in sin. No, no, that's not possible. A man and his offering, either falling or standing, either received or rejected.

That's the message. That's the key to an understanding of this passage. And as far as Cain was concerned, he was rejected.

His offering was rejected because he was rejected. You know, the writer of the book of Proverbs put it all so succinctly. The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination.

How much more when he brings it with evil intent, Proverbs 21 and 27. Now, there's an important question that must be raised here, and I raise it here deliberately. Granted that the offerer and the offering are either acceptable or unacceptable together, what is the determining factor in their acceptance? A few moments ago, I quoted the words of Scripture concerning well-doing.

It says God to Cain, If thou doest well, wilt thou not be accepted? And if you don't do well, you won't be. Now, why was Abel and his sacrifice, why were they accepted? Why was Cain and his sacrifice rejected? Now, in answering that question, there are one or two certainties and there are one or two uncertainties. Now, let's get the certainties first.

I suggest to you that there are two things that we know from Scripture. No beyond any reasonable doubt at all, because they're clearly stated in Scripture. The first thing is this.

It is certain from Scripture that Cain's offering was unacceptable because, and I put it in the very blunt terms of Scripture, I'm sorry if there's anybody who will object, because he was a child of the devil. Now, that's not me, that's Scripture. And however wonderful a sacrifice is offered by a child of the devil, God doesn't accept it.

But you say to me, where on earth did you get that from? That's not in Genesis. No, it isn't, it's in the New Testament. Let me read.

I read from 1 John chapter 3, verses 11 and 12. "We should love one another," says the apostle John, the apostle of love. "We should love one another and not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother." Did you get that? He was of the evil one.

He was of the stock, he was of the family, of the evil one of Satan. He was a child of Satan. He was of the seed of Satan, as much as those Jews to whom Jesus said one day, "You are of your father the devil, and you will do your father's desires." John 8 and 44.

Now, that's a certainty. The apostle says so. The reason, one reason at any rate why Cain was rejected was this.

He was a child of the devil offering to God. Still God's creature, of course. But spiritually he was a child of the devil.

The second certainty is this. It is certain that Abel's offering was acceptable, basically, because Abel was a man of faith. God saw the faith of his heart.

And this is what we read in Hebrews chapter 11 and verse 4. You remember that great chapter. Someone's called it the Westminster Abbey of the Bible. Well, whether that is suitable or not, here it is.

Here we have the great, lustrous men and women of faith. And it starts off with these words. By faith, Abel.

By faith, Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he received approval that he was righteous. God bearing witness by accepting his gift. Abel's righteousness then, Abel's well-doing was not just a matter of self-righteousness.

Abel's righteousness was the righteousness which God imputes where there is faith in his Son. Whether it be from the other side of Christ or from this side of the New Testament. Whether it be as in the case of Abel when he's only been given one solitary promise that the seed of the woman will come, will rescue men from the bondage and tyranny of Satan.

Or whether it be from our point of view where we've received all the promises and they've been fulfilled in Christ and we look back and have faith in the same Christ. We are justified by faith, says Paul. So was this dear man, Abel, on the basis of that one promise.

He looked forward to God to fulfill that promise and God counted it to him for righteousness. Oh, our God is good. Now there are the two certainties.

Mark them, my friend, because they may have something to say to you tonight. Are you a child of God? Have you been born again? Or let me put it to you in the words of John. To as many as received him, that is the Lord Jesus.

To them gave he the power or the right to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name. You see, before we receive the Lord Jesus Christ, we don't belong to the family of God. We're his creatures, all right.

And he's very good to his creatures. But it's quite a different thing to be his child. With right of access to the family circle, right to call him father, and the knowledge that his people are our brothers and sisters.

I tell you, if you're not born again tonight, however much you offer, God doesn't receive it. He cannot receive the offering apart from the quality of soul he requires in the offerer. Lord, let me put it to you differently.

Have you faith in Christ and in the promises of God that relate to him? As you offer your prayers tonight, as you listen to God, as you offer him your heart, I hope you're doing that. You know, this is what preaching ought to be. And if it isn't this, then God help us, we better shut shop.

If the congregation is not able to worship as the minister preaches, something's wrong. And I'm taking it for granted that in your hearts you're worshiping the Lord in his glory and in his grace. Is it acceptable? I'll tell you, it is acceptable in every soul, in every heart, where there is faith in Jesus.

For God counts that for righteousness. And because you are accounted righteous, your sacrifice, your worship, your praise, everything else is acceptable. Abel and his offering, Cain and his, the one falls, the other stand.

Now, there are some uncertainties. Can I just mention one? I do so because in some of the commentaries, in quite a number of the commentaries, there's reference to this. And some of you I know will be asking a question, so I might as well answer it now.

It could well be, and I put it like that, it could well be, as many believe, that God communicated with Adam and Eve in the garden, and either directly or through Adam and Eve, with Cain and Abel, telling them that because of sin, no man can approach him henceforth without sacrifice. It could be. Many people believe that.

But what I want to say is that we've no assurance of that because the book doesn't say so. If that is so, then what we have in the case of these two brothers is this. We have Abel obeying the divine directive, coming on the basis of sacrifice, acknowledging that he's a sinner, and he depends upon the grace of God to bring him near.

And Cain rejecting the divine way of salvation. Bringing a very nice offering, mind you, the best that he could, the best that he himself could produce, but without blood. Now, that's a beautiful picture.

I wish it were true, really. There's nothing in the Bible to say so, and so I put it as an uncertainty. It could well be true.

What then is certain is this, that Cain was personally unacceptable, and God warns him that his anger is unjustified. Moreover, he is in danger, for if he proceeds to do evil, he will find a host of crouching sins that will master him and maul him and tear him to pieces. Differences in worship, a divine warning, and the next thing is the determined wrongdoing of Cain.

How would you react if God warned you like that? How would you react if God came and reasoned with you just like that, and spoke to you by name? Doesn't he do that? Well, this is how this man reacted. Cain said to Abel, his brother, let's go out to the field. And when they went out to the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him.

That murder was deliberately planned. With calculated anger and bitterness of soul, Cain not only decided upon the murder of his brother, after worship he set the whole stage. He planned it all out.

He had every T in its place. He worked it all out in his mind. The stage was planned, calculated.

The murder was deceptively executed. Here was no case of an open feud leading to a pitched duel between the two brothers, many two brothers. Indeed, what two brothers haven't had a squabble at some time or another? In youth? This is nothing of that kind.

This was an unsuspected attack by one brother upon another, and it was all arranged following his act of worship, but he carried it out. That murder was diabolically flavored. It shows how deeply prostituted an act of worship can become.

It shows how rebellious sin can become. You see, in Eden, sin meant disobedience to God and taking the forbidden fruit of a tree. So small, isn't it, as we humans judge? But in the next chapter, sin, the same kind

of thing, takes the form of not taking a forbidden fruit, but a forbidden life.

He who can take the forbidden fruit can soon take the forbidden life. It shows the stronghold of sin can have upon a man, and in so short a time, that he can brazenly defy God's warning and ruthlessly kill his own brother and do so after worship. I must hurry through that.

Differences of worship, divine warning, the determined wrongdoing of this man, and lastly, he was dismissed from the presence of God to a life of wandering. Now, here's the last scene. God comes to interrogate, to know whether any of us have gone through this experience, when God has been interrogating us, God asking questions.

No sooner was the murderous deed done than God appeared in Cain's presence as he had done in the Garden of Eden with his parents. You notice these two questions coming in Genesis 3 and Genesis 4. Adam says, God, when he had sinned, where are you, man? Adam and Eve were hiding behind the trees of the garden. Now he comes to Cain and he says, Cain, where is Abel, your brother? God is concerned, my friend, with where you are and I am tonight.

And he is basically concerned also with where our brothers are. Where have we put them? What have we done with them? What's my attitude to my brother? Are there any men or women in the world who are my brothers in humanity, if not in another sense, who are suffering, who are wounded, just because of either my inactivity or my sin? Where is your brother, he says to us? My friends, God is concerned for his creature everywhere. You remember how this man looked to God and says, he says, what are you asking me for? Am I my brother's keeper? Now get the point of that.

Abel was a keeper of the flock. He was the keeper of sheep. He says, he's looking after sheep.

Are you expecting me to look after him? He's the shepherd, not me. Why ask me? God interrogating. God probing.

A first question is never the last one with God. When Cain tried to wriggle out of it in this way, God says to him, what have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground. The voice of your brother's blood? There was no human witness to that act.

Cain had chosen the best place. He'd gone right out into the open countryside and he was able to look around and there was no one who could see what had happened and at close at hand the deed was done. No one saw it.

Never mind, says the Almighty. I hear the voice of blood. I hear the voice of blood.

I hear righteous Abel's blood crying for vengeance from the ground where you spilt it. What have you done, man? And God comes from his probing to his sentence. The righteous judge of all the earth in full knowledge of all the relevant facts sentences the guilty man, first of all, to a curse from the ground in verse 11.

The ground will not only bring forth thorns and thistles in terms of God's curse upon it in chapter 3, verses 17 and 18, but from now on, as far as this man is concerned, it will withhold its potential strength and its fruit to the heedless, impenitent criminal who has spilt innocent blood upon it. It will not yield its strength to you, says God. It has reserves, but it will not yield them to you.

And God delivers him to the curse of wandering upon a cursed earth. Think that one out. The curse of wandering upon a cursed earth.

You shall be a fugitive and a wanderer, says God, upon the earth. You know, this is a terrible sentence, really. Doomed to wander on a curse-yielding earth was in many respects a forrest of hell with this one notable difference.

Though the earth does not willingly yield its fruit to this man, he can repent. In hell he cannot. But he'll have no home upon earth.

He'll be a wanderer. My good people, you like to go home, don't you? Mind you, I wonder sometimes in the evenings here, when the services are over and I see you talking one to another, whether some of you like to go home. But it's a blessed place, our home, where we can go and recline and relax and talk freely with our loved ones and rest.

Imagine that if you were living in this universe tonight and you could make no place your home. No home and no hope. Cain felt it so hard and he says, Lord, it's too much, it's more than I can bear.

You know, it thrills me to be able to say this. The God who condemned him out of righteousness, the arrogant man that he was, the God who righteously condemned him, listen to his grouse. You know, God loves even the condemned man.

Cain said, wherever I go, the first person or the first animal to see me, whichever he meant, I don't know. The Hebrew doesn't make it clear. The first man or the first animal that meets me will slay me.

No, says God. I will see to it, he says, that if anyone tries to slay you, he will suffer sevenfold. Now what that means I can't tell you, but it meant something.

And God put a sign upon this man, a signal, whatever it was, I don't know, but it was something of a warning to all and sundry. Even though this man is under divine condemnation, let no man take his life or beast. God is merciful even to the unworthy.

Cain leaves the scene then of his sentence as a hard, impenitent rebel. Not even that, not even that touched his heart. Not even that gave him a meager sense of penitence.

He leaves the scene of his condemnation as if he had been unrighteously condemned by an unholy God, and he goes with a grouse in his soul to live it out as a wanderer until God terminates his earthly pilgrimage. Now what's all this got to say to us? Can I just sum up from two or three points? From this scene of murder after worship, there are some very evident things we ought to see. If we want to let Genesis speak for itself, we must see them, though I can't enlarge upon them now.

The first thing I want you to notice is that sin has spilled over into the second generation. This is of very practical relevance, you know. I sometimes meet people and they're wrapped up with this sin or that sin and they say, I do nobody no harm.

Have you heard that? I do nobody no harm. I have many, many, many, many times. And sometimes the person who says that has children at home.

I want to tell you, were it only on the basis of this chapter tonight, that sin spills over from Adam and Eve to Cain and Abel. I would plead with men and women outside of Christ in this service tonight, come to Christ,

if it were only for your children's sake, to break the entail of sin and the power it has to damn your children, to make a Cain out of a lovely little knight that comes into your home. You and your children are not safe, I tell you, until you come into the bosom of the Son of God and receive forgiveness of sin.

That's the first thing. The second thing is this. In seeping into the next generation, it is even more violent and vicious and profane than it was in Eden.

Sin doesn't become genteel and gentleman-like as it spreads. It becomes more vile and violent and vicious. It took the fruit of the forbidden tree in Genesis 3. It takes a life in Genesis 4. Then it is, as such, the sin of Cain extinguishes his parents' hopes for him and exceeds their wildest fears.

I remember saying last Sunday evening, or rather asking the question, whether in Genesis 4 and verse 1, Eve, at the birth of Cain, thought that the seed of the woman who would tread upon the serpent's head and bring deliverance had arrived? I pose it as a question. Is it her faith that God has already answered her prayer? If she built her castles around that supposition or that hope, then poor Eve, her heart's going to break. And I'm quite sure of this.

Neither Adam nor Eve thought that they were going to produce a child like this. And the sin that they had allowed to come into their lives was going to produce something of this order. Fourthly, sin that began in Eden as being essentially against God now shows its viciousness against God and man.

Sin always progresses in evil. It moves forward with a gigantic impetus. First of all, against God only, His sovereignty.

And I've heard men argue there was nothing much wrong in taking the fruit, but at the heart of that there was a rebellion against God. Now that rebellion against God will slay one of His preachers. The same thing, you see.

But it's gaining impetus. And lastly, sin as it spreads already shows the enmity emerging between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent. God said, I will put enmity between the seed of the woman and your seed, the seed of the serpent.

And here you have it. Cain was the serpent's seed, the child of Satan. Abel was a child of faith.

And already within that one family you have them divided up. And you have the basic division that runs throughout the whole course of human history starting that year. My dear friends, let me hurriedly close.

Sin is a serious business. Oh, good people, may the Lord speak to us tonight about this. Whatever your status, whatever your standing before God, oh, may the Spirit of God burn this into our souls tonight.

Sin is serious. And you may say to me, that's your business to say that. You're paid for saying that.

Yes. But my friend, even if I wasn't paid for saying it, I'd have to say it. Because it's true! It will dam your soul and it will penetrate into the soul of your children and it will go on and on and it will strangle your soul.

Oh, come to the fountain where sin is washed away. Oh, haste to the Savior. Is there any man or woman here tonight who is not trusting in Jesus Christ as Savior? Come to Him.

I say come to Him because there is none other that can take the sting out of it. There is none other that can forgive the acts that have taken place. There is none other that can change your heart and give you a

new spirit to overcome it.

But by simple faith in Him, He saves to the uttermost. Come to Him, then, just where you are. Close your eyes and say, My God, I realize it's serious and things haven't changed.

I can just read my newspaper. I can see the truth of that. Him that cometh to me, said Jesus, I will in no eyes cast out.

Let us pray. Oh, Heavenly Father, forgive us that we are so feeble in taking in what Thy Word tells us. And yet we thank Thee for giving us a little glimpse of what Genesis 4 is telling us tonight.

A little of it. We ask of Thee that what we do see, by the help of Your Holy Spirit, may teach us something and give us a grasp of the immensity of the task that we have in proclaiming to men the power of sin to condemn, but more so the power of Christ to change and to serve to the uttermost. Father, grant that all of us who have gathered here tonight may know the power of Thy grace in our hearts and not only that, but may be able to go out to our needy brethren, our fellow creatures, who need the Savior that we need.

Come, O Lord our Father, be our God, that in our presence and in our offering we may be acceptable before Thee now and then at last. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

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