

Don't Offer To God What Costs You Nothing

by Zac Poonen

This sermon delves into the contrast between sins that harm only oneself (Genesis 3 sins) and sins that harm others (Genesis 4 sins), emphasizing the importance of honesty, humility, and responsibility within the church community. It highlights the significance of offering our best to God, the danger of jealousy and pride, and the need to confess our sins honestly. The message also draws parallels between the blood of Abel crying out for revenge and the blood of Jesus crying out for forgiveness, urging listeners to choose forgiveness over vengeance.

Scripture: Genesis 4:10, Genesis 3:17, Hebrews 12:24, 1 John 1:9, James 5:16, Matthew 5:23, Ephesians 4:29, Proverbs 16:18, Luke 23:34, Romans 12:10

Topics: "Personal Responsibility", "Forgiveness vs. Vengeance"

Description

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Transcript

Praise the Lord, brothers and sisters, I'd like you to turn with me to Hebrews in Chapter 12. I want to share with you a little bit today about coming to the Lord in prayer and what will help us to have faith that He will hear our prayer. In Hebrews in Chapter 12, there's a contrast drawn here between the Old Testament relationship that people had with God and the New Testament and the New Covenant, the relationship we have with God.

Beginning at verse 18, please turn in your Bibles to Hebrews 12 and verse 18. Here it says, you have not come to a mountain that can be touched and to a blazing fire. That is how it was in the Old Testament, you know, when the children of Israel, they came to a mount called Mount Sinai.

It was a blazing fire and a whirlwind and darkness and the blast of a trumpet, verse 19. And the sound of words that God spoke with those who heard it, He said, we don't want to hear anymore. Imagine hearing God speak and saying, Lord, we don't want to hear anymore.

That's one of the big differences in the New Covenant. That when we hear God speak, we say, Lord, I want to hear more. I wonder whether you realize this, that in the Old Covenant, when they heard God speak, they were so scared that they asked the Lord not to speak to them anymore, but we are so different.

The great danger there is we can take advantage of that. We treat God as if He's an old buddy, friend of mine. That's how a lot of people come to Jesus, and that's why their lives are so shallow.

So many. I've seen that particularly in the charismatic movement, where they end up with a buddy-buddy relationship with Jesus, and their lives are shallow. They live in adultery and sin and so many things.

So we have to be careful that because God is so kind and good when He speaks to us, that we don't lose our reverence for Him. If you have a very kind father, an earthly father, if you have a very kind earthly father, you should actually respect him more than some of these other fathers who are very hard and strict in a wrong way. So here it says, they could not bear the command which said that even if a beast, verse 20, touches the mountain, it will be stoned.

It was such a terrible sight that even Moses, the great man of God, said, I'm full of fear and trembling. And it says in verse 18, you have not come to that mountain, but, verse 22, you have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, to the heavenly Jerusalem, to myriads of angels and to the general assembly and the church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the judge of all the spirits, righteous, made perfect, and to Jesus. You see, the contrast in the book of Hebrews is always between Moses and Jesus.

There, the mediator between God and man was Moses. Now in the new covenant, the mediator between God and man is Jesus. In both covenants, it's very clear, you cannot approach God directly.

That's why when we pray, we pray in the name of Jesus. It's not just a ritual or an empty phrase. When I pray and I conclude my prayer, Father, I pray in the name of Jesus, I'm acknowledging, and if you didn't know it until now, you know it now, Lord, you're too holy for me to come to you directly.

But because you've given me a mediator, I can come to you. That mediator is Jesus Christ. And in the Old Testament, the mediator was Moses.

And here it says, our mediator is Jesus of a new covenant, and then he contrasts the sprinkled blood of Jesus, which speaks better than the blood of Abel. That's the other contrast, where in the Old Covenant, if you turn to Genesis in chapter 4, it speaks here of the sprinkled blood of Jesus and the blood of Abel. If you turn to the Old Testament, if you're not familiar with it, the story in Genesis 4 is of Cain and Abel.

And they both brought their offerings to God. You see this contrast that I've often mentioned. Why did God accept Abel's offering and reject Cain's offering? Now, if you go and ask anybody else in Christendom, go to any pastor, especially those who have gone to Bible school, they'll give you the wrong answer.

So many things in Scripture you don't understand by academic study. The people who studied the Bible most carefully in Jesus' time were the Pharisees. They were called the scribes.

They studied and studied and studied the Old Testament. And after studying the entire Old Testament, when they looked at Jesus, you know what they called him? Beelzebul, Prince of Demons. But Peter said, You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God.

And Jesus told Peter, You didn't understand that with your cleverness. Flesh and blood did not reveal that to you. My Father in Heaven revealed it to you.

Was Peter the greatest scholar in Jesus' time? No. The great Bible scholars who had been to Bible school in Jesus' time called Jesus the devil. But one simple, humble man who had never been to a Bible school like Peter, whose heart was open to God, he got revelation from God and said, Jesus, He's the Son of God.

Now I want you to remember this is the same principle today. People who study so much and are very clever, they don't know God. But those who are humble and are sincere, they know the Lord.

So, here it says that Cain and Abel brought an offering. It says in verse 3, Cain brought an offering. This is Genesis 4 verse 4. Last part of verse 3. Cain brought an offering to the Lord from the fruit of the ground.

Because that's because he was a farmer. And his job was looking after tilling the ground as it says in verse 2. So he brought the best of his crops. He brought something from his crops anyway.

Because that was his job. Now, Abel was keeping flocks, verse 2. And it says he brought the firstlings of his flock and the fat portions. Then it says in the last part of verse 4, The Lord had regard for Abel and his offering.

And for Cain and his offering the Lord had no regard. Why? Now this is where all the Bible school professors will tell you. It's because Abel brought a lamb and shed its blood.

And Cain brought an offering with no blood. But this was not a sin offering. In the book of Leviticus you read that the sin offering had to have blood in it.

But there are many offerings mentioned in the book of Leviticus. Which has no blood. People could bring a Thanksgiving offering from grain.

No blood and God would accept it. So Cain and Abel were bringing a Thanksgiving offering. You know, Cain had got a good crop.

And Abel's flock was prospering. So they brought a Thanksgiving offering. And in a Thanksgiving offering you could bring grain.

Or you could bring whatever you are working with. Then why did God accept Abel and not accept Cain? There is a lesson there if you read the Bible carefully. That all of us can learn.

One simple letter. Word rather. Genesis 4.3. Cain brought an offering.

A-N. He just brought an offering. Some offering.

He picked up some grain and brought it. But what did Abel bring? Abel brought the best. He looked among his flock.

And he didn't just pick up any lamb. He looked for the best. And he brought that and he brought the fat portions.

So that was the difference. Cain brought just any offering that he picked up. Abel brought the best.

That's why the Lord had regard for Abel and his offering. Today also, among all of you sitting here and among Christians, there are two types. Like Cain and like Abel.

I don't know which one you are, but you know. We all bring offerings to God. Our life.

Part of our time we give to God. For example, time that you spend studying the Bible is an offering to God. Time that you spend serving the church or serving people in the name of Christ is an offering to God.

And there are two types of offerings. One, just bring an offering which is you have some spare couple of minutes because somewhere you pick up the Bible and read it for two minutes and you have eased your conscience that I read the Bible today. That's Cain.

He brings an offering. You can't say he didn't read the Bible. He did read it.

But it wasn't the best of his time. No. He brought an offering of five minutes to God and eased his conscience.

I offered it to you. Okay, now day's work is done. Let me go get on with what I have to do for the rest of the day.

But Abel brought the best. That is a person who takes time to give the best to God. Who's made sacrifice of something in his life.

You know, David once said I will never offer to God that which costs me nothing. Remember that expression. I read that when I was a young man of 21.

When I had taken baptism. You must read that verse. 2 Samuel 24, verse 24.

Soon after I had taken baptism and I had taken my Christian life seriously and I was 21 years old. I was reading this passage, 2 Samuel 24, 24 King David went to somebody's field to offer a sacrifice. And the man said, Oh King, you don't have He said, I'll buy everything from you.

I'll buy the ox and I'll buy you this ground so I can offer it to God. And that man said, Oh no, King, you're my king. I'll give you the ox, I'll give you the wood, I'll give you the land.

Take it all free. Now you know how much we all love to get something free. Isn't it? Everybody likes to get something free.

And David could have said, Oh, thank you very much. Thank you for offering that. But he didn't say that.

He said, in verse 24, 2 Samuel 24, 24. No, I won't take it free. Because if I take it free, my offering to God will cost me nothing.

Cheap. It's like Cain's offering. I got it free.

Our Lord gave it to me free. And I offered it to God. He knew.

That's Cain's offering. So he said, No, I'll pay you for it. I'll pay you the price of this land.

I'll pay you the price for the oxen. I'll pay you the price for the wood. Then when I give to God, it has cost me something.

I felt the pinch in my pocket of money. And then he said these wonderful words, I will never offer to God that which costs me nothing. And I say that because that was the verse that changed my life.

When I was 21 years old and baptized. And the Lord spoke to me through that verse. And I still remember it.

And what, past 83 now. What the Lord spoke to me 62 years ago. What he said was, You must never offer to me that which costs you nothing.

I learned something. I'm glad I learned it when I was 21. You must never offer to me, said the Lord, that which has cost you nothing.

And from that day I decided that I would try my best. I didn't always do it perfectly. But I tried my best to offer time, money, energy, my service, everything.

And I would ask myself, Has it cost me something? Then it is an offering worthy of the Lord. But if it has cost me nothing. You know, even if you love your wife and you want to give her a gift.

And you pick up some cheap thing that costs 2 or 3 rupees. You wouldn't do that on her birthday. No.

Even if you're a poor person, if you love your wife, you'll give her something that costs you something. Because what you give shows how much you love that person. And so from that day in my life I decided whether it was an offering of time or an offering of money or an offering of my energy or my life or anything.

It must cost me something. And that's the great lesson in the offering of Cain and the offering of Abel. I'll tell you how important this is.

If you turn to 2 Chronicles 3 Some of you heard me say this before but it's good to be reminded again. 2 Chronicles 3 When the temple was to be built which is a picture of our church. We are building a church here.

The church is an invisible group of people God has chosen to be His. And the Old Testament temple was a picture of the New Testament church. Where was it built? Very important.

2 Chronicles 3 Solomon began to build the house of the Lord in Mount Moriah. Mount Moriah was where Abraham offered up Isaac his son. Now that morning if Abraham had offered 10,000 sheep instead of Isaac If God said offer up Isaac and he said Isaac that's too much I can't offer my son I'll give 10,000 sheep to God It would have cost Abraham nothing.

Because he probably had 20,000 sheep. What does 10,000 sheep mean? But when God asked for Isaac there was nothing more expensive that Abraham had. That's a lesson we got to learn.

Abraham offered to God that which cost him something. He didn't know. We know the end of the story that Isaac didn't die.

But Abraham did not know the end of the story when he put Isaac on the altar he lifted up the knife and he thought this is it. I have to say goodbye to my son. And I'll tell you another thing I learned from that passage.

Isaac was not a small boy. If you read there in Mount Moriah Genesis 22 Isaac carried the wood all the way to the top of the mountain to place on the altar. He must have been about 20 years old at least to carry all that wood.

A young strong man of 20, 22. And it's not like telling a 3 year old lie down there. Abraham tells his 22 year old son lie down on the altar.

Isaac says where's the offering? He says you're the offering. I'm going to kill you. And this 22 year old young man says okay dad.

Boy, little things like this if you meditate I say what a wonderful father Abraham was to bring up his son in such a way with such a reverence for God that when Abraham said lie down there I'm going to kill you, I'm going to offer you to God he said okay dad if that's what you want to do it will be wonderful if you have children like that who are submitted to God to such an extent and trust their father and mother to such an extent and say you lie down there I'm going to offer you up to God and say okay dad, I trust you. We don't have parents like that and we don't have children like that. Not many anyway today.

I'll tell you why. Because the parents themselves don't have the devotion to God that Abraham had. That's why.

Don't blame the children. Lot was a nephew of Abraham. He also had children.

You know what they did? His two girls they committed adultery with their father. Can you believe it? That was Lot. They grew up in the same area.

But look how Lot's children turned out and look at Abraham's children. I see the same thing today. Two types of Christians.

See how this children turn out and see how these children turn out. It all depends on the father. Lot was after money.

He was only interested in money. Ah, if I go there I can make a lot of money. No wonder his children turned out that way.

He took his children to that place and they saw the father was passionate to make more and more money. What is the end? They commit adultery with their own father. Abraham he had told Lot Lot, you take what you want.

I know I am the leader here. I am your uncle. I am the one who came to Canaan.

You only followed me. I have the right to make first choice but I will not make a first choice. You make a first choice.

So he took Sodom and Abraham said I'll take what's left. It's a beautiful passage there in Genesis 13 where the Lord told Abraham Abraham I have seen what you did just now. You gave up something for my sake.

He said to Abraham stand on this mountain and look north, south, east, west. All of this I will give to your children. And if you go to that land Israel today you know who's living there? Not Lot's children.

No. He grabbed a little bit and he lost it. It's Abraham's children who are living there.

God keeps his promise. I'll tell you that. You honor God, he'll honor you.

He'll honor your children. Give to God that which costs you something. That's where it says here this temple was built not only Mount Moriah but it says here in the same place where David, 2nd Chronicles 3.1 prepared a sacrifice for God in the threshing floor of Ornon the Jebusite.

That's what we just read. Where David said these words I will never offer to the Lord that which costs me nothing and the Lord said that's the place where my temple is built. And that's the word the Lord spoke to me too when we started building CFC.

That verse 2nd Chronicles 3.1 This is the place where I want to build a church is the word the Lord spoke to me 48 years ago when we started CFC. Gather together those who will say like David I will not offer to God that which costs me nothing. And the Lord says I'll build my church with such people.

Gather together those like Abraham who say I give you the best Lord of my life. I will build my church with such people. Now I don't know your lives but I don't believe everybody sitting here is saying that to God because I don't think there's any congregation on earth where everybody says that to God but there must be a core a core of people who say that.

And because there has been such a core in CFC churches through the years that's why the church is being built. So please remember that I want you to turn back to Genesis 4 Cain verse 3 brought an offering there are many people today who bring an offering to God many of you sitting here the very fact that you've come here you're bringing an offering to God not money I'm not talking about money we never talk about money in this church we talk about giving our life but Abel brought the best there are some sitting here who are bringing the best I don't mean just this morning but who's whole attitude in life is I must give the best to God thank God for such people that is the core with which the church is built in every place the other thing I want you to notice here is we read in Hebrews how the blood of Jesus cries out better things than the blood of Abel. Here we read that Cain was very angry verse 5 when he found that his offering was not accepted when you find that God has blessed somebody else far more than you or blessed somebody else's family far more than yours do you get jealous and angry like Cain? Do you get jealous? or do you ask yourself why is it God has blessed him and not me that's the question you should ask Cain should have asked why is it God has sent the fire on Abel's offering and no fire on my offering, why? why is there a fire in that brother's life and no fire in my life? I seem to be cold as ice and that brother is on fire all the time why? that's what Cain should have asked.

I see the fire of God falling on Abel's offering nothing on mine, why? and if you see the fire of God in another brother or sister ask yourself why it is not on your life instead of getting jealous of that person, but Cain was jealous he was so jealous and I'll tell you this I've seen people who are jealous of me, I've seen people who are jealous of CFC, we don't compete with anybody we're not interested in numbers we're interested in purity we're not in competition even in that area with anybody because our offering is to God we're not competing with people so there's no jealousy I can honestly say that is zero jealousy in my heart towards anybody in the whole world I live before God you must live that life with no jealousies in your heart against anyone but Cain was jealous and he was angry and the Lord asked him, verse 6, why are you angry? why is your face fallen? when people are angry their face changes it started there and the Lord said to him, hey listen Cain you can also bring the best and the fire will fall on your offering, verse 7 if you do well, in other words if you bring the best of your grain instead of just gathering some cheap stuff and

putting it on my altar the same fire will fall on you on your offering like it fell on Cain's offering Abel's offering why don't you do that? why should you be angry instead? but if you don't do that and you're jealous of somebody else who's being blessed more than you or somebody else's offering is accepted and somebody else's family is better than yours and you're jealous of that then be very careful Cain, verse 7 middle because sin is crouching at the door of your heart that's a great verse, right in the beginning of the Bible it reads, sin is just waiting outside the door of your heart, did you know that? you know that sin is just waiting outside the door of your heart, especially when you're jealous of another brother or sister is anybody sitting here? jealous maybe of your blood brother or some relative who's doing better than you somebody else's children are doing better than yours somebody else's wife is prettier than yours somebody else's husband is richer than yours a little jealousy you're sitting in the same church to all such people, I want to tell you what God told Cain, sin is crouching at your door as long as you keep that jealousy in your heart, sin is just waiting for a little crack in the door and it'll come right in to destroy you that sin, verse 7 it's desire is for you it's like a lion just waiting to eat you up but the last part of 7 you must master that sin sin shall not be your master it's not in Romans 6 first of all, it's in Genesis 4 right at the beginning of time God gives this message you must conquer sin where did that message come? it came in Genesis chapter 4 so this is not some later message that came 4000 years later right there in the beginning God says you must conquer sin have you heard that message? those of you who still have a little jealousy of somebody else you compare yourself one of the worst things you can do is to compare yourself with somebody else because you'll always feel jealous or you'll feel proud one of the two either pride or jealousy and if you're proud or jealous sin is crouching at the door of your heart maybe God has accepted you and not accepted that other person and you're aware of it and you compare yourself. If Abel had compared himself with Cain, sin would have been crouching at the door of his heart too not making him jealous but making him proud pride and jealousy are the two things that are always crouching at the door of people's hearts. Whenever they compare themselves with others I remember when my children would come back after the final exam and the prize giving day I say I don't want you to show your report card to anybody no, you got good results, hide it away somewhere you got some award on the prize giving day, don't put it in the sitting room put it in some corner, I don't want anybody in the sitting room to see your awards we don't want to make people jealous and we don't want you to become proud be careful if God has blessed your children in some way don't make them proud and make sin crouch at their door and they ruin themselves and if somebody else's children have done better than yours tell them okay, be happy that somebody else did well be happy that somebody else came first and you didn't come first, you came fifth perhaps, okay or you came 25th, doesn't matter you do your best I always used to tell my children I never want you to come first in the class, that's not my goal I want you to do your best if you do your best and you come 25th in the class I'll be happy but if you're clever and you don't study and you don't do your best and somehow you still came first, I will not be happy because the greatest accomplishments in life don't go to those who are clever it goes to those who work hard so I was more interested in teaching my children to work hard rather than to be clever because cleverness is something you cannot give to somebody they are born with it all our children are born with a certain level of intelligence which came from their parents it's a well known fact but hard work that's something they are not born with hard work is something parents teach their children to do and I've seen parents who teach their children to work hard at home and I've seen parents who teach their children to be lazy at home some other servant does all the work great but wait and see how those children grow up when they are older they'll be useless but those children who've been taught to work hard whether they were clever or not clever they are the ones who make the best in life and that's why sometimes you find the children of some poor families turn out much better than the spoiled children of some rich families it's not how much

you are born with, it's a question of how hard you work don't be jealous, don't be proud that's what we learn here but Cain never took that exhortation and I often think of many people who come to CFC and hear some strong words perhaps even today but don't take that exhortation they get offended with what they hear on Sunday morning is it like that with you today? are you offended with something you heard? because it is the truth and God speaks to your heart don't get offended see it's a warning right at the beginning of the Bible you can go the way of Cain or the way of Abel and Cain instead of humbling himself and responding to God came to him and warned him you know whenever God comes and speaks to somebody like this, I think of Sunday morning like this when God speaks to you like that he spoke to Cain and Cain did not listen and he got angry with his brother and it says he just took a stone and hit him on the head and killed him verse 8 and the Lord says to Cain verse 9 Genesis 4-9 where is Abel your brother? as if God did not know why is God asking? God asked in the previous chapter you read that God asked Adam did you eat? did you eat of the tree? Genesis 3-11 as if God did not know of course he knew why did he ask Adam did you eat of the tree? to see what Adam would say that's what the Lord asks you in your conscience did you have a bad thought there? did you have some jealousy there? did you have some pride there? Adam say that woman, this woman Eve whom you gave me, she is the cause of the problem and very often when God speaks to us many people try to find fault with somebody else that's Adam's way you know the difference between Adam and Jesus Christ Adam could not take the responsibility for his own sin he took that fruit which Eve gave and ate it Eve did not pull his mouth open, he opened it himself and ate it he also wanted it why couldn't he tell God Lord I took it, I ate it I'm sorry why does he have to blame somebody else that's human nature in a situation if 1% of the fault is with you and 99% is fault is with somebody else, take that 1% blame, say yes I'm sorry I did that don't point at somebody else and say but 99% is with this woman there are lessons for us in Genesis chapter 3 and chapter 4 if you meditate, if you don't just read through the Bible fully and ease your conscience, I read 25 verses today don't read like that, go slowly like we are going through this chapter and you'll find God himself speaking to you you know Cain could have learned something where is Abel your brother God wants us to confess our sin, he knows already he knows that Adam ate but he asked him, did you eat he knows that Cain has killed Abel but he says where is Abel your brother and can you imagine a more stupid thing than that, Cain trying to tell God a lie Adam trying to tell God a lie I want to say to you all of you my brothers and sisters whenever you justify yourself in some situation where you know you were wrong you know you did something wrong and you try to justify yourself remember Adam remember Cain you can't fool God no, he knows he already knows the answer, he just wants to know whether you'll be honest enough to speak the truth confessing of sin when the Bible says if we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us it's not because God did not know what you did why does he want you to confess your sin he wants you to do the opposite of what Adam and Cain did putting the blame on somebody else saying no no no I don't know where it is honesty is what God wants first of all from us, remember this, it's very simple he does not want you to be holy first he wants you to be honest holiness is a goal it will take a long time to reach but honesty even if you're a prostitute you can be honest and say I'm a prostitute that's honesty yeah I did it I'm sorry I did that Lord honesty is the easiest thing for anybody to have but when you're proud you will not be honest because honesty and humility are like twins they always go together the humble person will always be honest the proud person will never be honest in your conflicts as husband and wife if you're humble you'll be honest you'll take the blame if you're proud you'll try to put the blame on somebody else remember that so he says where is your brother? he says I don't know and he has the arrogance to tell God am I my brother's keeper and the answer is yes you are your brother's keeper God gave you a younger brother so that you can care for him I see it like that if God has given me younger brothers in the church as far as possible I must try to help them and not say like God am I my brother's keeper I want to say to you my brothers and

sisters there are two types of churches one is a church where people come in great crowds to listen to a message they have no interest in their brothers and sisters in the church they're only interested in this is a place where I can get a good message can I go there they're only interested in themselves I tell you such people never grow spiritually but those who say well I'm in the midst of a family with brothers and sisters I must have a concern for the brothers and sisters I'm with those are the ones who grow, am I my brother's keeper yes I am are you your sister's keeper yes you are whether you realize it or not that's an answer to Abel's question, am I my brother's keeper yes are you your sister's keeper, yes how much fellowship do you have with the brothers and sisters in this church I don't mean just with your favorites the world also has that that's not fellowship, that's friendship how much fellowship do you have do you have a concern for the others in this church or do you have a concern only for yourself if you have a concern only for yourself you're like Cain am I my brother's keeper, I don't care for my brother or sister I just take care of myself, that's all I want to say you can come to this church and think only of yourself then you're like Cain then there are others who come here and say is there something I can do can I clean the toilets can I clean the floor can I do something here, can I serve my brothers and sisters in some way that is the type of person who understands the body of Christ I hope all of you will grow up to be like that otherwise you're like little babies you know how little babies are in your house how does a little 4 year old or 5 year old in your house they have zero sense of responsibility for the things in your house they're not bothered, they only live for themselves and there are such 4 year olds in CFC who are actually 40-50 year old exactly like the 4 year old children at home who have absolutely no sense of responsibility for this church even though they get so much benefit from it that 4 year old gets so much from his parents at home but he has zero sense of responsibility towards the house and some of them grow up to be 25 years old and still have no sense of responsibility towards the house now in CFC also there are people like that who have been here many years but don't seem to have a sense of responsibility for the family from which they receive so much and thus came well the Lord said to him in verse 10, the voice of your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground and you accursed came, verse 11 that's another thing I want you to point out to you in Genesis chapter 3 when Adam sinned turn back, turn one page back to Genesis 3 when Adam sinned the Lord said to him in verse 17 Genesis 3 verse 17 because you listened to the voice of your wife and disobeyed me I hope the Lord never has to say that to any husband here you listened to your wife instead of doing what I told you to do oh you're in danger brother if the Lord has to say that to you because you listened to the voice of your wife and you didn't listen to me the ground is cursed cursed verse 17 God did not curse Adam that's what I want you to notice he cursed the ground Genesis 3 17 but when Cain sinned see what the Lord says verse 10, Genesis 4 10, the voice of your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground and you are cursed the first man God cursed was not Adam it was Cain and Adam sinned he cursed the ground and Cain sinned he cursed him why? those are the things you will learn when you meditate on scripture and don't just read through scripture fast you must ask such questions when you read the Bible why was it like that? why is it like that? you know just like you tell your children you will understand even more of everything if you question why is it like that? you keep asking yourself such questions you learn something I'll tell you now why because when Adam sinned he hurt only himself he ruined his own life he became a sinner and he was on his way to hell he didn't hurt anybody else when he sinned so God did not curse him he cursed the ground but when Cain sinned he hurt somebody else he hurt Abel and he killed him so I see there are two types of sins Genesis 3 sin where you hurt only yourself for example you smoke cigarettes you don't I mean if you are in a room you may hurt others with that smoke but otherwise it's your own lungs that get destroyed not that person's lungs your lungs you keep drinking alcohol whether secretly or publicly you destroy your own liver not somebody else's and the liver doesn't bother whether you drink it secretly or publicly it will still be destroyed so in all those sins you are

harming yourself you watch pornography you are harming yourself you are ruining your mind you will not have a proper married life and your mind will be plagued with filth for the rest of your life who are you ruining? you are ruining yourself by watching pornography it's like taking a dagger and stabbing every man who's watching pornography is taking a dagger and stabbing himself he's not hurting anybody else if you see a man on the street stabbing himself with a dagger you'd think the man's crazy that's exactly what men who watch pornography do the only thing that dagger is not visible, they ruin their mind their mind becomes polluted they don't get anything from the bible when they read it they can't even concentrate on their work they are destroying themselves but they say I get pleasure out of hurting myself what would you think of a man who's stabbing himself with a dagger and say I get a lot of pleasure out of this what shall we say that's how fools the devil makes people into fools but when you commit when you for example you gossip against somebody do you gossip? speak evil of somebody behind their back there you are hurting somebody else you are spoiling somebody else's reputation now if you see a person coming drunk into this building staggering in the building drunk you say boy how can he come here to this church let me tell you something he has hurt only himself but some brother or sister comes here who's a gossip we don't think of him or her as a bad sinner do we oh gossip, that everybody does but that gossip is worse than that drunkard because that drunkard has only hurt himself but this gossip has hurt somebody else which category are you? you think that drunkard is worse than you I tell you in Jesus name you gossip you're worse than that drunkard because he's committing a Genesis 3 sin and you're committing a Genesis 4 sin he's hurt himself with his drunk drinking habit and you hurt somebody else with your gossip always distinguish between Genesis 3 sins and Genesis 4 sins sins where you hurt only yourself and sins where you hurt somebody else and most Christians don't think that the sins with which they have hurt others are serious they despise people who smoke and drink I'll tell you honestly I'd rather have a smoker and a drunkard in this church than a gossip any day I hope you'll give up smoking and drinking but he's far better than the gossip and CFC CFC is probably the only church where you'll hear such a statement that a smoker and a drunkard is better than a gossip because that man is hurting himself of course he shouldn't do it but this other person is hurting others how many of you speak evil of others and hurt them spoil their reputation you may be speaking evil of your mother-in-law okay that's also gossip whenever you hurt another person with your words or any other way I want to say to you in Jesus name you are committing the sin of Cain I don't want to conclude on that note it says here your brother's blood verse 10 is crying to me from the ground you know when the blood was lying there on the ground which Cain had shed Abel's blood and the blood was crying out to God you know when the blood was crying out to God the blood had a voice God is saying that blood is crying out to me take revenge on this man who shed my blood take revenge and God cursed Cain now there was somebody else's blood also that fell on the ground many years later it's the blood of Jesus on Calvary's cross people speared him and nailed him and the blood fell just like Abel's blood but we read in Hebrews chapter 12 verse 24 where we started you remember Genesis 12 24 Hebrews 12 24 the blood of Jesus is speaking better things than the blood of Abel Hebrews 12 24 what is the blood of Jesus crying out revenge no no no that is Abel's blood revenge revenge and the blood of Jesus when it fell to the ground was saying forgive forgive forgive forgive these people who hurt me forgive those other people who have done wrong against you God here is my blood we can learn a lesson when people hurt you think of the blood of Abel the blood of Jesus you can either long that God will punish that man for hurting you that's the blood of Abel or you can say like Jesus Father forgive them have you learned the difference today between the blood of Abel crying out and the blood of Jesus crying out our fellowship with God and our prayer life will be much better if we understand that difference and all the other things we heard today let's pray Heavenly Father we pray that none of us here will ever forget for the rest of their life the things they heard today the things that have

hindered them from growing spiritually the things that the devil has used to ruin their spiritual life help them to wake up today to glorify you we pray in Jesus name Amen

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