

Home Groups Questions

September 18, 2011

The Story of Cain and Abel

Genesis 4:1-13

Leaders: The questions below are inspired by Sunday morning's sermon. Please take time to review the questions and use them as a tool for discussion in your Home Group. It may be that we have provided more questions than you will have time to answer. If this is the case, please adjust or adapt the questions to fit your group.

Icebreakers/ Conversation Starters – These are random questions designed to create community and encourage conversation.

1. Where do you fall in the birth order of your family? What were the benefits and drawbacks of your place in the order?
2. Did you ever suspect your parents of having “favorites” among your siblings? What was the basis of this suspicion?
3. When it comes to anger, would you say you have a short or long fuse? Explain.
4. If you could choose between farming the ground or raising livestock, which would you choose and why?

Turn to Genesis 4:1-13 and read it.

What stands out most to you about the passage or message from this morning?

I. The Story of Worship (4:3-5a)

Genesis 4:3-5a “ So it came about in the course of time that Cain brought an offering to the LORD of the fruit of the ground. ⁴Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and for his offering; ⁵ but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard.”

- 1) How would you define worship and what are the characteristics of it?
- 2) In the first 3 chapters of Genesis, we do not find any instructions or commands for worship. However, in chapter four, Cain and Abel both feel the compulsion to worship God through offerings. Is it reasonable to conclude that even without the command to worship there is a natural inclination in the heart of man to worship something? Agree or Disagree? Why?
- 3) What is God looking for in worshippers? AND, does what we do on Sunday's meet the requirements of what God expects?

4) Cain and Abel's worship cost them something.

II. The Story of Violent Anger (4:5b, 8)

Genesis 4:5a, 8 - "So Cain became very angry and his countenance fell... 8 Cain told Abel his brother. And it came about when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him."

- 1) What are some other ways that Cain could have responded in this situation? And, why do you think he responded in anger?
- 2) Why is it easier to blame others for our mistakes than to take responsibility for it ourselves?
- 3) How do you handle your anger? Do you:
 - a) erupt like a volcano
 - b) suppress your feelings and walk away
 - c) keep your mouth closed
 - d) pretend like the situation never happenedWhat would you like to do differently about the way you handle anger?

III. The Story of Responsibility (4:6-7, 9)

Genesis 4:6-7, 9 - "Then the Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry? Why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it." 9 Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" And he said, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?"

- 1) How would you describe the Lord's reaction to Cain in these verses? What does this tell us about the nature of God?
- 2) In what ways does sin crouch at our door?
- 3) What does it mean to master sin and what could Cain have done to master it? What can we do to master the sin in our own lives?
- 4) Cain shows no sign of remorse and appears to not want to have anything to do with God or his questions. How does sin affect our worship and our relationships with others?

IV. The Story of Consequences (4:11-13)

Genesis 4:11-13 - "Now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. ¹² When you cultivate the ground, it will no longer yield its strength to you; you will be a vagrant and a wanderer on the earth." ¹³ Cain said to the LORD, "My punishment is too great to bear!"

- 1) Cain's punishment is linked to his crime. He is promised frustration in work (difficulty cultivating soil) and restlessness in life (alienation from others). Does human sin continue to have these same consequences? For example, does our sin have bearing on the earth? (Is drought, cancer, disease, etc the consequence of our sin?)
- 2) Although Cain complains about the severity of his punishment, is it seem too lenient given the crime?
- 3) Does Cain ever repent of his sin in this passage?
- 4) Why does God offer protection for Cain in verse 15?

Prayer Time

Calendar:

September 25 – Evening Worship Service (Childcare Provided)
October 2 – Home Groups
October 9 – Home Groups
October 16 – Home Groups
October 23 – Home Groups (SCHEDULE CHANGE)
October 30 – Evening Worship Service (SCHEDULE CHANGE)