

**Last week we talked about God as sovereign and pre-existent creator of everything being the origin of evil which according to His design was necessary for our human development and His divine revelation. Today we will look more at evil manifested as sin from the very beginning up to a few thoughts I may have while presenting this sermon.**

**Again I had a chicken joke...**

**Genesis 4:1** Adam lay with his wife Eve, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Cain. She said, "With the help of the Lord I have brought forth a man." **2** Later she gave birth to his brother Abel. Now Abel kept flocks, and Cain worked the soil.

**3** In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the Lord. **4** But Abel brought 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.

**6** Then the Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? **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 master it."

**8** Now Cain said to his brother Abel, "Let's go out to the field." And while they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him.

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

Cain and Able: What is it about?

Quality control....Relative good ....Arbitrary nature of God

For Cain things didn't go his way  
Anger...wanted to be better than Abel  
    Withheld from the Lord His due  
        -but he still wanted the reward

Downcast face

- \* Did not want to listen to God
- \* Did not want to look into the Lords eyes
- \* Pride problem

He knows that he has done wrong even without the benefit of the Law...it is written in his heart...when his parents gained the knowledge of good and of evil it was written in their hearts...Gen 3:7 said that their eyes were opened...not that they were sent to Sunday School and taught right from wrong...likewise all of their offspring were given the gift of the knowledge of good and of evil.

Cain did not want to receive what the Lord offered next...wisdom:

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 master it."

God did not say; "if you had done right, you would have been accepted"

Instead His statement (being ignored) looks ahead to the next sin with the warning:

"But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door"  
Implied here is that Cain is already doing something that is not right...

In sustaining a condition of his heart that will lead to greater sin  
As long as his heart is given over to evil (external or realized) "sin is crouching at (his) door" ready to strike and devour...

“it desires to have you, but you must master it”

Miltonian Rule of Proximity...

Biblically these are the first instructions given mankind by the word of God pertaining to our handling of sin.

You want fundamentalism:

Here it is: (Sin)...desires to have you, but you must master it

...not should master it

...not ought to master it

...not might want to master it

...not it may in certain circumstances be in your best interests to master it

Gods first advise about sin says “you must master it”

Why?...Because that’s why He created it...

Why create sin plop us in the lap of it and tell us to master it?

Because this is the manure out of which we grow tall and strong or mire to rot and decay

Cain being a farmer you would have thought might have figured this out...ironic he didn’t.

My opinion:

I don’t believe that Adam and Eve were in rebellion against God as they didn’t know evil...

How could they choose evil before knowing what it was.

They chose not to trust God’s word or to accept something outside of Him and His allowance...but the knowledge of good and of evil were simply not in their bag of choices.

Now Cain, eyes wide open, knew better...in his heart, mind, and soul...

He was clearly warned but rather than take instruction in love...

Cain in pride or jealousy or anger but certainly in rebellion...  
Cain slayed he who was most favored by God, his brother Abel  
Not because it would improve his situation...quite the contrary  
Because the evil rage he invited into his heart would allow his  
hand no other option

There are several great principles here to explore:

- the progressive nature of sin

- God's warnings to us

- The development of God's training ground

- Quality control in ancient agrarian societies

- Sacrifice-The nature and spirit of giving to the Lord

- Cain's heart condition and his rebellion against God

What I want to hold on to here most is that sin which is allowing something to separate us from God and rebellion though closely related have differences worthy of careful (but brief...) examination

In the world...I know a lot of people who basically know right from wrong and pretty much do the right things most of the time...they read bedtime stories to their kids, recycle, and turn the thermostat down or up as recommended by people who probably do neither.

Some perhaps many possess a convenient ability to tap out on occasion and go have their way in the world and with a manageable amount of guilt and carry on relatively successful daily lives.

As it turns out I know "Christians" whom I could describe with exactly the same words.

The 'world folks' pretty much have a "live and let live" philosophy of life...a "your thing is your thing and my thing is my thing and

you do your thing as long as it doesn't interfere with me doing mine and I have no right to disagree with your thing".

And 'Christians' who pretty much live out the same philosophy.

It's not that it's a bad philosophy...it's just that it has nothing to do with God. Like Adam outside of God.

Some of you have heard me mention and I will repeat:  
"I didn't know you were a Christian..."

Oops...cluck, cluck, cluck...no eggs

In-excusable when as modern day Christians we have a huge advantage over Adam and Cain...the history of God's people, the power of His word and the sacrifice of His Son

If we want to wear the cross, talk the talk, and drink the coffee we better read it, hear it, embrace it, and live it.

If other people don't see Jesus in or through us they don't see anything worth seeing.

**Our witness...?**

**Our testimony...?**

Most people know just enough about Christianity to get us 'Christians' in trouble

What does God say about our witness?

Listen to the following verses from Luke 6:27-36 and brace yourself

You won't hear evangelists reciting this whole thing often since it lacks recruiting value:

**Luke 6:27-36:** “But I [Jesus] say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. To one who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also, and from one who takes away your cloak do not withhold your tunic either. Give to everyone who begs from you, and from one who takes away your goods do not demand them back. And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them. If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners do the same.

And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to get back the same amount. But love your enemies, and do good, and lend expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.

I suggest...we take these verses, tear them out of our Bibles, fail to memorize them, and then burn them lest they fall into the hands of bums and homeless people...or

Just do it...

This is sacrifice...the nature and spirit of giving to the lord...the same thing Cain had a problem with...we still have a problem with today

Crap...this is gonna cost us something...cost me something...

Unless...wait... “and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High,”

If we believe and do the first part out of love and obedience why not have faith in the second part...well...out of encouragement

All of a sudden we are not talking about gifting but about investing.

Every real investment cost something up front...the more solid the investment the higher the cost.

But what can cost you even more is to be found in rebellion

When He has shown you what He requires of you...

...and you with downcast eyes are to be found with a heart condition that leaves 'sin crouching at your door'

Cluck, cluck, cluck...no eggs

Who have you invited into your heart?

So we have the knowledge from the tree

The history of God's people

The Sacrifice, death, burial and resurrection of Jesus

The helpmate of the Holy Spirit

The word of God in multiple languages and translations.

The fellowship of the Church

The internet AC a pot of coffee and a partridge in a pear tree

If we can't squeeze out a few eggs here and there we need to take off the chicken suit go home get drunk on Saturday night and sleep in on Sunday morning like a bunch of the rest of the city out there.

Remember that the only reason God put evil here was to show His goodness and mercy and maybe even develop these god like properties in our beings.

...and the first thing he told us to do?

“you must master it”

### **1 Thess 5 –5-14**

**5** You're sons of Light, daughters of Day. We live under wide open skies and know where we stand.

**6** So let's not sleepwalk through life like those others. Let's keep our eyes open and be smart. **7** People sleep at night and get drunk at night. **8** But not us! Since we're creatures of Day, let's act like it. Walk out into the daylight sober, dressed up in faith, love, and the hope of salvation. **9** God didn't set us up for an angry rejection but for salvation by our Master, Jesus Christ. **10** He died for us, a death that triggered life. Whether we're awake with the living or asleep with the dead, we're alive with him!

**11** So speak encouraging words to one another. Build up hope so you'll all be together in this, no one left out, no one left behind. I know you're already doing this; just keep on doing it. **12** And now, friends, we ask you to honor those leaders who work so hard for you, who have been given the responsibility of urging and guiding you along in your obedience. **13** Overwhelm them with appreciation and love! **14** Our counsel is that you warn the freeloaders to get a move on. Gently encourage the stragglers, and reach out for the

exhausted, pulling them to their feet. Be patient with each person, attentive to individual needs. **15** And be careful that when you get on each other's nerves you don't snap at each other. Look for the best in each other, and always do your best to bring it out.

**16** Be cheerful no matter what; **17** pray all the time; **18** thank God no matter what happens. This is the way God wants you who belong to Christ Jesus to live. **19** Don't suppress the Spirit, **20** and don't stifle those who have a word from the Master. **21** On the other hand, don't be gullible. Check out everything, and keep only what's good. **22** Throw out anything tainted with evil.

**23** May God himself, the God who makes everything holy and whole, make you holy and whole, put you together - spirit, soul, and body - and keep you fit for the coming of our Master, Jesus Christ. **24** The One who called you is completely dependable. If he said it, he'll do it! **25** Friends, keep up your prayers for us. **26** Greet all the Christians there with a holy embrace. **27** And make sure this letter gets read to all the brothers and sisters. Don't leave anyone out. **28** The amazing grace of Jesus Christ be with you!