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Go and make disciples!

E-votional 118

Sins Desire Is For You

Genesis 4:4-8 (NKJV)

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. 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." 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.

You know, there is a lot we could talk about in this passage of Scripture. There is no shortage of lessons we could glean here. However, for the sake of this teaching, I would like to highlight one particular theme. This theme is that we have a choice whether to sin or not and it comes from verse 7,

"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."

Here the Lord is explaining to Abel before his fateful choice to murder his brother that he has a choice to make here. It is all about choice in this life. Now, we know Cain was angry with his brother over the Lord accepting Abel's sacrifice over his own. Yet we also know that God in His infinite wisdom and mercy did not just outright condemn Cain because of it. In fact, in God's mercy and compassion, He met Cain right where he was at and tried to prevent him from making a choice that he would always regret.

Cain's choice began with the type of sacrifice he gave. When he gave the wrong type of sacrifice the Lord rejected it. Now, it was not just that the Lord rejected the sacrifice that Cain became angry with Abel, it was that the Lord accepted his brothers over his own that caused him to be angry with his brother.

However, the choice really began with the choice of sacrifice. When Cain later became angry at Abel, the Lord met him and said this, *“If you do well, will you not be accepted?”*

I find this an important element of this story. It is this way because even though the Lord rejected Cain’s sacrifice, He was still offering him an opportunity to make better choices from here on out. I guess this is worth highlighting for the sake of this teaching. That is that God is always willing to help us in our time of failure. You see, God does not leave us as orphans, He has in fact given us everything we need to live a life of holiness and godliness. Even when we are on a path about to make some really bad life-altering decisions there are always warning signs that God flashes before us in hopes that we will hear or see and be changed. However, in light of these warnings, we still have a choice to make. Do we continue on a path of bad or do we change the game and turn around for good to accurately serve the Living and True God?

Thankfully, we serve a God of amazing opportunities for growth and maturity through the Lord Jesus Christ!

When I reflect on my own life and walk with God, I can quickly see some times when I was about to make a wrong turn and how long before I made it to the point of choice, the Lord had already been preparing me and warning me of what was to come. I just love that our God is so faithful that He does not leave us to our own devices and that He is intimately involved in the details of our lives. I tell you the truth brothers and sisters that our God is not far off from anyone on of us at any given point in time.

While the Lord is firm in what He deems a right sacrifice and does not let us get away with false ones or half-hearted worship, we can still be assured that He will meet us even in those moments of error to teach us His ways and His truth. However, there is always a choice to make and an attitude to take. The attitude is one of humility for, *“Good and upright is the Lord; Therefore He teaches sinners in the way. The humble He guides in justice, And the humble He teaches His way. (Psalm 25:8-9)”*

Praise You Lord for Your endless supply of grace and mercy and how You always look to teach the humble Your ways, let us never forget this!

In the case of this chosen passage, we can clearly see the mercy that the Lord was showing Cain even before Cain committed such a horrendous act against his brother Abel. Even though the Lord was merciful towards him, Cain still had a choice to make. Would he take heed to the Lord gentle warnings, or would he follow through with his rebellion and anger? The choice is also ours, brothers

and sisters. We may not be plotting such serious acts of rebellion as maybe Cain did. However, any rebellion against God's commands is sin and, "*sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you. (Genesis 4:7)*" Right before this statement in Scripture it also says, "*And if you do not do well (Genesis 4:7)*" So, the Scripture says that if Cain does not do well that sin is lying in wait at the door and that sin's desire is for Him. This also illustrates the choices we have to make in this walk with the Lord. I am reminded of 1 Peter 5:8,

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

Brothers and sisters, this here illustrates that not only are we going to have choices to make, but that our choices will have adverse reactions and consequences that will inevitably bring us into a place for more bad choices to be made. Let me simplify. In the case of Cain, the Lord was telling him that if he makes the wrong choices that sin lies at the door in wait for him. This is interesting because we know that Cain offered a wrong sacrifice and was later motivated to further sin by killing his brother. So in context, we can see that the sin that was lying in wait at Cain's door was murder and the motivation or rather a bad choice that led him to this next choice in sin was offering a wrong sacrifice and being angry at his brother for offering a right sacrifice.

The overall principle here to be applied to our faith is that of making choices. Brothers and sisters, if we could take something from the life of Cain here, it would be that of making choices. And coupled with that would be also that making bad choices will inevitably lead to more bad choices if we are not careful.

Yet in all of this, if we are humble and desire to do what is right we can be assured that God is more than able to work all things together for good no matter where we are on the spectrum of choices, whether good or bad. He is faithful. But remember, sin is always lying in wait at the very door for us much like the prowling of the lion seeking someone to devour. Note that, the adversary or sin is seeking someone to devour. Do your best then by the power of the Holy Spirit to not be the one that is easily motivated to make sinful choices. Choices to sin are sure to come. But that is just it, they are choices.

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In Christ's Love,

Chris and Jeanne
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