

The Gospel In The Conflict Between Mankind

- I. Conflict Between Mankind Results First From a Conflict w/ God (1-7)
- II. Conflict Between Mankind Seeks Justice From Mankind (8-14)
- III. Conflict Between Mankind Can Only Be Addressed by the Gospel (9-17 , 21-26)

All We Have to Do IS Turn on the News To See Conflict Today

Last Week We Saw How Sin Created Separation & Conflict Between Adam & Eve & God
This Morning We'll See How Original Sin Expands & Begins to Create Conflict w/ Mankind.

I. Conflict Between Mankind Results First From a Conflict w/ God (1-7)

- **Read Vs 1-7**
 - **Vs. 2** Cain works fields and harvests produce of the ground
 - Abel keeper of livestock.
 - These are both provisions God gave
 - God gave plants and tress that bore fruit and required cultivation
 - God gave animals that needed domestication
 - **Vs. 3a** *"It came about in the course of time....."*
 - We don't know how long this was
 - Some time has passed between Garden, birth of Cain & Abel, and their offering.
 - Enough time passed to understand Who God is and that He deserves an offering.
 - There has been no ceremonial law given for atonement yet
 - There has been no law given for offering a tithe yet.
 - Simply a knowledge God deserves respect, honor, reverence, & worship.
 - **Vs. 3-5** *"Cain brought an offering from the ground, Abel brought an offering of his livestock, and the Lord looked favorably on Abel and his offering, but not on Cain and his offering so Cain became very angry and his countenance fell."*
 - NET says his expression was downcast. He was dejected. His face fell.
- **Nothing here to imply that this was necessarily about quality of offerings but attitude.**
- READ I John 3:11**
- John understood this was about heart. This was a heart condition.
 - No one can say "I love God" and yet hate his brother.
 - John says that we love because God first loved us.
 - Without God unconditional agape love for others is impossible.
- **Vs. 6-7** *"Why the mopy face Cain, why do you have a bad attitude? You know full well that if you do what is right you will be accepted. You will be fine. But, sin is at work within you and will become your master if you do not control it."*
 - Notice the word picture of sin crouching like a wild animal.
 - **1 Peter 5:8** *"Be Alert and be of sober mind because Satan prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour."*
 - **James 1:14-15** *"but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. 15 Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death."*

We'll Pause Here for a Moment- Cain Had A Heart Problem, Not An Offering Problem.

- Sin darkens our hearts. Sin makes us an enemy of God. Sin opposes everything about God
- He brought an offering, but his heart was not in the right place
- **Read Psalm 51**

The Gospel Is the Only Solution for Conflict Between Mankind Because The Gospel Addresses Our Our Hearts.

Jeremiah 17:9 *"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?"*

Romans 6:17 *"But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed,*

Romans 10:10 *"For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved."*

II Corinthians 5:17 *"Therefore anyone in Christ is a new creation. The old has past and the new has come."*

The Gospel Restores Our Relationship w/ God & Empowers Us to Resist Temptation

The best that Cain had was self will-power and nothing more. But We have the power of God living in in us. The same power that rose Jesus from the grave gives new life in Christ to us.

I Corinthians 10:13 *"No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it."*

II. Conflict Between Men Results From Seeking Justice Among Men (8-14)

Read Vs. 8-14 Murder Becomes the Ultimate Attack on the Image of God

Vs. 8 Various renderings of this verse, but basically Cain invites Abel to the field.

- Ultimate attack on the image of God. Mankind is formed in image and likeness of God
- Satan first goes after relationship between God & Man, then the image of Man
- Murder is a total disregard for the sanctity of life.

Cain's Action of Murder Is the First Act of Violence

- God made coverings for Adam & Eve which represent first death after sin
- This act of violence/murder represents first of its kind and begins a snowball.
- Murder now becomes method for obtaining justice in the eyes of mankind.

This is Also A Direct Attack on the Family

- Two brothers in conflict all because of a broken relationship w/ God.
- I believe this is one of the consequences explained to Eve in the Garden for sin.
"You will have pain in child rearing, not just labor, but when your eldest kills his brother"

Ironically, While Conflict Breaks Down the Relationship Between Mankind, Even Family Members, The Gospel Unites Strangers to Each Other in Christ Jesus.

1. Parallel to The Garden 2. Personification. 3. Word Picture

1. **3:9-12.** *"Where are you Adam?.....Did you eat from that tree I commanded you not to eat?"*
"The woman you gave me made me do it."

Vs. 9. *"Where is Abel your brother? "I don't know. Am I my brother's keeper?"*

- Like the Garden, we see quick intent to deflect.
- This tells a lot. Cain either really dumb to assume God doesn't know. Or Cain is completely aware of the omniscience of God and he's extremely flippant.

2. **Vs. 10-11** *"the voice of your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground...."*
".....the ground has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand."

Cain Shows No Repentance, Just Remorse for His Consequences

Vs. 13-14 *"My punishment is too great to bear, whoever finds me will kill me...."*

- Cain only seems to express concern for his own well-being going forward.
- Recognizes vengeance will be sought by other men for Abel's death.
- Justice for Abel must be sought in the eyes of the world.

Illustration: Dennis Prager radio show.

"Make sure you visit Hiroshima memorial"

"Next time you're in Hawaii make sure you visit the USS Arizona."

We Have Conflicts With Fellow Mankind When We Seek Justice On Worldly Terms

- Cain had a heart issue with God that he was going to make right by eradicating his brother who had become the standard.
- In Cain's eyes, God had favor on Abel so Abel became the means for justice and equity.
- When we are convinced that we have been mistreated or disadvantaged, we seek to make it right by worldly standards.

10 Commandments Reveal To Us Just How Often We Seek Justice In Our Own Estimation

Honor Your Father & Mother: Unless you feel like they mistreated you and are not due any honor

Do Not Murder: Unless you've been wronged and the other person deserves it.

Do Not Commit Adultery: Unless you're not getting what you want from your spouse at home.

Do Not Steal: Unless it makes you even with the other person, or in life.

Do Not Lie: Unless it evens the playing field and helps your case.

Do Not Covet: Unless God has mistakenly not given you what you're owed.

God-You're Not Adequate Enough For Me

- When We Seek Justice From the World We're saying "God, You're Not Enough"
- Your provision for me is not enough.

Cain despised that God did not look with favor on him and his offering.

Cain's solution was to take out his anger on his brother and get even.

The Gospel Is the Only Solution for Conflict Between Mankind Because the Gospel Reminds Us That Our Joy and Contentment Is Found In Christ Alone

The Gospel speaks to our hearts and reminds us that God is sovereign.

The Gospel reminds us that God is fair. He is just. He is our Provider.

The Gospel reminds us that God cares for us and will supply all our needs. We need not covet our neighbors' houses, wives, cars. We need not steal to make ends meet, God will provide a way for us.

The Gospel also reminds us that adultery, murder, theft and covetousness are already committed in our hearts whether we act out or not.

III. Conflict Between Mankind Can Only Be Solved By Grace & Mercy of the Gospel (15-17 , 21-26)

Read Vs. 15-17, 25-26

Acts of Mercy

- **The First Act of Mercy** we see upon Cain is God allowing him to live.
 - God could have exacted deathly judgment on Cain in an instant.
 - Instead, God allows him to live
- **The Second Act of Mercy:** God Appoints A Sign All Men Would Recognize & Do No Harm to Cain
 - Cain recognizes that others will want their justice just as he wanted justice.
 - But God, in an act of mercy delays immediate further violence and murder
 - God prevents immediate retaliation which slows the proliferation of violence

Acts of Grace

- **First Act of Grace** God Extends to Cain **Vs.17**
 - Cain is able to take a wife, bear a son, and establish a city.
 - Mercy is when we are spared of consequences we DO rightfully deserve.
 - Grace is when we are extended blessings we DON'T rightfully deserve
- **Second Act of Grace** God Extends to Adam & Eve **Vs.25-26**
 - God blesses Adam and Eve with Seth in Place of Abel
 - Men & women began to call upon the name of the Lord

These Acts of Grace & Mercy Simply Prolonged But Could Not Prevent The Inevitable (Vs. 21-24)

- Cain's Great Great Great Grandson Lamech seeks his own justice & murders
- Even when God showed grace & mercy to Cain, heart of mankind had not been repaired
- **Genesis 6:5** *"The wickedness of man was great on the earth and every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil."*

God's Merciful Response to Cain Foreshadows The Gospel Today

1. Foreshadow for the Unbeliever (2 Peter 3:9)

- *"The lord is not slow in keeping His promise of judgement. Rather, He is patient with you not wanting that anyone should perish, but that everyone would come to repentance."*
- God did not strike Cain dead on the spot, nor does He strike people today.
- God patiently endures sin & conflict wanting that none should perish.

2. Foreshadow for the Believer. (2 Corinthians 1:22)

- *"God has put His seal on us. He has sealed us with His Holy Spirit as a guarantee of our inheritance."*
- **Ephesians 1:13-14** *"In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, 14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory."*
- Like Cain, we also have been marked, but we are marked for Heaven
- Like Cain, we were once worthy of death, but God went above and beyond and acted mercifully toward us when we didn't deserve it.

Conclusion:

1. The Gospel Addresses Conflict Between Mankind Because Gospel Addresses The Heart

- No matter how much grace & mercy God extends to mankind, our hearts are evil
- No matter how many Laws God instituted (Civil & Ceremonial) they cannot repair our hearts
- No matter how many laws mankind puts on the books, they cannot repair our hearts

2. The Gospel Reminds Us That Justice Is Not Accomplished Horizontally w/ Men But w/ God

- God exchanges our corrupt hearts with His heart
- The Holy Spirit takes up residence in us and not only warns of sin crouching at the door, but empowers us to resist the temptation.
- The Holy Spirit teaches us to forgive our neighbor 70 x 7 times when they sin against us, and when we sin against them.
- The Holy Spirit reminds us to find peace and justice in God's economy of grace.
- To find contentment in the Lord Himself.

3. The Gospel Restores Our Understanding of the Image and Likeness of God

- The Gospel calls us to recognize mankind as being made in the image and likeness of God
- The Gospel reinforces the sanctity of life
- The Gospel calls upon us to love others as God loves them and as He loves us.

Jesus Did Not Die to Redeem Society. He Died To Redeem Us So That Our Behavior Would Influence Society

- **Col. 1:13** *"For He delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the Kingdom of His beloved Son."*