

## Series: Beginnings, Betrayal, Blessings

### Title: Blessings and Curses: Letting go of Anger

Text: Genesis 4

#### The Story

#### Tell the story

- Children born
- Two sons
- They make an offering
- Abel's preferred
- Cain is upset and God talks with him
- Cain kills his brother and is cursed
- The punishment is too hard and God grants blessings
- You see Cain's lineage
- Then it says that Seth is born and people begin to call on God

Cain – worker of the ground

Abel – tender of sheep

#### Offerings and comparisons

#### In the course of time.....

Sometime you are going to deal with this

- **An offering to the Lord 4:3-5**
  - One received the other not / one regarded and the other not
    - Cain – fruit of the ground
    - Abel – choicest portions (his best)
  - God regards the person who give their best
    - firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions
      - Not the leftovers of your day or your life
    - The first fruits
      - The best you have got
      - We work for his glory
      - All you put your hand to do...do unto Him
- **Comparisons will only get you into trouble**
  - Comparisons ruled his life and his heart

## Cain Reacts and God Counsels

- *...but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his face fell. (Gen. 4:5)*

### Genesis 4:6-7

*<sup>6</sup> The Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? <sup>7</sup> If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it."*

- God tells Cain and us what must be done.
- Do well – you will get acceptance.
- If you do not do well,
  - Sin crouches at your door
  - It's desire is contrary to you

### God has given us a way to fight off sin

- Do well
  - WELL
  - **To be wise or use good judgment**
    - ...to do what one should do.
    - You would do well to avoid him right now.
    - You did well to avoid him when he was in a bad mood.
- Don't let sin be at your door
- Sin is contrary to you. You must rule over those thoughts.

**2 Corinthians 10:5** *Take every thought into captivity unto the obedience of Christ.*

## Six ways to rule over the thoughts

### 1. Accept responsibility for your thoughts.

You have the ability to exercise control over your thoughts. God warned Cain to focus his mind on the right things, but Cain chose to think about the wrong things - anger and jealousy - which led to his murderous actions. Are you willing to admit that you can, with God's help, regain control of your thoughts - and think enabling thoughts instead of disabling ones?

## **2. Your mind - not just your behavior - must change.**

God calls us to change sinful behavior that does not honor Him. Instead of focusing on your outward behavior, work on disciplining your mind - from which the behaviors stem. Allow God to transform you by the renewing of your mind (Rom. 12:2).

## **3. Think through your problems rather than just react to them.**

When you experience difficult challenges, you can react to them and think yourself into despair every time. Or you can look forward to the next opportunity and ask yourself what you learned from this failure. Is your first thought I'll never do anything right? You don't have to get trapped by disabling thoughts. You are capable of getting out of your shame, despair, hopelessness, and anger - by taking control of your thoughts.

## **4. Take your disabling thoughts captive through confession.**

Paul urges us to "take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ" (Rom. 12:21). Confront your disabling thoughts. Turn them over to God and become who He sees you can be. It will take work to take your thoughts captive each time they pop into your mind. But it is possible with the help of the Holy Spirit.

## **5. Choose to focus your thoughts on the right things.**

We are to think about those things that are "true, noble, right, pure, lovely, and admirable" (Phil. 4:8). When we think about those things, God promises to give us His peace. What a contrast that is to the thoughts of millions of people today. Don't look to a movie, TV show, or how-to formula to accomplish this for you. It takes personal discipline and commitment.

## **6. It is possible.**

It is not easy to retrain your thoughts or to respond in new Christ-like ways. Take heart: as God empowers you to focus your mind on the right things, it will become easier. You can develop a new frame of reference, based on what is true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, and praiseworthy.

But let's be honest. Often we do not do this. And things get out of hand.

Cain was angry because it did not go His way.

God did not bless him

- God did not answer the prayer the way I prayed it.
- He let the bad thing happen and he should not have done so.

And he became angry

- Rage and bitterness, unforgiveness, it ruled him.

### **Cain's Rage and God's Curses**

- **4:8-12**
- Cain spoke to Abel his brother.
  - **They had words**
- Cain kills his brother.
  - And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him.

### **Genesis 4:9-12**

*<sup>9</sup> Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" He said, "I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?" <sup>10</sup> And the Lord said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground. <sup>11</sup> And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. <sup>12</sup> When you work the ground, it shall no longer yield to you its strength. You shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth."*

**If you rage when things don't go your way...**

**It will only lead to a cursed result.**

- Angry that someone else received the blessing and you didn't.
- Angry that someone else has success and you don't.
- Angry that someone else has a "better life."
- We curse ourselves.

**Nothing will grow in your life.**

- The soil will be cursed.
  - The ground will not work for you.
- You will feel like you have no value.
- You will feel like your life is over.
- Everything will wither.
- His Face fell.
  - Me oh me poor me!
  - God doesn't like me, and I want everyone to see how I feel about that.
- Your soul withers and dies.
- Relationships cannot grow. Life cannot move forward.

- Living in the curse of your own making:

### **You will feel lost and haggard.**

- **A fugitive** - person who is running or is in hiding, especially to avoid arrest or persecution.
  - **You soul is in hiding**
- **A wanderer** –
  - No direction, at a stand-still, frozen in time.
  - Despondent.

### **Cain Repents and God Cares.**

#### **Genesis 4:13-14**

*<sup>13</sup> Cain said to the Lord, “My punishment is greater than I can bear. <sup>14</sup> Behold, you have driven me today away from the ground, and from your face I shall be hidden. I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me.”*

From my job, then from Your face.

- You take my skill away?
- Why am I even alive?

#### **He gains protection from others**

- *“Not so! If anyone kills Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold.”*
- *And the Lord put a mark on Cain, lest any who found him should attack him.*

#### **He gains the blessing of family**

#### **4:16-24; 10**

- *Adah bore Jabal; he was the father of those who dwell in tents and have livestock.*
- *His brother's name was Jubal; he was the father of all those who play the lyre and pipe.*
- *Zillah also bore Tubal-cain; he was the forger of all instruments of bronze and iron.*
- We see after the flood that descendants of Cain continue – one of the boys' wives, or Noah's wife.
- Kenites

God has given you a way not to follow your sin.

Rage and unforgiveness will destroy you and cause you to wither.

You must let go of that rage and when it is simply too much call out to him.

God will heal but you must receive that blessing.

The blessing is a beautiful life.