

# Southeast Sower

August 2018

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## The Southeast Church Of Christ Meets At:

- 35 Walnut Ct.  
Mogadore OH 44260
- Phone: 330.628.7432

### Services:

#### SUNDAY:

- 10AM Bible Study
- 10:50AM Worship
- 6PM Worship

#### WEDNESDAY

- 7:30PM Worship

### God's Plan of Salvation

- Hear Rom. 10:17
- Believe Heb. 11:6
- Repent Acts 2:38
- Confess Matt. 10:32
- Be Baptized Mark 16:16
- Stay Faithful Rev.2:10

## Cain or Abel

Genesis chapter 4 gives us information regarding the first children of Adam and Eve. Although many may have read this account previously, it is important to read this, and the rest of God's word, several times. Each time you read you can gain a better understanding. Throughout the chapter there are several lessons we can learn from both Cain and Abel.

Lesson 1: Cain and Abel were real people, who lived real lives. This may come across as an obvious statement...and it should be. This is also an important statement to understand. The reason that this point is made is due to the fact that often times we refer to people of the Bible as "Bible characters." Now, this label is not wrong or sinful, etc.. but given today's understanding of the word "character" can be misleading. We associate the word with t.v show characters who are not real, and are played by an actor or actress who lives a different life than the character. This word-association has been carried over and sometimes is applied to people we read of in the Bible.

This act may not be done intentionally or even consciously. So then how do we know if we are doing this? Well, how do you view the people discussed in the Bible? When you are struggling with temptations or your faith, when you are looking for guidance or advice do you turn to the Bible to read how another went through a similar circumstance? God has given us the Bible so we may learn from the examples of others regarding both what to do and what not to do. If you do not see the people of the Bible as being real people in real situations, but simply as fictional characters then you are less likely to believe their example can and will help you.

Lesson 2: God will not accept anything less than your best. Genesis 4:3-5 "And in the process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and his offering. But unto Cain and to his offering He had not respect. And Cain was very wroth and his countenance fell."

Here is a clear example of what God expects. Before you even get to verse 5, by studying carefully the words used to describe the two offerings it is clear which one God would be pleased and displeased with. The key phrase is how Abel's sacrifice is described. V.4 says "...of the **firstlings**..." Compare this to Cain's offering in v.3 "brought of the fruit of the ground.." Cain's offering was missing something...otherwise would not both sacrifices had been described with similar

### Genesis 4:1-2

"And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived and bore Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the Lord. And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of the sheep but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

### Genesis 4:7-8

"If thou doest wel, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall thou be his desire and thou shalt rule over him. And 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 slew him."

### Romans 6:16

"...to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey..."

words? God expects to be first in your life. Pleasing God should be the most important priority because, if you remember, He created you. Also because God has given preference to you. God chose man to be in dominion over all the rest of His creation (Gen. 1:28), God chose to make man in His image by giving man an everlasting soul (Gen 1:26) and God sent His Son to die on the cross and be resurrected so that man might have the hope of salvation. (John 3:16).

Lesson 3: Obedience to God's word is good.

Another obvious statement but one that is commonly not lived out. Hebrews 11:4 lists Abel with the faithful because he gave his best to God. Abel abided by the Lord's instructions and commandments regarding what he was to sacrifice. Conversely, Cain did not abide by the Lord's commands and look at what that led him to. Gen. 4:5-13 recounts Cain's actions. First we see that Cain became upset or angry because the Lord did not find his sacrifice pleasing. Then Cain became consumed in his anger, which then led him to murder his own brother. Will anger always lead to murder...no. Anger does lead to aggression, which is manifested in some way, physically or verbally. Keep in mind that Cain probably did not wake up that morning and decide that he was going to murder Abel. Rather, he was caught up in the emotion he was feeling and became a slave to his anger. Paul wrote in Romans 6 about how we become slaves to the master we serve, either God or sin.

Lesson 4: You are responsible for your actions, thoughts, etc..

As God's inspired word recounts for us, Cain killed Abel. This is simple to understand, for verse 8 says, "...and Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him." This verse does not say that anyone forced or coerced Cain into killing his brother. V.8 states that Cain alone killed Abel. Earlier, in v.3, there is no mention of Cain being forced to disobey God's commands and not sacrifice the best of what he had unto the Lord. Cain even takes responsibility for his actions because nowhere does Cain blame anyone or anything else for his actions.

So, if Cain had to accept the consequences of his sin and take responsibility for his actions, shouldn't we also take responsibility? Are we governed by a different standard? No, the God we serve and will be judged by is the same God who punished Cain for his actions. It is this same God who created the foundations of the world that we will face on the day of judgment. If you try to justify your sin or lack of faith, etc... by trying to blame another for your decisions, thoughts and actions...then **stop**. No one else is to blame for what you do or do not do. I am as faithful as I desire to be. If I choose to not be faithful then that is my own fault. To make a change in yourself you first need to acknowledge and accept responsibility for yourself.

-Jordon Smith