

Series: Types of Christ
Title: The More Excellent Sacrifice
Text: Genesis 4: 1-8
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Genesis 4: 1: And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD. 2: And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

A. No difference in Cain and Abel according to the natural birth.

1. Both are sons of Adam.
2. Both are born with the same corrupt nature which Adam passed on to them in natural generation.
3. As we see next, both came to make an offering unto the LORD-- probably both taught by Adam the promise of Christ to come, which God taught Adam in the garden.
4. But Hebrews 4, tells us that there was a difference in these two

Hebrews 11:4: By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain

B. How did Abel have faith in God? The same way every sinner has faith.

Ephesians 2: 1: And you *hath he quickened*, who were dead in trespasses and sins;...8: For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9: Not of works, lest any man should boast. 10: For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

1. Abel was born of the Spirit of God.
2. Abel was given faith by the grace of God-- **By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain**
3. Abel was the workmanship of God, created in Christ Jesus--we have before us a good work which God before ordained that Abel should walk in and which he did--**By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain**

This is the fruit of grace. God speaks—faith hears—faith believes—and faith obeys. Faith stands only on the rock of divine promise. It has no ear, but for heavenly wisdom. Faith trusts in only what the finger of God writes. Faith reasons, this way, "The mouth of the Lord has spoken it."

Application: Think on this. In the twilight of the world, Abel saw the Sun of Righteousness. He staggered not through unbelief. He embraced the truth wholly unto life eternal. Now what about you who sit here at the end of the world in the full blaze of the Sun of Righteousness? Now, let's see the difference grace makes.

CAIN

Genesis 4: 3: And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD.

Cain is a tiller of the ground. Cain offered the fruit of the ground. The way in which Cain came to God manifest what was in his heart. The way in which you come to God manifests what is in your heart.

A. Cain offered unto the LORD his Self-will.

1. God has ordained the way in which He was to be approached--in the garden the LORD slew an animal made coats of skins. Cain comes with something he imagines is a little more dignifying than blood.
2. He places his puny reason above the word of Almighty Wisdom. He turns from a revealed will to the darkness of his own vain conceits. Professing himself to be wise he became a fool. He changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature (himself, his will, his understanding, his way) more than the Creator (**Romans 1: 22, 25.**)

B. Cain offered unto the LORD his pride.

1. Blood signifies the need of pardon for sin. Cain feels neither sin, nor need of pardon. Therefore he proudly tramples under foot the blood of Christ.
2. Pride is the stuff of the deceitful heart which makes sinners imagine, "We are rich and have need of nothing", when in fact they are "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked."

C. Cain offered unto the LORD unbelief.--God had set before him the redemption of Jesus Christ in promise and in type.

1. In unbelief he closed his *eyes*—he will not look to Jesus.
2. In unbelief he closed his *hand*—he will not lay hold on Him.
3. In unbelief he stumbles over that Sure Foundation
4. In unbelief he closes his *ear*—he will not hear of Him.
5. In unbelief he closes his mouth---he will not cry unto Him.
6. In unbelief he closes his *heart*—he will not receive Him.

This is the dire situation of all sinners born in Adam.

Isaiah 1: 5:...the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. 6: From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment.

ABEL

Genesis 4: 4: And Abel, he also brought, of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof.

Abel selects the firstborn of his flock--the very best lamb. He offers the fat thereof--meaning his lamb was slain, and the blood and the fat thereof offered unto God.

A. Abel confesses this is what he justly deserves.

1. He is confessing that in himself he is lost, ruined and undone, apart from God's free, justifying grace in Christ.

2. He confesses he has no power to save himself, but must be saved in the blood of Christ the Lamb of God.

B. Abel confesses that he believes God.

1. By faith Abel lays hold of the promised Messiah

2. By faith Abel sees Christ's day afar off

3. By faith Abel confesses that all his hope is in God to save him in Christ.

4. By faith Abel confesses he needs Christ to be his High Priest, his Mediator, his Intercessor, his All!

THE LORD

Genesis 4: 4:...And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering:

- The LORD accepted Abel in the Beloved
- Fully pardoned
- Fully justified
- Fully righteous
- Holy and accepted of God
- Abel's offering--as all the believer's works of obedience to God--was through faith in Christ and came up to God with the fat thereof as a sweet smelling savor.

Genesis 4: 5: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.

- Cain was very angry at God and at his brother.
- All along, Cain's heart was enmity against God.
- Now he can not hide it.

Application: There is no joy, no heart cheerfulness, anywhere but through faith in Christ. You will never have peace by your works. You will never have assurance trusting in your will. You will be like Adam and Eve after they worked so hard to make their fig leaves. When they heard the Voice of the LORD they were not secure they had done enough so they hid in the trees.

Abel had peace...how so? Through faith--*he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts.*

- God purged his conscious.
- God witnessed to Abel in his conscience through the Holy Spirit, telling him in his heart, he was accepted of God.
- Faith is *the evidence of things not seen.*

Genesis 4: 6: And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?

He was the firstborn son, he thought he had the right to be accepted with God because of natural reason and works.

Genesis 4: 7: If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.

It is not that God is not willing to save all who come to him through faith in Christ. Christ said the problem is this:

John 5: 40: And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.

John 3: 19: And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. 20: For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. 21: But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

Murder In the Heart

Next we see how hard the heart of sin really is. Instead of heeding God's word, repenting and casting himself upon the mercy of God, Cain still sought his own way--and it was murder.

Genesis 4: 8: 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.

Cain was cast out to be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth.

APPLICATION

The only two beliefs in the whole world throughout all time--grace and works. The way of Abel is the way of grace. The way of Cain is the way of works.

Romans 11: 6: And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.

- Satan threatens.
- The law condemns.
- Conscience accuses.
- Your wounds are deep.
- Your burdens heavy.

- If you look to *self*. It is despair.
- You look to the *world*. It mocks your woe.
- You look to *reform*. It is a broken cistern.
- You fly to outside *performances of devotion*. They are reeds, which break and pierce the hand.

Abel is yet testifying. Hear him this day and flee to Christ--He is the More Excellent Sacrifice!

Amen!