

# Preparing for Next Sunday

Week of October 19<sup>th</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup>

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At CFNW we put in the work to get ready for the upcoming Lord's Day. If you would like to participate, we encourage you to

1. Study the Upcoming Sermon Text (Questions Below)
2. Join our Scripture Reading Plan (Available on the Website)
3. Read a Recommended Book During the Sermon Series (Available Online)

## Read and Consider Genesis 4:1-26

If you are unsure how to study the Scriptures, here are several questions you can answer alone or in a group.

### Stop and Consider the Text

**[4:1]** *What did Eve say after she and Adam had their first son, Cain?*

**[4:2]** *What different responsibilities did Cain and his younger brother, Abel, have?*

**[4:3-4]** *What did Cain and Abel bring as offerings to the LORD?*

**[4:5]** *Why did Cain become "very angry?"*

**[4:6-7]** *What two questions did the LORD ask Cain?*

**[4:7]** *What did the sin crouching at Cain's door desire to do?*

**[4:8]** *What did Cain do to Abel before he murdered him?*

**[4:9]** *How did Cain respond to God's question, "Where is your brother?"*

**[4:10]** *What weighty statement did God make about Abel's blood?*

**[4:11-13]** *What punishment did God give Cain?*

**[4:14-15]** *How did God show Cain mercy?*

**[4:16]** *Where did Cain go in relation to the LORD?*

**[4:17]** *What city did Cain's family establish?*

**[4:18-21]** *What strange thing did Lamech, Cain's descendant, do?*

**[4:23-24]** *What did Lamech celebrate in a poetic song?*

**[4:25]** *What did Eve say after she and Adam had Seth, their third son?*

**[4:26]** *What began to happen after the establishment of Seth's family line?*

## Stop and Consider God

After Cain killed his brother, the LORD heard the cry of Abel's blood. Though Abel could no longer cry out for help, the ground soaked in his blood cried out for justice. This is a massive revelation of God's character and activity in a world after the entrance of sin.

After sin, men, women, and their children would know enmity, hostility, hatred, and even murder. Injustice would occur as each seeks to satisfy his own desires. The first family faced several pressing questions: *Will God be active outside of the garden? What will God do in response to sin? When murder happens, will he care? How will God respond to sin?*

The first glimpse given to us of life outside the garden shows that God is still active outside Eden. He sees sin. He hears the afflicted. He will hold accountable the guilty, and He will provide justice for the victims.

*Have you been wronged by someone who to this day seems to have gotten away with what they did? If so, what do you think justice would require in that situation?*

*List 1-3 examples in the news or in the lives of those near to you in which the victim is still waiting for justice.*

*How might the truth that God hears the cry of the victim's blood, bruises, or heart wounds comfort those who await justice?*

**GOING A LITTLE DEEPER: These are tougher questions, but take a moment to consider.** The Scriptures claim that because of His death on the cross, Jesus is righteous and just in both His justly condemning the

guilty and in forgiving and pardoning the guilty who have faith. For example: God would be just if he chose to pour out His wrath on a murderer, and he would be equally just to forgive the same murder if He possesses faith in Jesus.

*How does knowing this truth about Jesus shape the way we think and act towards those who commit injustice?*

*Should the church, the individual, and the government respond differently to the guilty? If so, how should each uniquely respond?*

## Stop and Consider Yourself

We tend to think of sin as acts of rebellion, mistakes, and disobedience, yet in 4:7 sin is identified as a power that desires to control. The indicator that sin was nearby to Cain was his angry response to not getting what he wanted.

*What kinds of things are more prone to make you angry than others?*

*When's the last time you experienced anger?*

*What made you angry, and/or what did you not get that you wanted?*

Cain, in his anger, murdered Abel. You might not have murdered someone, but there are many sinful actions taken against others in anger that do not elevate to shedding blood.

*What sinful actions become extremely tempting when your anger burns hot?*

Timothy Keller wrote in *Counterfeit Gods*, “When you pray and work for something and you don’t get it and you respond with explosive anger or deep despair, then you may have found your real god.”<sup>1</sup>

*What might the cause(s) of your anger reveal about you and your own heart?*

*Who have you recently wronged in your anger, and what wounds did you cause?*

All of us want to see ourselves as Abel in the story, but if we are honest, at times we have all been Cain. We have all been wounded, and we have all caused wounds.

## Stop and Respond

**Praise** and **thank** God for His justice. **Thank** Him for showing mercy and patience to those who commit acts of violence and injustice for we all need it. **Thank** Him also for not letting the guilty go unpunished, and for promising to avenge the wounds suffered by the victims. **Thank** Him for Christ who makes forgiveness and pardon possible for those who put their faith and trust in Jesus.

**Confess** to God your anger. **Confess** the wrongs you have done against others in pursuit of your own selfish desires.

**Ask** God to forgive you though you do not deserve it. **Ask** him to hear the cries for justice from those who have yet to receive it in this world. **Ask** him to give you the faith to wait for His vengeance rather than taking matters into your own hands. **Ask** Him to put civil authorities in place that will uphold justice in some measure now while we await for it at the return of Christ.

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<sup>1</sup> Keller, Timothy. *Counterfeit Gods: The Empty Promises of Money, Sex, and Power, and the Only Hope that Matters* (p. 169). (Function). Kindle Edition.