

"If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it" -- Genesis 4:7.

In Genesis 4:6, God asked Cain the questions: *"Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen?"* Cain was angry with his brother for no valid reason! Cain and Abel offered sacrifices to God, and God accepted Abel's offering, while rejecting Cain's. Rather than change his sacrifice for the better, Cain became angry at Abel!

Angry With Others?

It is foolish to become angry at another person for your own problems. Ahab blamed Elijah for his own sins. He said to him, *"Have you found me, O my enemy?"* (1 Kings 21:20). Elijah seemed as Ahab's enemy because Ahab steadfastly refused to do right, and Elijah kept calling him out for it.

How often do Christians get *blamed* by the world because Christians are doing the right thing, leaving the carnal ones self-condemned? See Ephesians 5:11, 13. Well, naturally Christians have to be blamed because the only other person left is the *guilty*!

Elijah replied to Ahab: *"I have found you, because you have sold yourself to do evil in the sight of the Lord."* Elijah did not enjoy rebuking Ahab, but as God's prophet it was his job. But Ahab was not about to do right.

Ahab's **unwillingness** to repent and straighten up his life eventually cost him his life. The self-willed never prosper. Ahab's many false prophets told him what he wanted to hear; God's prophet, Micaiah, told him the truth (1 Kings 22). Ahab chose a lie over the truth, and as a result, lost his life. But not before he castigated Micaiah with these words: *"...but I hate him, because he does not prophesy good concerning me, but evil"* (1 Kings 22:8). He was of the spirit of Cain unfortunately.

Likewise, in the New Testament, when Paul was trying to teach the Galatians out of their error of following Judaizing teachers, he asked: *"Have I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?"* (Gal. 4:16). Sometimes the truth hurts, but it always heals the believer!

Stephen became the first Christian martyred for the cause of Christ (Acts 7) for telling the truth to his audience. He accused the hard-hearted Jews when he said: *"You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do you"* (Acts 7:51). Yes, those were fighting words to these hardened consciences, so they killed the messenger!

Let God Judge

Another lesson we learn from Cain and Abel in Genesis 4 is that God has the right to judge our offerings and sacrifices to Him. Too many people want to offer that which **pleases them** and then expect God to be happy with it! ***"Oh, I just know the Lord will be happy with my sacrifice!"*** we hear some say. I actually had one person tell me after a particularly challenging sermon: ***"Well, the Lord is just going to have to accept me as I am!"*** Really? Do you think God has been forced into a corner by you, me or anyone else?! Read Malachi 1:6-9.

Man Versus God?

An important lesson to learn is this: **What pleases man may not please God!** God warned Judah in Isaiah 55:8, *"For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," says the Lord.* God is the Worshiped One; we are the worshipers. Let Him tell us **how** to be worshiped! *"Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men"* (1 Cor. 1:25).

"There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death" (Prov. 14:12). Just ask Ahab.