

Genesis 4:1-26_ Now that sin is loose: A detailed look into the invasive nature of sin.

Douglas Humphrey

In The Beginning / Genesis 3:8–24

SERMON AIM: To show that sin is not static — it crouches, it moves, it multiplies — and to call the congregation to deal with sin before sin deals with them.

[Genesis 4:1-26_ Now that sin is loose: A detailed look into the invasive nature of sin.](#)

Welcome back to our Genesis study... season 1: Creation & Fall.

The other week we stood in the garden and watched everything fall apart.

We watched Adam and Eve listen to the wrong voice, reach for what was not theirs, and lose everything — the presence of God, the peace they had with each other, and the home God built for them.

But we also watched God do something that they didn't deserve.

He covered their shame. He made them a promise.

And I told you — your failure is not final. God promises restoration through the person of Jesus Christ.

That's true. I stand by every word of it.

But I need you to understand what happened next.

Because their story didn't end with a promise.

Adam and Eve are cast out the garden.

And the first thing recorded after the exile is the birth of two sons — Cain and Abel.

These are not strangers in a distant land.

These are the children of the Fall.

Born outside the garden.

Born into a world their parents broke.

And if you thought sin would stay contained to just Adam and Eve —

if you thought the consequences of the Fall would stop with them — [Genesis 4](#) is about to correct that.

Because sin did not stay in the garden.

It walked out with them. And it showed up in their children.

And here is what I need you to hold onto today:

Sin does not stay where it starts. It moves from the heart to the hand, from the hand to the home, from the home to the community. But God's mercy moves faster — calling us back to genuine worship before sin swallows us whole.

That is the arc of this chapter. And that is the arc of this sermon.

What I have for you today are four truths about sin's impact and how to deal with it.

For our time together you will need a Bible, sermon notes, and an open mind. If you have all those things say I got it. If not put your hand up and we will get them to you.

Four truths about sin's impact beginning with...

When sin has your heart, your worship becomes bitter to God. v1-5

Cain and Abel both brought offerings.

Abel brought *"the firstborn of his flock and their fat portions"* — the choicest part, reserved for God. His First and Best.

Cain brought *"some of the land's produce."*

No qualifier. No firstfruits. Just *some*.

The LORD had regard for Abel and his offering, but he did not have regard for Cain and his offering.

The problem was not that Cain brought grain instead of blood.

The problem was never the gift. It was the giver.

God does not weigh the offering. God weighs the worshiper.

Cain had something on the inside of him that turned his worship into a transaction. It soiled his offering.

That's how corruption works, it taints everything we bring to the.

Cain looked like a worshiper. Nobody on the outside could tell the difference. He showed up. He brought something. He went through the motions.

Cain wanted God to accept a self-willed offering on self-chosen terms, and that's exactly what made his offering bitter.

Now here's the uncomfortable truth — Sometimes our heart behind the gifts we bring to God. Our acts, Our worship. Our deeds are no different than Cain's.

Like Cain...

I can stand in this pulpit, open this Bible, deliver this manuscript with everything I have to give — and still be performing.

Still be more concerned with what you think of me and my preaching,— than with whether I'm pleasing God.

It's a real temptation.

And if it's real for the pastor, it's real for the whole church.

You can sing every word. Give every week. Serve when scheduled. Attend every Sunday.

And God can look at all of it and say — *there's no love for me in this. You're not worshipping me. You're simply going through the motions.*

The problem is not that people stop worshiping. It's that they keep showing up to worship with a heart God rejects.

And most of us know it. We just won't say it out loud.

So let me give you three things you can do right now to keep your heart from soiling your offering:

Examine your heart before you enter:

Before you sing, give, or serve — stop and ask: What am I actually bringing right now? Not what is in your hand. What's in your heart. Anger toward your spouse? Resentment toward a coworker? Jealousy of someone else's blessing?

Name it before God before you bring anything else.

Confess what is corrupting your offering:

Don't offer good worship on top of bad worship.

Bring the corrupt thing to God first — say to Him, Lord this is what's actually in me.

I confess it. I don't want it between us. And leave it with God.

Ask God to purify your motives:

Cain's problem was not effort — he showed up. His problem was motive. Ask regularly: Why am I doing this?

Is it for your glory or for mine?

A heart that asks that question honestly is already moving in the right direction.

If you're serious about maintaining a true heart of worship, this is where it starts.

When sin has your heart, your worship becomes bitter to God. That's the first truth... second....

Unchecked sinful desires will overtake you. v6-7

After Cain's gives God a worthless offering, God does exactly what he did with Cain's parents in the garden — He moves towards and asks...

"Why are you angry? And why do you look despondent?"

Not accusation. Intervention.

"If you do what is right, won't you be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is for you, but you must rule over it."

In this context the word "crouching" is the posture of a predator lying in wait. Not running after you. Not charging.

Patient. Calculated. Unnoticed.

Cain's sin was stalking him, like a lion on the hunt. Like this video

[VIDEO: BBC Earth "How Lions Hunt" — <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6fMBRCKUkSQ> — cue 1:45. Let it run until the Cape Buffalo is taken down.]

That Cape Buffalo never saw it coming.

The lion used the tall grass to conceal itself — moving inch by inch, closing the distance, waiting for the perfect moment to strike.

That is exactly how sin operates.

Right now, sin is stalking through the tall grass of unchecked anger, social media comparison, jealousy of what someone else has, pride that won't let you apologize, lust that keeps feeding you one scroll at a time, bitterness you keep justifying.

You cannot see it moving. But it is moving.

Getting closer and closer to you acting on it

And the question is never *"Will it do damage?" It will*

The question is: how much — and to whom — before you finally deal with it.

Notice, God doesn't say *"sin has already won."*

He doesn't Cain say *"you are beyond help."*

He says: it is crouching — but you can rule over it.

For those of us in Christ, that truth carries even more weight.

[Romans 6:14](#): "For sin will not rule over you, because you are not under the law but under grace."

The chains have been broken. The power sin had over you was shattered at the cross.

But broken chains do not mean you cannot pick them back up.

Think about credit card debt.

You worked hard to get out of debt.

You sacrificed. You finally paid it all off — zero balance, free and clear.

Then one day you pull out the card *just this once* — and with one swipe you re-enslaved yourself to the very thing you spent years getting free from.

That's what Cain did.

And the moment he opened the door, he was overtake by negative emotions.

First he was jealous.

Left unaddressed, jealousy became resentment.

Resentment became anger.

Anger became bitterness.

Bitterness became premeditation — "let's go out to the field."

Premeditation became murder.

Murder became deception — "[Lord] I don't know where he is."

Deception became exile — removal from the presence of God.

One unchecked sin became eight.

Every sin has children. Jealousy parents resentment.

Resentment parents anger. Anger parents bitterness.

Bitterness parents violence.

If you trace almost any destructive behavior back far enough, you'll find something small that someone refused to deal with at the door.

The most dangerous moments are not the loud, obvious ones.

It's the quiet ones — when nothing appears to be happening but something is stalking your heart.

And from the outside looking in, it appears that we're destined to fall victim to our negative sinful emotions.

But God says, yes sin is crouching at your door,

"it desires you, it wants to have it's way with you — but you must rule over it."

You must dominate you desires that lead to sin. Not manage, but dominate.

For those of you in Christ — you have the Spirit of the living God inside you. The same power that raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you.

You are not helpless.

You have already been given dominion over what crouches at your door. But dominion has to be exercised — weekly, daily, hourly, and sometimes moment-by-moment.

And the way you do that is by bringing "that which crouches" to the One who already broke its power over you.

Bring it to Jesus.

Give it to Him and keep bringing it.

For those of you who do not know Jesus — you are facing the same crouching sin but without the same power to rule over it.

I am going to address that directly in Point 4. stay with me.

Cain did rule over his sin. He opened the door.
And what got through did not stay with him.

It spread.

Which brings us to our third truth.

Unresolved sin does not die with you — it lives on in future generations. v8-12, 23-24

Cain walked away from that conversation with God and did nothing.
He didn't lock the door. He didn't confess. He didn't repent.

He let his anger percolate and boil over into murder.

"Cain said to his brother Abel, 'Let's go out to the field.'"

And while they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him".

Now his brother is dead. And God inquires...

"Where is your brother Abel?" [Cain responds] "I don't know.
Am I my brother's guardian [keeper]?"

[To which God says...] Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground! Now you are cursed, alienated from the ground from which you buried your brother.

It's important to note that God's judgment on Cain is specific to him. Only Cain is cursed, not humanity. When God judged Adam and Eve, he cursed satan and the land, not human kind.

Yet God cursed Cain, he will spend the rest of his life as restless, hungry, wanderer, always a day late and dollar short.

But the text does not stop with Cain.

Five generations later — a man named Lamech.

He takes two wives — the first recorded act of polygamy in Scripture, a fracturing of God's one-flesh design of [Genesis 2](#).

Then Lamech gathers his two wives and delivers a speech.

Not a confession. Not a prayer.
But a boast. Look @ v23 with me...

"Adah and Zillah, hear my voice; wives of Lamech, pay attention to my words. I killed a man for wounding me, a young man for striking me. If Cain is to be avenged seven times over, then for Lamech it will be seventy-seven times!"

Cain killed in a moment of unchecked rage.

He was warned. God confronted Him. He knew what he did was wrong — he tried to hide it.

Lamech killed a young man simply for wounding him.

He doesn't hide it. He celebrates it. Wearing it like badge of honor.

What happened in five generations?

What Cain did in a field and tried to cover up,
Lamech does openly and writes a song about.

The shame is gone. Morality is gone. Only proud boasting in oneself remains.

Loved ones, this is what unaddressed sin does, it gets handed down, with each generation becoming more depraved.

Drifting further away from God.

Before we proceed I need to make a distinction—

I know some of you have heard teaching about generational curses.

The Bible does not support that theology.

The idea that you are spiritually bound by what your ancestors did, that a curse is literally moving through your family tree — the Bible doesn't teach that.

In fact [Ezekiel 18:20](#) says the opposite.

"The person who sins is the one who will die. A son won't suffer punishment for the father's iniquity, and a father won't suffer punishment for the son's iniquity."

You are only answerable for your sin.

We are not cursed because of what our fathers sin.

The penalty of your sin is assigned to you.

Sin that remains unconquered, unconfessed, and unresolved does not stay contained to the person carrying it.

It becomes the fabric the next generation grows up wearing — so normal to them they don't know what godliness looks like.

Cain's sin was never dealt with. His descendants grew up in a world where violence was just how things worked.

By the time Lamech arrives, he has no framework for thinking murder is wrong — because nobody in his line ever showed him how to live for God

That's not a curse. That's a consequence of perpetuating the same environment.

A curse requires supernatural deliverance.

A consequence requires a decision — somebody in the line has to choose differently.

Some of you in this room are that somebody.

You came from a family where sin ran deep — addiction, rage, abandonment, abuse, poverty, sexual immorality — and everybody expected you to end up just like them. They wrote you off.

But you're sitting here today because somebody decided the pattern stopped with them. Maybe that was you. Maybe a parent. Maybe a praying grandmother who refused to let the cycle have the last word.

That's the mercy of God interrupting a consequence that would not stop on its own.

That being said, I need you to understand this...

There are people in your life who are living inside whatever you have refused to deal with.

They may not know it yet. You may not see it yet.

But make no mistake —

What you normalize, they will naturalize.

What you excuse in yourself, they will excuse in themselves. What you refuse to bring to God, they may never know can be brought to God at all.

Your impact is greater than I realize.

Cain tried to hide his sin.

Lamech posted his on tik-tok.

So the question isn't just *"What is this doing to me?"*

The question is: what will my undealt-with sin do in the lives of the people around me and generations to come?

That question should weigh heavy on you.

Don't rush past it.

How will your unresolved sin impact others?

But if this was where the sermon ended — with the weight of our failure and the reach of its consequences — it would be a sermon without hope.

And, I didn't come here to leave you under the weight of your sin.

I came to show you how to get free from it.

So, how do you break the cycle?

Not willpower — Cain had that.

Not good intentions — Cain did not plan to become a murderer.

Not better information — God told him face to face. Yet he killed his brother anyway.

There is only one thing that has ever broken a sin cycle.

It is not a program. Not a principle. Not a method.

It is mercy.

And that mercy has a name.

Only God's mercy has the power to break the cycle of sin. v13-16, 25-26

After the murder. After the lies. After the exile is pronounced.

Cain protests:

"My punishment is too great to bear! Since you are banishing me today from the face of the earth, and I must hide from your presence and become a restless wanderer on the earth, whoever finds me will kill me." v13-14

Really Cain? You killed your brother. Hid his body. And lied to God.

And you have the audacity to say, "your punishment is too great"?

He's not repentant. He's afraid.

He's only worried about saving his own skin.

Notice how God respond? He responds with mercy.

He places a mark on Cain. Not a mark of shame.

A mark of protection. v15

The Hebrew word is "ot" — is the same word used throughout Scripture for a sign of covenant care. We do not know what the mark looked like. Or even where it was placed.

But we do know its function:

It said hands off, Cain still belongs to me.

Even after what he did. Even in exile. God says don't touch him.

walk with me for moment...

The man who killed his brother, lied to God's face, and showed no repentance — God still marked him as protected. Not because Cain earned it.

But because God's mercy doesn't wait for your apology in order to start working.

And the same is true for you.

While you were still caught in the grip of your sin — not after you cleaned up, not after you said sorry, not after you got your act together

God had already marked you.

He predestined you for salvation.

He held back the judgement you earned.

You were his enemy — and he showed you mercy anyway.

That should mess all of us up.

Had God waited for Cain to repent before he acted,

Cain would have died in that field with no protection and no future.

And if God waited for you to get right before he moved, you would still be out there — unmarked, uncovered, and unaware that mercy was even an option.

But he didn't wait. He never does.

Even when we don't know that God is working —

He working on our behalf

Now this chapter, does not end with Cain.

It does not end with Lamech's boast.

It ends with Seth — a new line, a new beginning.

v26 says....

"At that time people began to call on the name of the LORD."

In the same chapter where sin escalated to boasting, God preserved a people who still knew how to call on his name.

The darkness got darker. But God's light shined through it.

Abel's blood cried from the ground for justice. For vengeance. For God to act against the one who shed it.

But [Hebrews 12:24](#) says:

"You have come to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which says better things than the blood of Abel."

"Better things".

Hold on to that phrase.

Not vengeance — forgiveness.

Not condemnation — reconciliation.

Not exile — access to God.

Abel was the first righteous person killed unjustly by his brother. ([Matt 23:34-35](#)) Jesus was the last.

In Jesus's death the pattern is not repeated — it is reversed.

The innocent death of Abel produced only exile.

The innocent death of Jesus produces justification, adoption, and access to the Father.

Notice the counter-trajectory:

Cain to Lamech — one murder becomes a boast. Unchecked sin escalates.

Cross to resurrection — one death becomes the end of death. Grace escalates faster than sin ever could.

The only blood that stops the cycle is the blood of Jesus Christ.

His death reversed the curse.

CONCLUSION

[Genesis 4](#) is not a story about the first murder.

It is a story about how sin operates in ordinary people — how it starts in the heart, moves to the hand, reaches into the home, spreads through the community, until a man can brag to his wives about killing someone, calling it a strength.

But it's also a story about God.

The God who did not walk away from Cain after the offering.

The God who warned him before he acted.

The God who asked "Where is your brother?" knowing full well what was up.

The God who placed a mark on the man who deserved none.

The God who — in the same chapter where Lamech was boasting — preserved a people who were still calling on his name.

That God has not changed.

Like with Cain, He's asking us today:

"Why are you angry? And why do you look despondent?"

He is not asking because he does not know.

He is asking because he wants you to confess it.

He's offering us the same thing he offered Cain — the chance to deal with your sin before your sin deals with you.

And for those who feel like sin already got through — who feel like the damage is done, like the pattern has already been handed down —

Here's what you need to know...

The cycle can be broken. Right here. Right now.

By you.

There is blood that speaks better than Abel's.

There is a mark that is not exile but belonging.

There is a new line God is building through the rubble of your worst experiences.

You can be the one — in your family, in your bloodline, in your generation — who stops answering "*Am I my brother's keeper?*" the way Cain did, and starts *calling on the name* of the LORD.

Altar call _____

[Genesis 4](#) ends with one line: "At that time people began to call on the name of the LORD."

In the same chapter where Cain murdered and Lamech boasted — somebody called on God's name.

That same invitation is on the table right now.

If you have never called on his name — this is your moment. Sin has been crouching at your door, just like the lion, and you have had no power to rule over it. Come forward. Confess that you are a sinner, profess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, surrender your life to him.

We would love to talk to you about that and pray with you.

If you know you have drifted — this is your moment too. Your offering has been hollow and you have felt the distance. Come forward and recommit yourself to calling on His name.

And if you are walking with Jesus and you want to affirm afresh that he is your Lord — come forward with gratitude. Come saying — Thank you, Father, that the cycle is broken. Thank you that I belong to you.

There is room for every one of us at this altar. The lost should come. The wandering should come. The faithful should come.

Cain was asked a question and walked away. Lamech never even heard the question. But Seth's line — they called on his name.

Which line are you standing in today?

Come. Call on his name. And keep calling.

Would you join me in prayer?

Unsaved, repented, committed....

When sin has your heart, your worship becomes bitter to God.

Unchecked sinful desires will overtake you.

Unresolved sin does not die with you — it lives on in future generations.

Only God's mercy has the power to break the cycle of sin

Thank God

Adore him

3 Circles: Now for those of you who just called on the Lord as your savior for the first time, please indicate that on your cc and there will be a gift waiting for you at Guest Connection on your way out.

Closing: Prayer/questions, CC, invites, Anniversary cake, LGLAHP

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But we also watched God do something that they didn't deserve.

He covered their shame. He made them a promise.

And I told you — your failure is not final. God promises restoration through the person of Jesus Christ.

That's true. I stand by every word of it.

But I need you to understand what happened next.

Because their story didn't end with a promise.

The story continued with a family —

and that family was already broken before it started.

Adam and Eve last cast out the garden.

And the first thing recorded after the exile is the birth of two sons — Cain and Abel.

These are not strangers in a distant land.
These are the children of the Fall.
Born outside the garden.
Born into a world their parents broke.
Born carrying the weight of a curse they did not choose.

And if you thought sin would stay contained to just Adam and Eve —
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Cain brought *"some of the land's produce."* No qualifier. No firstfruits. Just *some*.

The LORD had regard for Abel and his offering, but he did not have regard for Cain and his offering.

Before you go looking for the difference in the gifts — there's no need.

The problem was not that Cain brought grain instead of blood.
No serious Bible scholar supports that reading.

The problem was never the gift. It was the giver.

God does not weigh the offering. God weighs the worshiper.

Cain had something on the inside — jealousy, resentment, a competitive spirit that had quietly turned worship into a transaction.

And that thing on the inside soiled everything he brought to the outside.

That's how corruption works. It doesn't announce itself.

It works the way a single drop of contamination works in a well — quietly, invisibly, until everything drawn from that well is compromised.

Cain looked like a worshiper. Nobody on the outside could tell the difference. He showed up. He brought something. He went through the motions.

I showed up God. I brought something to you. Now you owe me acknowledgment. Pat me on the head and tell me I'm a good boy.

Cain wanted God to accept a self-willed offering on self-chosen terms, and that is exactly what made his offering bitter.

Now here's the uncomfortable truth — Sometimes our heart behind the gifts we bring to God. Our acts, Our worship. Our deeds are no different than Cain's heart.

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I can stand in this pulpit, open this Bible, deliver this manuscript with everything I have — and still be performing.

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It's a real temptation.

And if it's real for the pastor, it's real for the whole church.

You can sing every word. Give every week. Serve when scheduled.

And attend every Sunday.

And God can look at all of it and say — *there's no love for me in this. You're not worshipping me. You're engaging in a transaction, you want something from me.*

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Name it before God before you bring anything else.

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If you're serious about maintaining a true heart of worship, this is where it starts.

You know...

God did not walk away from Cain after the rejection. He moved toward him. He asked a question. He gave a warning.

He did that because what's inside you, if you don't deal with it, does not stay inside It will and does come out .

Which brings us to our second truth.

Unchecked sinful desires will overtake you. v6-7

God does exactly what he did with Cain's parents in the garden — moves toward the broken person and asks a question he already knows the answer to.

"Why are you angry? And why do you look despondent?"

Not accusation. Intervention.

"If you do what is right, won't you be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is for you, but you must rule over it."

The Hebrew word for crouching is *"rovets"* — the posture of a predator lying in wait. Not running after you. Not charging.

Patient. Calculated. Unnoticed.

Sin does not already have you. It is waiting for your decision.

And here is what that looks like in real life.

[VIDEO: BBC Earth "How Lions Hunt" — <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6fMBRCKUkSQ> — cue 1:45. Let it run until the Cape Buffalo is taken down.]

That Cape Buffalo never saw it coming.

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Then one day you pull out the card *just this once* — and with one swipe you re-enslaved yourself to the very thing you spent years getting free from.

That is what Cain did.

And the moment he opened the door, watch how sin spread through him:

First he was jealous. Left unaddressed, jealousy became resentment.

Resentment became anger.

Anger became bitterness.

Bitterness became premeditation — "let's go out to the field."

Premeditation became murder.

Murder became deception — "I don't know where he is."

Deception became exile — removal from the presence of God.

One unchecked sin became eight.

Every sin has children. Jealousy parents resentment.
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If you trace almost any destructive behavior back far enough, you will find something small that someone refused to deal with at the door.

The most dangerous moments are not the loud, obvious ones.
It's the quiet ones — when nothing appears to be happening but something is getting closer.

Now the secular world has measured this damage.

Therapists will tell you unprocessed anger is destructive.

The FBI's own crime data confirms that most homicides happen between people who knew each other — triggered by conflicts that were never resolved.

Now therapy is a good tool.

I am not telling anyone in this room to stop seeing your counselor.

But therapy can help you manage what is crouching.

It can even help you keep the door closed.

But it cannot give you dominion over it.

God does not say to Cain: *manage your anger*.

He says: "Its desire is for you — but you must rule over it."

That is not management language. That is dominion language.

Dominion starts by naming what's crouching at your door.

Not the sanitized version. Not a generalization. The actual thing.

You cannot confront what you will not name.

You cannot rule over what you keep pretending is not there.

For those of you in Christ — you have the Spirit of the living God inside you. The same power that raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you.

You are not helpless.

You have already been given dominion over what crouches at your door. But dominion has to be exercised — weekly, daily, hourly, and sometimes moment-by-moment.

And the way you do that is by bringing "that which crouches" to the One who already broke its power over you.

Bring it to Jesus.

For those of you who do not know Jesus — you are facing the same crouching sin but without the same power to rule over it.

I am going to address that directly in Point 4. S. stay with me.

Cain did rule over his sin. He opened the door.

And what got through did not stay with him.

It spread.

Which brings us to our third truth.

Unresolved sin does not die with you — it lives on in future generations. v8-12, 23-24

Cain walked away from that conversation with God and did nothing.

He didn't lock the door. He didn't confess. He didn't repent.

He let his anger percolate and boil over into murder.

"Cain said to his brother Abel, 'Let's go out to the field.'"

And while they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him".

The word brother appears eight times in verses 2 through 11.

Not an enemy. Not a stranger. His brother.

The text will not let you forget the relationship Cain destroyed.

Now his brother is dead.

And God inquires...

"Where is your brother Abel?" [Cain responds] "I don't know.

Am I my brother's guardian [keeper]?"

[To which God says...] Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground! Now you are cursed, alienated from the ground from which you buried your brother.

It's important to note that God's judgment on Cain is specific to him. Only Cain is cursed, not humanity. When God judged Adam and Eve, he cursed satan and the land, not man directly.

But God cursed Cain, he will spend the rest of his life as restless, hungry, wanderer, always a day late and dollar short.

But the text does not stop with Cain.

Five generations later — a man named Lamech.

He takes two wives — the first recorded act of polygamy in Scripture, a fracturing of God's one-flesh design of [Genesis 2](#).

Then Lamech gathers his two wives and delivers a speech.

Not a confession. Not a prayer.

But boast. Look @ v23 with me...

"Adah and Zillah, hear my voice; wives of Lamech, pay attention to my words. I killed a man for wounding me, a young man for striking me. If Cain is to be avenged seven times over, then for Lamech it will be seventy-seven times!"

Cain killed in a moment of unchecked rage. He was warned. God confronted Him. He knew what he did was wrong — he tried to hide it.

Lamech killed a young man simply for wounding him.

He doesn't hide it. He performs it. Wears it like badge of honor.

What happened in five generations?

What Cain did in a field and tried to cover up,

Lamech does openly and writes a song about.

The shame is gone. Morality is gone. Only proud boasting in oneself remains.

Loved ones, this is what unaddressed sin does, it gets handed down, with each generation becoming more depraved.

Drifting further away from God.

Before we proceed I need to make a distinction—

I know some of you have heard teaching about generational curses.

The Bible does not support that theology.

The idea that you are spiritually bound by what your ancestors did, that a curse is literally moving through your
bloodline — the Bible doesn't teach that.

In fact [Ezekiel 18:20](#) says the opposite.

"The person who sins is the one who will die. A son won't suffer punishment for the father's iniquity, and a
father won't suffer punishment for the son's iniquity."

You are only answerable for your sin.

We are not cursed because of what our fathers sin.

You sin, and its penalty is assigned to you.

Sin that remains unconquered, unconfessed, and unresolved does not stay contained to the person carrying it.

It becomes the fabric the next generation grows up wearing — so normal to them they no longer know what
godliness even looks like.

Cain's sin was never dealt with. His descendants grew up in a world where violence was just how things
worked.

By the time Lamech arrives, he has no framework for thinking murder is wrong — because nobody in his line
ever showed him how to live for God

That's not a curse. That's a consequence of perpetuating the same environment.

A curse requires supernatural deliverance.

A consequence requires a decision — somebody in the line has to choose differently.

Some of you in this room are that somebody.

You came from a family where the pattern ran deep — addiction, rage, abandonment, abuse, poverty, sexual
immorality — and everybody expected you to end up just like them. They wrote you off.

But you're sitting here today because somebody decided the pattern stopped with them. Maybe that was you.
Maybe a parent. Maybe a praying grandmother who refused to let the cycle have the last word.

That's the mercy of God interrupting a consequence that would not stop on its own.

That being said, know this...

There are people in your life who are living inside whatever you have refused to deal with.

They may not know it yet. You may not see it yet.

But make no mistake —

What you normalize, they will naturalize.

What you excuse in yourself, they will excuse in themselves. What you refuse to bring to God, they may never
know can be brought to God at all.

Your impact is greater than I realize.

Cain tried to hide his sin.

Lamech posted his on tik-tok.

So the question isn't just *"What is this doing to me?"*

The question is: what will my undealt-with sin do in the lives of the people around me and generations to
come?

That question should weigh heavy on you.

Don't rush past it. How will your unresolved sin impact others?

But if this was where the sermon ended — with the weight of our failure and the reach of its consequences — it would be a sermon without a gospel.

I didn't come here to leave you under the weight of your sin.

I came to show you how to get free from it.

So, how do you break the cycle?

Not willpower — Cain had that.

Not good intentions — Cain did not plan to become a murderer.

Not better information — God told him face to face. Yet he killed his brother anyway.

There is only one thing that has ever broken a sin cycle.

It is not a program. Not a principle. Not a method.

It is mercy.

And that mercy has a name.

Only God's mercy has the power to break the cycle of sin. v13-16, 25-26

After the murder. After the lies. After the exile is pronounced.

Cain protests:

"My punishment is too great to bear! Since you are banishing me today from the face of the earth, and I must hide from your presence and become a restless wanderer on the earth, whoever finds me will kill me." v13-14

Really Cain? You killed your brother. Hid his body. And lied to God.

And you have the audacity to say, "your punishment is too great"?

He is not repentant. He's afraid. He's only worried about saving his own skin.

Notice how God respond? He responds with mercy.

He places a mark on Cain. Not a mark of shame.

A mark of protection. v15

The Hebrew word is "ot" — the same word used throughout Scripture for a sign of covenant care. We do not know what the mark looked like. Or even where it was placed.

But we do know its function: It said hands off, Cain still belongs to me. Even after what he did. Even in exile. God says don't touch him.

walk with me for moment...

The man who killed his brother, lied to God's face, and showed no repentance — God still marked him as protected. Not because Cain earned it.

But because God's mercy does not wait for your apology to start working.

And the same is true for you.

While you were still caught in the grip of your sin — not after you cleaned up, not after you said sorry, not after you got your act together

God had already marked you.
He predestined you for salvation before you ever wanted it.
He held back the destruction you earned.
You were his enemy — and he showed you mercy anyway.

That should mess all of us up.

Had God waited for Cain to repent before he acted,
Cain would have died in that field with no protection and no future.

And if God waited for you to get right before he moved,
you would still be out there — unmarked, uncovered, and unaware that mercy was even an option.

But he didn't wait. He never does.
Even when we don't know that God is working —
He working on our behalf

Now this chapter, does not end with Cain.
It does not end with Lamech's boast.

It ends with Seth — a new line, a new beginning.
v26 says....

"At that time people began to call on the name of the LORD."

In the same chapter where sin escalated to boasting, God preserved a people who still knew how to call on his name.

The darkness got darker. But the light kept conquering it.

Abel's blood cried from the ground for justice. For vengeance. For God to act against the one who shed it.

But [Hebrews 12:24](#) says:

"You have come to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which says better things than the blood of Abel."

"Better things".

Hold on to that phrase.

Not vengeance — forgiveness.
Not condemnation — reconciliation.
Not exile — access to God.

Abel was the first righteous person killed unjustly by his brother. ([Matt 23:34-35](#)) Jesus was the last.

In Jesus's death the pattern is not repeated —
it is reversed.

The innocent death of Abel produced only exile.
The innocent death of Jesus produces justification, adoption, and access to the Father.

Notice the counter-trajectory:

Cain to Lamech — one murder becomes a boast. Unchecked sin escalates.

Cross to resurrection — one death becomes the end of death.
Grace escalates faster than sin ever could.

The only blood that stops the cycle is the blood of Jesus Christ.
His death reversed the curse.

[Genesis 4](#) is not a story about the first murder.

It is a story about how sin operates in ordinary people — how it starts in the heart, moves to the hand, reaches into the home, spreads through the community, until a man can brag to his wives about killing someone and call it strength.

But it's also a story about God.

The God who did not walk away from Cain after the offering.

The God who warned him before the act.

The God who asked "Where is your brother?" knowing full well what was up.

The God who placed a mark on the man who deserved none.

The God who — in the same chapter where Lamech was boasting — preserved a people who were still calling on his name.

That God has not changed.

Like with Cain, He's asking us today:

"Why are you angry? And why do you look despondent?"

He is not asking because he does not know.

He is asking because he wants you to confess it.

He is offering you the same thing he offered Cain — the chance to deal with your sin before your sin deals with you.

And for those who feel like sin already got through — who feel like the damage is done, the pattern has already been handed down —

You need to know...

The cycle can be broken. Right here. Right now.

By you.

There is blood that speaks better than Abel's.

There is a mark that is not exile but belonging.

There is a new line God is building through the rubble of your worst experiences.

You can be the one — in your family, in your bloodline, in your generation — who stops answering "*Am I my brother's keeper?*" the way Cain did, and starts *calling on the name* of the LORD.

Altar call _____

[Genesis 4](#) ends with one line: "At that time people began to call on the name of the LORD."

In the same chapter where Cain murdered and Lamech boasted — somebody called on God's name.

That same invitation is on the table right now.

If you have never called on his name — this is your moment. Sin has been crouching at your door, just like the lion, and you have had no power to rule over it. Come forward. Confess that you are a sinner, profess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, surrender your life to him.

We would love to talk to you about that and pray with you.

If you know you have drifted — this is your moment too. Your offering has been hollow and you have felt the distance. Come forward and recommit yourself to calling on His name.

And if you are walking with Jesus and you want to affirm afresh that he is your Lord — come forward with gratitude. Come saying — Thank you, Father, that the cycle is broken. Thank you that I belong to you.

There is room for every one of us at this altar. The lost should come. The wandering should come. The faithful should come.

Cain was asked a question and walked away. Lamech never even heard the question. But Seth's line — they called on his name.

Which line are you standing in today?

Come. Call on his name. And keep calling.

Would you join me in prayer?

Unsaved, repented, committed....

When sin has your heart, your worship becomes bitter to God.

Unchecked sinful desires will overtake you.

Unresolved sin does not die with you — it lives on in future generations.

Only God's mercy has the power to break the cycle of sin

Thank God

Adore him

3 Circles: Now for those of you who just called on the Lord as your savior for the first time, please indicate that on your cc and there will be a gift waiting for you at Guest Connection on your way out.

Closing: Prayer/questions, CC, invites, Anniversary cake, LGLAHP