

# WORSHIP WHICH PLEASES GOD

RR # 706

## INTRO

- Normally at this time of the year ~~ sermons focus on what **Jesus did** for sinners when He was born in a manger ...
  - Today - want to turn the tables and have us think about what sinners can do to **please God**
    - An important thing to know if we're trying to **please God** ... is how **He** wants us to **worship Him**
      - This is such a significant topic ... this is our **2<sup>nd</sup>** sermon on worship in **2** months ... last one was taken from **Psalms 95**
- Want us to see some principles on how to **worship** God in a way which **pleases Him** by looking at the difference in how a couple Biblical Characters tried to worship Him
  - We'll learn key concepts about worship from ~~ **Cain** and **Able**

## **#1 ~ FOR WORSHIP TO PLEASE GOD ... MUST HAVE THE RIGHT SACRIFICE**

- **Heb 11:4** starts: *By faith, **Able** offered God a more excellent sacrifice*
  - **Able** was the second son born of Adam & Eve ... younger brother of **Cain**
    - **Gen 4:2** tells us: **Able** kept flocks of animals ~ **Cain** worked the soil
- Their story reveals there's a **right** and **wrong** way to worship God
  - Seems like the Holy Spirit included this story in the Bible to teach God's Children how to worship God in a way which pleases Him
    - **Jesus** focused on worshippers which please God: **John 4:23**
      - Part of worshipping God in **spirit** involves having the right attitude
        - Worshipping God in **truth** means to do so IAW His Word
- Jesus knew this contrast was important ~~ He shared: **Luke 18:9 – 14** → →

- **COL/152:** *The Pharisee and the ( tax collector ) represent two great classes ( of ) those who come to worship ( God ) .... Their first two representatives are found in the first two children that were born into the world. **Cain** thought himself righteous, and he came to God with a thank offering only. He made no confession of sin, and acknowledged no need of mercy. But **Abel** came with ... blood ( which ) pointed to the Lamb of God. He came as a sinner, confessing himself lost; his only hope was the unmerited love of God. The Lord had respect to his offering, but to **Cain** and his offering He had not respect. The sense of need, the recognition of our poverty and sin, is the very first condition of acceptance with God.*
- Let's see how **Abel** offered to God a **better sacrifice** than Cain ... **Gen 4:3, 4**
  - Apparently ~ **God** had given specific instructions concerning the time, place, and type of sacrifice which would please Him
    - **Cain** was a hard-working farmer who plowed, planted, cultivated, and harvested his crops ... all **w/o** a diesel-powered tracker
      - At harvest time, **Cain** came to worship God and brought the fruits of **his** hard work
        - **Abel** offered the fat portions ... from the firstborn animals
          - Fat portions = the best parts
          - First born = putting God first
  - In my imagination ... **Cain's** offering was certainly more visually pleasant than **Abel's**
    - I see it as beautifully arranged ~ with colorful fruits and vegetables on the altar
  - **Conversely** **Abel's** offering **wasn't** very appealing ~ all the blood & fatty tissue
    - God's Ways are not like man's ways ... **Gen 4 b – 5 a**
      - **Abel's** sacrifice was accepted because it involved blood and testified to the death of a coming Substitute {This wasn't the first indication...}
        - When Adam/Eve sinned - God covered their nakedness ~ **Gen 3:21**
          - Here a sacrificial slaughter of animals is implied when God clothed His wayward children w/ skins to cover their shame
    - God was teaching **a key principle:** the covering of sin requires shed blood
      - The blood sacrifice points toward the future act **Jesus** on the Cross

- **Abel** knew what God demanded ~ and **by faith** ~ he acted appropriately
  - **Cain's** offering was quite different ... it represents all the "**good things**" people try to offer God
    - **Cain's** offering was the result of **his own** hard work ...
- **Cain** offered to God a sacrifice which seems to say: "*My sins aren't so bad ... and my good works should be enough to cover them.*"

**&&&**

- **Unfortunately** there still many of **Cain's** psychological descendants **in** God's Church
  - They bring the wrong offering as they try to worship God ... in their own way
    - They're friendly ~ hard-working ~ moral people who come offering God **their** good works
      - Maybe these saints aren't familiar with **Ish 64:6**
        - **Filthy Rages** doesn't describe the people's **sins** ... rather it describes their feeble attempts at self-righteousness
  - Trying to worship God based on self-righteousness doesn't please Him ...
    - This type of worship doesn't do the sinner any good either - **Prov 14:12**
- God accepted **Abel's** sacrifice because through it ~ **Abel** was saying to God:
  - **Good works aren't enough ~ I can't do anything to earn forgiveness**
    - Worship which pleases God conforms to His Word: **I.E. Heb 9:22**
- We can live a good moral life ~ attend church ~ return a tithe ~ evangelism sinners ...
  - But **unless** we worship God based on the **blood sacrifice** of Jesus ...
    - ... ALL OUR DEEDS ARE AS FILTHY RAGES ... in the sight of God

**TRANS:** Worship which pleases God **requires the right sacrifice** ... and:

## # 2 – WE MUST HAVE THE RIGHT SPIRIT

- We're come to the real issue
  - **Cain's** wrong sacrifice was a **symptom** of his real problem: **Gen 4:4, 5**
- Here we see the true attitude of Cain's heart ~ if he really wanted to please God ...
  - He would have **humbled** himself - gone and returned w/ the proper sacrifice
    - When we give the "wrong gift" to someone we love ... (as they define it) we don't get made ~ we go and get **the gift they want**
- Notice **God's** reaction to Cain - **Gen 4:6, 7**
  - Because God already knows all things ~ He's **not asking** to get information
    - When God asked Adam/Eve ... "Where are you?" ... He knew where they were and what they had done
      - **God questions us to bring us to confession / repentance**
- **V 7** indicates Cain knew the right way to come to God ... so - no reason for his anger
  - All Cain had to do was bring the proper sacrifice
    - Real problem wasn't the sacrifice ~ but **Cain's spirit**
      - Cain wanted to pay his way with things he'd made
        - **Pridefully** ... he refused to bring God's required sacrifice
          - **Proverbs 13:10 a - 16:18 - 29:23**
- We all know people who **don't** get baptized ~ **don't** return a tithe ~ **don't** join God's Remnant Church ...
  - They want to establish a relationship with God – but only based on their terms
    - **Luke 12:8 – 9**
      - I submit we deny God ... by **NOT** doing things His Way

- Want to learn your real attitude ~ notice how you act when God spotlights your sins
  - Sometimes God points out our sinfulness through the reading of His Word ~ maybe it's the SS Lesson ~ a song in the Worship Service ~ or a dear friend
    - When God shows us our sin ... He expects the right sacrifice
      - **With the right spirit - we'll gladly offer the right sacrifice**
- **Psm 51:17** tells us what the right sacrifice is ~~ [ having the right spirit ]
  - When receiving forgiveness ... **humility** and **sincerity** are the right attitudes to have towards God
    - **Ish 66:2**
      - An attitude of reverence toward God's Word ... *and listening as one who can be taught* ~~ this **pleases** God
- Let me share the obvious: **God speaks to us in many ways to point out our sin**
  - As His Children ~ we'll either repent and forsake our **sin** ... or rebel
    - **Gen 4:7**
      - God spoke to Cain in person ... [ to most through the Bible ]
        - Cain refused to listen to God ... and ventured into the deep-end of the sin-pool
- **We** live in a world which has **rejected God's authority** ... Satan's Way seems to rule
  - Generally ~~ most people act like Cain and want to do things their own way
    - **My Way**
      - Popularized by **Frank Sinatra** in 1969 ... it spent 75 weeks in the **Top 40** ~ a record which still stands today ... some **50** years later
- The song expresses the approach used by **Cain** ~ and many so-called Christians
  - **Cain's** issue wasn't a lack of knowledge of what God desires ~ but his attitude
    - Just like Cain; many know what God requires ... we just refuse to submit
      - The only right way we can come to God and worship Him ... is the way He has prescribed: **John 14:6**

## CONCLUSION

- **Abel's** offering was acceptable to God ~ **Heb 11:4**
  - Interesting that **not** a single word of what **Abel said** is recorded in the Bible
    - None-the-less ~ he's been speaking to God's Children for centuries ... telling us *the kind of worship which pleases God*
- Will we listen to **Abel** this morning ...
  - Will we respond to his teaching on the **only** true way to worship God ...
    - Which is with the right sacrifice [ **shed blood of Jesus** ] ... and with the right spirit [ **a humble** and **submissive heart** ]
- Let's prayerfully ask the Holy Spirit to show us where we're lacking ~~ let's ask for His help to do things God's Way ... which will please God

### **NEXT SABBATH:**

1. **Baptisms** and a fellowship meal
2. Because of the Baptisms ~~ we'll explore How to Walk with God: **Heb 11:5, 6**

Hymn # 412 ~ Cover With His Life