

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 an significant topic ... this is our **2nd** 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.*"
 - **Cain** offered God a man-made salad bar ~ a shrine of human pride & arrogance

&&&

- **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