



Shepherd's Path

A Shepherd's Personal Devotions

Pass the Promise Series, Lesson 8

Lesson Title: Cain and Abel

Take Home Point: Don't let sin be your master – follow God!

Warm-Up:

We have all heard the story about the frog who is put into tepid water – it feels good to the cold-blooded amphibian so he doesn't move. But then as the temperature is slowly raised, the frog adjusts to it until it is too late and he is killed by boiling water. That story is a good analogy of how we miss the impending peril if we become accustomed to a sin slowly but steadily. Now here's the difference. The frog didn't have much of a choice about being put into the water of the experiment, but we can choose whether or not we yield to sin's temptation and get "into the water" in the first place.

Read: Genesis 4:1-16

Observation (What happened?):

How did Cain respond to God's rejection of his offering?

How did Cain respond when God asked where his brother was?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

Why do you think Abel's offering was acceptable to God while Cain's was not?

Based on his actions and words, what do you think Cain considered to be the worst part of his punishment, "more than I can stand"?

Insight:

It seems so effortless to fall into sin, doesn't it? That's because, contrary to popular belief, our heart has a natural proclivity toward sin. Paul spoke of that in Romans 7:19-20 "I don't do the good I want to do. Instead, I do the evil that I don't want to do...Sin that lives in me is doing it." And as we sin, we gradually develop a hardness of heart, especially if it is deliberate sin. It is the original "slippery slope," and only God reaching out to pull us up can keep us from sliding all the way to hell. He certainly reached out to Cain. First, in Genesis 4:6-7, God warned Cain to take care so sin would not take control. Then, in 4:14, after Abel's murder, Cain said he would have to hide from the Lord, and God replied, "Not so!" But Cain could not believe God's word of grace, so he "left the LORD'S presence." God didn't leave Cain; Cain left God. How sad, and how common still today, that so many people refuse God's presence and strength to resist sin because they won't believe it is true.

Application (What does it mean to me?):

What can you do every day to keep your heart from becoming hard like Cain's?

Pray for your small group children to see the seriousness of sin and that with God's help they can resist it.