

Conversations with the Killer

Genesis 4:1-24

Two brothers, but soon there will be one.

It all begins with false worship. And jealousy. (Gen 4:1-5)

- There are two clues why Cain's offering was rejected and Abel's was accepted (Gen 4:3-4; cf. Heb 11:4)

Conversation #1: The Counselor (Gen 4:6-7)

- *DEW: Diagnoses, Encourages, Warns*
- Diagnoses: You're angry. Why?
 - The face, the emotions: indicators of the heart, and can be signs of bad things. (Jonah 4:3-4; cf. 1 John 3:12)
- Encourages: You can have a fresh start and be accepted!
 - Repentance for the forgiveness of sins is implied here (cf. Mark 1:15; Luke 24:47)
- Warns: Your current path will kill you.
 - For the first time, sin is described as a *thing*. No, actually it's more than that. It's a *predator*. It's crouching at the door. It will have you for lunch. (cf. 1 John 3:12; John 8:34; Rom 6:16)

Conversation #2: The Judge (Gen 4:8-16)

- Diagnoses: Where is your brother?
- Judges: Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground!
 - Cain will not be able to work the ground anymore.
 - He complains, but this judgment includes mercy: no capital punishment (see Gen 9:6 later), and sevenfold judgment on anyone who kills Cain.
 - Aftermath: Soon the first polygamist claims a 77-fold judgment on anyone who avenges the murder he has committed! (Gen 4:23-24). Sin grows and becomes more brazen.

"...Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel." (Heb 12:24)

- Abel's blood cried out for justice, but Jesus' blood cries out for *mercy*.

Questions for Further Reflection and Application:

1. How can you apply Genesis 4:1-5 to the way you worship God in your life?
2. The idea of sin as a crouching predator is horrifying (Gen 4:7). We typically think *we're* in control, we're freely choosing to do what we want. Consider the words in John 8:34, Rom 6:16.
 - a. Have you experienced or seen in others that these words are true?
 - b. How should that make you a different 'counselor' to others?
3. God allowing martyrdom should be surprising. But what is God's plan for martyrdom? See Heb 12:24.