

Anger, Despondency, and The Sanctity of Human Life

Genesis 4:1-17

Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Peter LaRuffa / February 14, 2021

- I. **You need to remember God is the “Author of Life,” so we can’t write the final chapter for ourselves or anyone else.**

Acts 3:15 “And you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead...”

Acts 17:25 “Nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything.”

Job 33:4 “The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life.”

Murder is sin secondarily because of what it does to the victim, but primarily because it’s an affront to God who decides our length of days.

- II. **You need to realize you’re no different from murderous Cain if you’re characterized by anger and despondency.**

Genesis 4:5-7 “...So Cain was very angry, and his face fell. ⁶The Lord said to Cain, ‘Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen?’ ⁷If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it.”

The term translated “very angry” literally means he was burning with anger.
The term translated “face fell” literally means he was despondent; hopeless.

God’s hopeful warning to Cain isn’t one that’s limited to him or his day and age. If we’re driven by our passions, we’ll say and do things we never thought possible.

James 1:20 “For the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.”

Romans 12:19 “Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, ‘Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.’”

James 4:1-4 “What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? ²You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. ³You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions. ⁴You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.”

- III. **You need to beware of a callous, indifferent attitude towards victims of violence, suffering, & death.**

Genesis 4:9-10 “Then the Lord said to Cain, ‘Where is Abel your brother?’ He said, ‘I do not know; am I my brother’s keeper?’ ¹⁰And the Lord said, ‘What have you done?’”

When God confronts Adam in Genesis 3, he denied his personal responsibility by blaming Eve. When God confronts Cain in Genesis 4, Cain denies his moral responsibility. He's not saying he didn't do it, but angrily asking why he should care.

IV. You'll most effectively advocate for the sanctity of human life if Gospel transformation is your primary motivation.

God shows Himself to be a God of perfect judgment, but also One who desires people to repent and receive saving grace, mercy, and forgiveness.

A. God righteously judges Cain, but also protects him.

Genesis 4:13-15 "Cain said to the Lord, 'My punishment is greater than I can bear. ¹⁴Behold, You have driven me today away from the ground, and from Your face I shall be hidden. I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me.' ¹⁵Then the Lord said to him, 'Not so! If anyone kills Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold.' And the Lord put a mark on Cain, lest any who found him should attack him."

B. Even though Cain deserved to die for his sin, God allows him to live and have a family.

Genesis 4:16-17 "Then Cain went away from the presence of the Lord and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden. ¹⁷Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch..."

This is why we pray for people who don't think, act, or love Jesus like us. God desires all to be saved!

1 Timothy 2:1-4 "First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, ²for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. ³This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, ⁴who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."

Questions for Personal Reflection and/or Community Group Discussion:

1. There are so many examples of people, born and preborn, who aren't treated with the dignity and value they deserve as image-bearers. What person(s) weigh on your heart the most these days?
2. Recall a time in your life (past or present) when anger and/or despondency had a significant presence in your heart and mind. How did that trickle over into other areas of your life? How did it impact your relationships with others?
3. When Cain responds to God "Am I my brother's keeper?" he's denying his moral responsibility to his brother. When do you find yourself saying or thinking something similarly? When was the last time you said or thought "Why should I care?"
4. Do you pray for people you don't like? Do you pray for government leaders who think differently or outright oppose you? Why or why not?
5. Pastor Peter emphasized the importance of "heart transformation" when it comes to advocating for the Sanctity of Human Life. Maybe you can get involved. Maybe you can encourage and pray for someone who already is. Maybe you can financially support a ministry that's seeking to equip others to serve in this way. What "next step" can you take when it comes to taking part in changing hearts for His glory and advocating for the Sanctity of Human Life?