

heaven?" *what would you say? What would your answer be? Do you have your answer in your mind? Many people will say something like, "Lord, you know my record. I have lived a good life. I try to follow your commandments. I go to church." If that is the kind of answer you thought in your heart, you are still unrighteous like Cain. The only answer God will accept is something like, "Lord, I have placed my faith in Christ to save me from hell and He promised me forgiveness and eternal life in heaven."*

3. By Faith Abel's Testimony Continues

a. Abel was saved by faith

- 1) It was his faith in God that saved him from judgment to come.
- 2) His faith enabled God to declare him righteous. Righteous means that he was right with God.

b. Cain did not kill Abel's faith

- 1) Cain in jealous anger killed his brother Abel. Physically Abel died, but spiritually he still lives today.
- 2) Because he still lives, his faith is still a testimony us. He is a testimony that obeying God by faith is the only way to become righteous in God's sight and to receive eternal life.

Conclusion: God tells us in the Bible that Jesus Christ, the perfect Lamb of God, shed His blood and died as your substitute. He offers you righteousness and eternal life if you will by faith repent and trust Him alone to save your soul. Do you believe God? Faith is acting upon that trusted information.

Remember, Cain was religious, but he was not righteous. Religious rituals cannot save your soul. Religion did not die for your sins, Christ did. Trust Him by faith.

If you have not truly by FAITH repented of your sin and asked Christ to apply His payment to your sinful soul, do it right now. Just humbly admit to God your sinfulness and ask Him to make you righteous.

Song: Only Trust Him - 252

By Faith Abel Offered

18 August 2019 AM - Hebrews 11:4 - Heb19 - Scott Childs

Introduction: As we preview the heroes of the faith in this chapter, we see that by faith **Abel** offered, by faith **Enoch** pleased God, by faith **Noah** built an ark, by faith **Abraham** travelled, by faith **Sarah** conceived, by faith **Abraham** sacrificed, by faith **Isaac** blessed... Each received directions from God, but they could not see what was ahead and they had to obey by faith.

Read Genesis 4:1-5 then Hebrews 11:4. By faith, Abel offered to God a blood sacrifice that made him righteous and enabled him to live forever to testify.

Transition: This morning, I want us to see three facts about Abel's faith that ought to challenge us to receive Christ's sacrifice to become righteous and live forever.

1. By Faith Abel Obeyed God

a. By faith he did what God had commanded

After Adam and Eve sinned and God removed them from the Garden of Eden, they bore Cain, Abel and many other unnamed children. We have no way of knowing how many years are included in the phrase "*in the process of time*" (Genesis 4:3). Certainly, Adam and Eve taught all of their children the ways of God, yet not all of them followed the Lord.

- 1) The Bible does not say that God gave them specific instructions regarding blood sacrifices to atone for their sins, but it seems likely that He did and that Cain rebelled.
 - a) The Hebrew word for "*offering*" describes a gift, tribute, offering, present, oblation, sacrifice, meat (meal) offering.
 - b) However, the fact that God was pleased when Abel "*brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof*" (Ge 4:4) seems to imply that God had required a blood sacrifice. In addition, Hebrews 11:4 calls his offering a *sacrifice*, which frequently refers to a blood sacrifice. Then in we read in Hebrews 11:39 that Abel is included in the saints who were

expecting God's promised redemption. Therefore, for the remainder of the sermon, I am going to assume that God had clearly required a blood sacrifice like the one Abel offered.

- 2) By faith, Abel offered unto God. He could not see how a sacrificed animal offering could atone for his sins. He just believed by faith that it would.

b. Abel's offering was more excellent.

- 1) In his rebellious heart, Cain must have concluded that his offering of the fruit of his garden was just as good as any lamb in Abel's flock. Perhaps he brought the best fruit in his garden, but that was not what God had required.
- 2) God tells us that Abel's offering was more excellent than Cain's. What made Abel's offering superior?
 - a) Abel's offering met that requirement and Cain's did not. (Hebrews 9:22) "*And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.*" God's holiness requires the blood of a spotless lamb to atone for sin.
 - b) Second, we know that Abel gave his offering by faith and Cain did not. Abel's faith is what God wants us to see in this passage. Abel acted upon trusted information and Cain fulfilled a ritual. Both gave an offering, but God only blessed the offering given by faith.
- 3) The Genesis record assures us that the brothers clearly knew that God regarded Abel's offering and rejected Cain's (Gen 4:4-5). To *regard* means to look upon with respect.
 - a) God does not tell us how they knew.
 - b) It is possible that fire came down from heaven and consumed Abel's offering but nothing happened to Cain's. We find an example of this in Lev. 9:24.
 - c) Perhaps God told them verbally. God spoke to Cain verbally in Genesis 4:6.
 - d) Somehow, they clearly knew God's response.

☞ *Jesus Christ, being God's perfect Lamb, became the ultimate*

and final sacrifice for sin when He died on the cross as our substitute. God's requirement now is, (John 3:36) "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." As in Abel's day, God will accept no substitutes for His requirement.

2. By Faith Abel Became Righteous

a. His faith testified that he was righteous

- 1) The Psalmist wrote, (Psalms 14:3) "*They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one.*" That included Abel.
- 2) However, Abel obeyed God and God declared him righteous.
- 3) In the Old Testament, God made people righteous by faith just as He does today. The difference is that today we have much more information on which to base our faith.
- 4) (Romans 4:4-5) "*Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.*"

☞ *The same is true today. Every human alive is either righteous before God or unrighteous. We are all sinners, but those who by faith trust Christ for salvation are made righteous. (2 Corinthians 5:21) "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Those who fail to trust Christ are unrighteous. There is no in-between.*

b. Cain was religious but not righteous

- 1) He gave an offering of his human efforts to God but that is not what God required. God asked for a blood offering and he offered God the fruit of his garden.
- 2) Cain was not made righteous because he failed to trust God by faith. Cain lacked faith in God's Word.
- 3) Personal faith in God is the difference between religion and Bible Christianity. Many religious people believe in God but they have never personally placed their faith in God's salvation.

☞ *Let me ask you a question. If you died and stood before God this afternoon and God asked you "Why should I let you into*