

## SERMON NOTES

April 18, 2010

Bryan Richardson, preaching

### *It Doesn't Have to Be This Way: A Lost Man in Conversation with God*

Genesis 4:1-16

**Only the heart that listens to God can access the power to turn a human life from its self-destructive course.**

"The line separating good and evil passes not through the states, nor between [social] classes nor between [political] parties either—but right through the human heart." —Alexander Solzhenitzyn

The grace of God at work in three conversations:

#### **Conversation One:** vv. 6-7

- The heart must be renovated: ". . . Sin is crouching at your door . . . but you must master it."

#### **Conversation Two:** v. 9

- Truth leads to freedom: "Where is your brother Abel?"

#### **Conversation Three:** vv. 10-15

- Hope remains.

Cain: "Whoever finds me will kill me."

The LORD: "Not so."

Unless it is renovated by God's power, the heart will grow too weak or too unwilling to counter the forces that will destroy a human life. It will in fact begin to welcome those forces, desiring what is evil.

*"The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure.*

*Who can understand it?"*

*(Jeremiah 17:9)*

## **Genesis 4:1-16 (New International Version)**

### **Cain and Abel**

<sup>1</sup> Adam lay with his wife Eve, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Cain. She said, "With the help of the LORD I have brought forth a man." <sup>2</sup> Later she gave birth to his brother Abel.

Now Abel kept flocks, and Cain worked the soil. <sup>3</sup> In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the LORD. <sup>4</sup> But Abel brought fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The LORD looked with favor on Abel and his offering, <sup>5</sup> but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast.

<sup>6</sup> Then the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? <sup>7</sup> If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it."

<sup>8</sup> Now Cain said to his brother Abel, "Let's go out to the field." And while they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him.

<sup>9</sup> Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?"  
"I don't know," he replied. "Am I my brother's keeper?"

<sup>10</sup> The LORD said, "What have you done? Listen! Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground. <sup>11</sup> Now you are under a curse and driven from the ground, which opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. <sup>12</sup> When you work the ground, it will no longer yield its crops for you. You will be a restless wanderer on the earth."

<sup>13</sup> Cain said to the LORD, "My punishment is more than I can bear. <sup>14</sup> Today you are driving me from the land, and I will be hidden from your presence; I will be a restless wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me."

<sup>15</sup> But the LORD said to him, "Not so ; if anyone kills Cain, he will suffer vengeance seven times over." Then the LORD put a mark on Cain so that no one who found him would kill him. <sup>16</sup> So Cain went out from the LORD's presence and lived in the land of Nod, east of Eden.