

Abel and His Offering

Book of Genesis

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Bible Text: Genesis 4:1-7

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Look with me in your Bibles to Genesis 4. I want to speak with you about Abel and his offering. What we're doing is going through the Scriptures on days when we meet around the Lord's Table and observe and see how throughout all of Scripture Christ and him crucified is the theme. Now, that is the theme of all true preaching and yet it's especially so as we meet around the Lord's Table by the Lord's commandment. He says to remember his death till he comes so it's just an added way of considering Christ and his death. But here in Genesis 4, I'm going to read from verse 1 down through verse 7 and see with you what it is that caused God to accept Abel and to reject Cain. To show mercy to Abel and yet to be angered with Cain. What was it? Well, in verse 1, Genesis 4,

1 And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD. 2 And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. 3 And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. 4 And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering:

There is the part that I want us to consider together, "the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering." What made the difference? It says,

5 But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. 6 And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? 7 If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.

So in this chapter, what we have here is really a picture of the difference that there is between the church, God's people in this world, and the world. How it is that God has purposed that his people approach him and worship him and how it is that the world is determined that it is going to worship God. There are many today that believe that it doesn't matter how you worship just that you worship. You'll hear people say, "It doesn't matter what church you attend, just attend. Be in the habit of attending and you'll know

God's blessing." But that is not a message that we find in Scripture. Does it matter how we worship? Does it matter who we worship? Absolutely. You can take all of the denominations in the world and divide them up into one of these 2 categories: either you are worshiping God in the way of Abel which is the way that God has ordained that we worship him or you are worshiping him in the way of Cain and sadly, there are many more descendents of Cain today as you look around than there are of Abel. But even that being said, it is all according to God's purpose. There wouldn't even be one of us worshiping according to the way of Abel had not God been pleased to teach us.

So all of mankind is represented in one of these 2 heads and that's really how the Scriptures layout salvation, don't they? The fact that there is a representative head. Why are we sinners today? Well, it's because we're descendents of Adam, so he was our representative head. Why are there saved sinners today? Well, it's because there is a representative head in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ who came and paid the debt for his people and upon completion of his work, God, his law and justice being satisfied. You think about it: so complete was the work of the Lord Jesus Christ that when he had finished that work and said, "It is finished," there remained nothing but righteousness for God to impute to the account of those that he represented. It wasn't a crapshoot, trying to figure out, "What's the best way in here?" Rolling the dice. No, it's all according to what God purposed from eternity for the salvation of sinners such as we are.

So in these 7 verses that I have read for us today, I want us to consider the status of Abel, if you will. He was one of 2 sons. Secondly, I want us to consider their occupation. You know, a lot of people like to think they chose their occupation but if I wanted to be a doctor in medicine and there was a time when I was a kid that I thought I wanted to be but the Lord hadn't given me the ability and talent and the know-how even to get through one class on anatomy, then it's pretty obvious that that's not the direction and occupation for me. Every one of us in doing what we're doing right now regardless of what we set out to do, we're doing exactly what God has purposed to do and what God purposes, he gives that ability and talent to do. So it's not even with regard to the difference between these occupations between Cain and Abel, neither of them could take glory for what they did but God purposed that Abel be a keeper of the sheep and especially when you think about his role in history being a type and picture of the Lord Jesus Christ and Cain being a tiller of the ground. I'm sure he labored like anybody else to produce the best fruit. I've run into some farmers like that. You see them by the side of the road with their tomatoes and their squash and their watermelons and if you're in a hurry, you might as well forget it because they are going to talk about those vegetables like they are their kids. They are proud of them. They are proud of the work of their hands. But there's a reason why Cain was in the occupation, particularly when you consider that role that God had purposed him to have as a representative of works religion and of those who seek to come to God by the works of their own hands.

There's no mistake here as to why each of these was doing what they were doing but the primary difference that we're going to see: what distinguished Abel from Cain? Well, it was in the way that they worshiped. I'm telling you all of this ahead of time because I want it to sink in as we go through this particular portion. You will go out and read some

commentators that say, "Well, the real difference was in their attitude. Abel came humbly. He came in a manner how we're to approach unto God and Cain came with an attitude. So if he would have just changed the attitude, then God would have accepted him just like he did Abel." I don't see anything mentioned here with regard to attitude but I do see a very specifically stated something very important with regard to offering. Therein is the difference, dear friends. If you shut me out from here forward and start thinking about other things going on and things you have to do, let this sink in by the grace of God and the Spirit of God: what matters is what offering. It is by which we come to God because we know that there is only one offering that God has ever accepted. There is only one righteousness which God has ever accepted and that's not your righteousness. It's not Ken's righteousness but that righteousness which the Lord Jesus Christ came and worked out.

But let's look back at the distinction between Abel and Cain is in their son ship, as being sons, alright? Abel was one of 2 sons. Now, it's interesting when you go back and study some of the names because Cain, when you look at the names you are thinking, "Now, wait a minute, it ought to be just the opposite." Cain signifies "possession." Do you know what Abel means? Abel actually means "vanity." You're sitting there thinking, "Now, why would Eve," because it says that in verse 1, "Adam knew Eve his wife and she conceived and bear Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD." So the idea of possession along with gotten, that's what a possession is, what you have gotten, indicates that Eve may well have thought according to what the Lord had promised that he would raise up a seed. Remember, this is all tied in with Genesis 3:15 when the Lord said, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman and between thy seed and her seed. It shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel." Already in the story of Cain and Abel, we're seeing the fulfilling of this prophecy that there would be enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent.

But Eve's problem was much like ours: we can look at somebody outwardly and think, "If anybody's the Lord's, that one is," and yet be completely confounded when you look over here and think in terms of children or whatever, "This one is an abject rebel. If anybody is not the Lord's, that one isn't." And what is the Lord to do? He confounds the wisdom of the wise. No matter what Eve thought about Cain, giving him that name "possession" in some manner, she thought and perhaps it was because he was the firstborn. Some argue that these would have been twins but Cain came first. I don't know but what's clear is that he is the first one mentioned here. "She bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD." Now, it's true, all of our children are gifts of the Lord so we could say that is true but in the sense of the fulfillment of this prophecy, in her mind it was that "this is that seed of the woman that God had promised should come." She didn't know it anymore than anybody else in the Old Testament that it would literally be 2,000 some years or more before that would be fulfilled in the Lord Jesus Christ but that was her hope and as we can see, what a disappointment.

We so often in observing, we think that, "we've gotten a man from the Lord." A lot of people think of it in terms of preachers. A man will come in for a while and he'll stand and if you're hungry to hear the Gospel, maybe he says a couple of things that kind of

lure you in and you're thinking, "We've gotten a man from the Lord." But given enough time or long enough, pretty soon you realize it's not a man from the Lord, it's a man from hell. That's to keep us from ever putting any confidence in a man. Don't any of us look around. We're going to have people come and go. Let's not ever hook our wagon or our hope or our faith on any man, physical human being. I don't care how close they seem to be to us at any one time. Our attention, our affection must be upon the Lord Jesus Christ alone, the man. Therein you'll never be disappointed. Therein you'll never fail.

That's what Cain was but you read down here in verse 2, "And she again bare his brother Abel." Now, why do you suppose she called him Abel? Well, the Lord purposed it but especially when you think about what Abel means, vanity. Vanity. Well, you could say she was already disappointed. You know, it may be just Cain's rebellion. It may be how he lived around the house or whatever. We don't know but there was something to cause her that when Abel came along she said, "This is vanity. Vanity, vanity, all is vanity." When she thought that she had obtained the promised seed perhaps in Cain and was so taken up with that possession, that another son being given along...I was just briefly watching the news early this morning. They were talking about birth orders: first, second and third and how the third really just kind of is left on their own. They are out there. Maybe this is how she thought, "I've already got in Cain the one the Lord promised so anything else from there is vanity." That could be one way of looking at it or she observed already that in that one it wasn't what she thought and so anything coming from there forward would be vanity.

Either way, I have to say that the name given to Abel aptly describes any of us as we're born as sons of Adam. If we think that we're something, we're not and certainly that's how it describes who we are as sinners. If you look over at Psalm 39:5, let us consider this and this is why I want to emphasize it. It's a name but in Scripture we find that every name has significance so lest we somehow think there was something better in Abel than was in Cain and that's why God catered to Abel versus looking upon Cain, what was Abel's name? Vanity. What's the name of any one of us sitting here? Vanity. And that's how we are described here in Psalm 39:5, "Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreadth," this is David writing, "and mine age is as nothing before thee." You see, we find somebody that lives to be 100 years old and we go, "Wow!" David said, "mine age is as nothing before thee." The older he got, it wasn't that he was getting wiser and therefore he was a man after God's own heart. He saw it just the opposite, "mine age, whatever wisdom I think I have," is what? "Nothing before thee: verily every man," notice this, "at his best state is altogether vanity." I'll tell you what, that puts this whole false theory of man's free will and somehow man is the master of his own fate, it throws it right off the ship into the waters and drowns it. That's what we're seeing here is that man in his best state is altogether vanity.

So that's why I say in looking at why it is that Abel was accepted and not Cain, I know it wasn't his person. It wasn't anything in his person although when you read his story, there is nothing in Scripture that shows him to be a vile man. He may have been very moral and yet morality, dear friends, is vanity before a holy God because morality doesn't answer to God's holiness. He might have been very patient in how he responded to Cain.

There are some people that like to show that, "Well, look how he responded. He was passive. Cain was the aggressor. Cain killed him and so all of that was his acceptance before the Lord." As Paul said, "That would be dung. That's cow dung," is the way Paul put it. None of that matters. His name says it all, vanity. Vanity. Man in his best state is vain.

But secondly, as we come back here to Genesis 4, let's look at their occupation. All of these details are important. Here in verse 2 it says, "And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground." You see, they both had their calling. They were both put into this world to accomplish that for which God had gifted them but their employments were different. Their occupations were different and even that, the Lord purposed. But with regard to the story and with regard to what's important, when it says that Abel was a keeper of sheep, again, I come back to what I said in the introduction: it's because he was there as a type and picture of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was there as a picture of the one who would have come to save his sheep, deliver his sheep. The keeper of the sheep, that's who Christ is as we read in John 10, and that's why he was put on this earth, to be that type of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Then in verse 2, you see that strong contrast "but." But. It doesn't say "and Cain was a tiller of the ground," as if there was some equality. There's a reason the Lord put each of them in their particular places of employment and that is that Cain should serve as a picture of, as I said, works religion: those who come before God with their works commending them or thinking that it commends them and all such, just like Cain, all such are condemned of the Lord. It's not by works of righteousness which we have done but according to his, what? Mercy he has saved us. It was a mercy even that Abel knew anything about sheep and some might say, "Well, it really wasn't fair because Abel was in an occupation that more related to what God had acquired as far as an offering and sacrifice and Cain was over here," but they lived together. It wasn't like Cain wasn't under the hearing of the Gospel.

You say, "Well, where did Abel even know to bring a blood sacrifice?" Well, in Genesis 3:21, you know, it wasn't that tilling the ground was evil. It's an honorable occupation but don't think that because you do your work well. Today, the big thing that recommends you to God in human religion is that you serve people. If you could be in an occupation of service to people and give your life as Mother Teresa did with the vile poverty and just give yourself for people, that is considered to be commendable before God and that's how works religion thinks. That's how people think. They think, "Well, look how hard Cain labored to till that ground and get his feet dirty and here's Abel over here sitting under a shade tree watching the sheep reproduce and he's just trying to stay comfortable. How is that fair?" That's the way most people rationalize it in their minds, "How is that fair?" It has nothing to do with fairness. It has to do with what God has purposed.

How did Abel know even to bring a sacrifice? Well, Genesis 3:21, "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them." There had to be an innocent animal that died, that blood was shed in order for Adam and Eve to be clothed with their skins. That was God's message. That's was God's Gospel that he

preached. It wasn't the fig leaves. You see, Adam and Eve had to go and make fig leaves so you could say they were as guilty as Cain was for going and bringing the fruit of his labor. They tried to cover themselves with those fig leaves but that wasn't the way that God had purposed. He said, "The wages of sin is," what? "Death." It takes a death to satisfy a death and such it was.

But even in this occupation as the Lord was pleased to give Abel ears to hear, that's the only thing that made the difference. Abel in observing those sheep would have been much like anybody in the Old Testament whose eyes the Lord had opened as they observed those sacrifices. And certainly as we see here, he was taught to offer these sacrifices but as he did, his hope wasn't in the sacrifice, his hope was in what that sacrifice represented. The writer of Hebrews said that, "The blood of bulls and goats can't take away sin." How can you ever equate the death of an animal with the life of a man? You can't but what it takes is the death of the Lord Jesus Christ.

So even in their occupations we know that there was a purpose in that. But thirdly and this is where I want us to focus for the rest of this message, on the difference: what is it that made the difference? How is it that God accepted Abel and not Cain? Well, verse 3 says, "And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof." So both brought an offering. One was of the fruit of the ground and the other was the life of a sheep, the flock. When he says that "he brought the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof" it just simply means that that animal had been sacrificed. That's how that was brought. Fileted, if you will. Laid out before the Lord. And it says, "And the LORD had respect unto Abel," and this is the part that's important in Scripture. Don't put a period there and then go off commenting as if it was something in Abel. It says, "and to his offering." That little word "and" can also be translated "even to his offering."

So there is the answer plain and simple in Scripture, why it is that Abel was accepted. It was because of that offering. That offering which God had ordained to be a covering for his sin and so there again, just the fact that Abel brought this animal sacrifice indicates that he had no thought of goodness in himself. He came as a sinner. The Lord having opened his heart to see his need and awaiting the day when Christ would come and fulfill all righteousness, he offered and continued to offer those sacrifices unto the Lord. But the key there is that the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering, even to his offering. You cannot separate the 2. If you're the Lord's today, you're as guilty a sinner as Cain ever was or any that are reprobates. You say, "Well, why should the Lord look upon me?" It's only because of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ where in Isaiah 53, it says, "His soul was made an offering for sin." That sin debt had to be paid and I'll tell you this: if it was paid by Christ, then you stand righteous before a holy God. That's your righteousness. It's not any morality. We don't have any. It all is vanity in us but all of the righteousness is in the sacrifice. That's my only plea, that when Christ died, he died for me. I have no other plea. I can't at the end of my life look back on this life of service and preaching and missionaries and everybody always wants to hear about this, "Wow, that was the surest, true sacrifice," and when people say that, I get scared because that means

that somehow in just trying to tell a story, somebody's got the focus on me. That's not it. It's on the Lord. It's not any sacrifice I made or my family made, it's on the Lord's sacrifice and who he is.

I've told you the story before about Adoniram Judson that went out to Burma and was gone for 33 years. He buried 2 wives while he was over there. That's how long it was and finally someone coerced him into coming back to the United States and as he came in on a ship, there were crowds from the different churches around that were standing there on the wharf waiting to welcome him. He didn't realize it was for him but when he got off, they took him to one of the church buildings up there in New England and they wanted to have a meeting. They wanted to hear his story. That's why they were gathered. And when he found that out and was asked to get up to speak, he spoke for 15 minutes is what the writers say about it and he did nothing but talk about Christ and his death and the people were upset. They said, "You've been gone for 33 years. We want to hear about the work." He said, "What work could be greater to speak to you of than that of Christ and him crucified? That's all that matters. I'm just his humble servant." Would that God would give us that same heart as we come before him. It's not all the flimflam of religion and all that works religion considers important in programs and people and all of this stuff. I will tell you, it will be burned up in hell along with the works of men and it is just as rejected today as it was back in the day of Cain and to be part of it is to have a big old red X marked across us of condemnation. How long will you live in a condemned house is the question? People say, "Well, it hasn't fallen yet. Maybe we can do something to fix it up." I'll tell you what, if God has put an X on it, it is condemned and it's just waiting for the day when he fully manifests it. That's the way of Cain and that's what we see here.

Notice in verse 5, "But unto Cain," again, "and to his offering he had no respect." So it's the same answer. Why was Abel accepted? Well, his offering. Why was Cain rejected? His offering. It was an offering of the works of his hand. It's like one preacher said one time, "You cannot get blood out of a turnip." There is no remission of sins apart from the shedding of blood. You can't get blood out of a turnip. I don't care how good that turnip looks. That's the issue. A turnip, a vegetable, especially the works of a depraved, lost sinner is in no way a compensation for the holiness and justice of God. Nothing short of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ will do it.

Look over in Matthew 7. These are Cain's descendents over here in Matthew 7. Notice in verse 15. You say, "Where are the descendents of Cain today?" Well, here they are described. "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in," what? "Sheep's clothing." So it has evolved into such a thing right now to where people are like, "Okay, it's not our works. It's our works plus the work of Christ." So they try to cover it. It's his grace but then, again, it is works so here they are debating back and forth. That's false prophets in sheep's clothing. It says, "inwardly they are ravening wolves." You know, if a preacher stood up in front of you today in a red suit with a pitchfork and horns, you would probably run and think, "That guy's an idiot. Don't listen to him. He's a jokester." But put him in a suit, put a Bible in his hands and let him drop key words. It's like a robber. If he's coming to steal from you, he's not going to let you know, "Hey, I'm here to steal your house and rob you." He's going to come and smooth talk you, trying to find out when you

are home, when you're not home. He's just knocking at the door and checking it out, making sure you're okay. All this stuff but inside a ravaging wolf. That's the way preachers are. They'll use the name of Christ to their advantage. They'll use the word of grace to their advantage but inside they really have another agenda.

That's how they are described here. It says, "Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" When it says that you'll know them by their fruits, it's talking about not some sort of personal character they have but it's talking about the fruits is the fruits of their labors. What are the people like in general that follow these? Well, there's a popular preacher down in Houston and you talk to his followers and they say the exact same thing he does. "Why would I talk about sin? I have a positive message." So when you come and talk to them about what it is to be a depraved, lost, wretched sinner, they kind of pull back and say, "Whoa, wait a minute, that's a negative message. Our preacher says that that shouldn't even be part of our vocabulary today. God loves us all and so when we come together, it's to bolster each other up." And I say, "All you're doing is adding wood to the fire, getting ready to light it one day and the whole thing will be burned up." But by their fruits you shall know them. By their converts is what that's saying, you shall know them.

"Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit." Now, verse 17, when it says every good tree bringeth forth good fruit, the Lord is talking about himself. There is only one tree of righteousness and when it says that every good tree bringeth forth good fruit, the Lord is going to have the fruit of his labor but every corrupt tree, who is that? That's any man outside of Christ, bringeth forth evil fruit.

"A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit." There is nothing in the work of the Lord Jesus Christ who is the tree of life, you see. That's what Christ is describing here, himself, that could ever cause God to consider it to be corrupt. But it says, "neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." That's anybody outside of Christ. I don't care if it is the best fruit that you think that you can bring. The problem is that Cain was as much a fallen sinner as Abel was and so no works of his hands could ever satisfy a holy God.

It says in verse 19, "Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire." That's the result of works religion. Again, "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." What are you the product of? I'll tell you, for a long time I was the product of my upbringing. I was the product of my teachers. I was the product of what men were saying to me and I was following right along like a sheep to the slaughter until it pleased God to reveal Christ in me and then all of a sudden, I saw where the Lord had separated me out from eternity and had given me to his Son and that Christ had already paid my sin debt and that my righteousness was not in anything that I was attempting to work out to my glory but it was in his work, his death, what he accomplished. By his fruit, you shall know them. If I know anything of Christ today or of God, if I can stand here and tell you I'm in that line of Abel, it's not because I'm smarter than anybody else or finally figured it out. I'm the fruit of the labor of the tree that is Christ and that his death and his work have produced. That's it. I have no other hope.

My prayer is that that's where you stand, where you are because the alternative, notice in verses 21 and 23, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven." This is describing the Cains of religion. This is describing those that the Lord said are corrupt trees. They don't see themselves as corrupt. That's the one problem today with Cain's descendents. Just like Cain did not see himself as corrupt. He couldn't understand why it was that God wouldn't accept him. "Surely there's something good in what I do. Surely there's something good in who I am." That was his thinking. In essence, he just took that offering, his works and threw it in God's face just like these here where it says, "Lord, Lord." Do you see that? "Many shall say to me in that day, Lord, Lord," verse 22, "have we not prophesied in thy name?" There are those fruits, "and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?" I can imagine Cain going over to his offering, "What part of this don't you like, Lord? There are tomatoes. There are turnips. There are whatever."

"And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Anything outside of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ is iniquity, even righteousness, self-produced righteousness is iniquity. It is filthy rags before a holy God. But you know, unless God gives you eyes to see like he did Abel, that's why Abel came with that offering, but he did not badger Cain. He knew how the Lord had taught him and that's how he came in that way that the Lord had directed him.

Now, one other thing coming back here to Genesis 4 because our time is gone. Again, we see why Abel's offering was accepted, it's because of what it represented, the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. But you know, we're the kind that says, "So be it. Cain is who he is. Abel is who he is. That's the way God determined it." Some see that as a fatalistic sort of response. Do you know what I see here in what the Lord said to Cain, verses 6 and 7? The Lord's judgments are never without warning and there is mercy even in his warnings. Even if you're one of Cain's and you'll never hear this message and you'll go your way and you'll die the death of Cain, yet even in this message there is a merciful warning even if it falls on deaf ears. Verse 6, "And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?" What was he asking him to do? Get better fruit? No, do well in the sense of, "Come in the way that I have ordained," and that is through this one sacrifice. You know, you turn away from this way, dear friend, and there remains no other sacrifice. There isn't any.

So the word is still as pertinent and direct to us sitting here today. Whether you hear it or not, it's still true. To do well isn't to pull yourself up by the bootstraps and determine that, "I'm going to be better. I'm going to do better." No, "Let me take the shovel out of your hand," is what you tell people. "You're digging a deeper hole doing that." No, what it takes is the sacrifice and some people say, "Well, this is where Cain's pride would have gotten the better of him because, you know, then he would have had to go and ask Abel for a sacrifice. There was his attitude." Well, pride goeth before a fall. We know that in Scripture. That would be our case for any of us. But we see here what the Lord said, "and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." That's just simply saying that, "If you try to come in any other way than through the blood and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ,

your sin remains." It has never been removed. It's still there. You can go in and out of that door all you want to, it's still there. It's still there.

"And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him." So this is something that he's telling Cain, "Unless you come in this way," then the result will be always the same, nothing but condemnation.

So as we meet here today, we gather in order to remember the Lord's death around his table. I'm not in the fruit inspecting business. I'm not here to try to figure out whether you're the Lord's or not. In fact, I don't even want to look and see who is partaking and who isn't. That's not my business. There are some preaches that really feel that that's their responsibility. They have what's called closed communion and so everybody's got to be a member in right standing and they line up in front of the preacher to try to make sure that once a month, "With the Lord's Table coming up, at least I've got a clean week ahead of me so I can sit down and partake." If that's your thinking, you're still coming in the way of Cain. You know, when the Scriptures talk about eating and drinking unworthily, stop and think about it: what's the only way a person could ever truly eat and drink unworthily of the Lord's Table? It would be thinking themselves to be something when they are not; thinking that they have somewhat to bring. You say, "I'm such a sinner." All the more reason to need the blood and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. "You know, as I look back over my week, I can't think of one day where I really ever had a thought that would have been pleasing to the Lord." Do you know what? All the more need to come as Abel came through the blood of that sacrifice, the Lord Jesus Christ.

So as we prepare to partake, let Christ be uppermost in our mind and if he so directs you to partake, let it be because he is your one hope.

"My hope is built on nothing less
than Jesus' blood and righteousness.
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
but wholly lean on Jesus' name."

My hope is built on Christ alone, the solid, solid rock.