

Life-Link

Topic: Spiritual Attitude 1

Life- Link Study #41

Introduction

“Now Abel kept flocks, and Cain worked the soil. In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the Lord. And Abel also brought an offering—fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The Lord looked with favor on Abel and his offering, but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast.

Then the Lord said to Cain, “Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? 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 rule over it.” (Gen. 4:1-7 NIV)

The striking thing in the above verse is God’s conversation with Cain, *“Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it.”* God communicates with us every day, more strongly through His word, but most regularly through our conscience. However, the communication with Cain reveals that the choices we make have the potential to numb our conscience and carry out things that can only provide us with temporal gratification.

Why did Cain kill Abel? What could justify Cain of his actions if any? Both of them gave an offering, however, Abel had what Cain did not have, the right offering. It was not about the gift, it was about the attitude. Remember the story of the widow’s offering (Mark 12:41-44). Her attitude differentiated her offering from others who gave larger than she gave.

We have always heard, your attitude determines your altitude. Your level of growth is dependent on your attitude. The Cambridge online dictionary describes attitude as “a feeling or opinion about something or someone, or a way of behaving that is caused by this.” In other words, attitude is your behaviour influenced by your opinion about something or someone. This also implies that if your opinion is wrong, your behaviour will also be wrong. The way one responds to people or something will be wrong because of their wrong feelings or perceptions. On the other hand, if one’s opinion is right, then their behaviour will also be right.

Q1: In reference to the above, discuss why Cain’s offering was rejected and Abel’s accepted?

One’s attitude determines their offering and commitment to God and other people. From the opening scripture above, we read, *“In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the Lord. And Abel also brought an offering—fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock.”* Cain’s offering suggests to us that he did not plan for the occasion, he took the opportunity casually (*Cambridge online dictionary defines casual as informal, not suitable for special occasions*). We know when we show up unplanned for an occasion, it often suggests how much regard we have for that event, or for the celebrant. It seemed like Cain brought just anything, but Abel seemed to have taken time to plan: considering “fat portions” from some of the “firstborn” offering. He must have had a high regard for God to whom he was making this offering.

Q2: How do we make our attitude influence our worship?

How do we approach our worship to God? (Hint: Think about worship opportunities as a ‘date opportunity.’ When you are having a date with someone who you love or respect, what do you do? Do we plan ahead, bringing our best behaviour and looking our best? Or do we just approach the date casually?

Prayer

Lord, thank you for helping me to know you more, helping me frame an attitude that is not a barrier to our relationship with you. Amen

