

Genesis in Biblical Perspective
The Gospel of Christ from Genesis
Then They Received the Offering – Genesis 4

This is the word of God. Genesis 4.

1 Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, "I have gotten a man with the help of the LORD." **2** And again, she bore his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a worker of the ground. **3** In the course of time Cain brought to the LORD an offering of the fruit of the ground, **4** and Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and his offering, **5** but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his face fell. **6** The LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? **7** If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is for you, but you must rule over it." **8** Cain spoke to Abel his brother. And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him. **9** Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" He said, "I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?" **10** And the LORD said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground. **11** And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. **12** When you work the ground, it shall no longer yield to you its strength. You shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth." **13** Cain said to the LORD, "My punishment is greater than I can bear. **14** Behold, 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." **15** Then 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. **16** Then Cain went away from the presence of the LORD and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden. **17** Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch. When he built a city, he called the name of the city after the name of his son, Enoch. **18** To Enoch was born Irad, and Irad fathered Mehujael, and Mehujael fathered Methushael, and Methushael fathered Lamech. **19** And Lamech took two wives. The name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other Zillah. **20** Adah bore Jabal; he was the father of those who dwell in tents and have livestock. **21** His brother's name was Jubal; he was the father of all those who play the lyre and pipe. **22** Zillah also bore Tubal-cain; he was the forger of all instruments of bronze and iron. The sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah. **23** Lamech said to his wives: "Adah and Zillah, hear my voice; you wives of Lamech, listen to what I say: I have killed a man for wounding me, a young man for striking me. **24** If Cain's revenge is sevenfold, then Lamech's is seventy-sevenfold." **25** And Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and called his name Seth, for she said, "God has appointed for me another offspring instead of Abel, for Cain killed him." **26** To Seth also a son was born, and he called his name Enosh. At that time people began to call upon the name of the LORD.

May God bless this His Word to the heart of His people.

This text made me think of Mother's Day and the joy a woman must go through to bear a child and bring that child up in this world. I watched my youngest daughter

recently go through bearing a child. Each step of the way brought something brand new for my daughter Abigail and her husband, Ryan. But can you imagine what it must have been like at the very first birth? No books to read, no tales or statements to hand down. I have often wondered if God informed Eve as to what would happen; there will be nine months, then delivery. I have often wondered what that must have been like when they faced that. Here comes that very first child. Remember all the hope, excitement and anticipation one has when that first child is born or adopted?

Genesis 4 is an interesting text of Scripture. I really grappled with how I wanted to divide this text up because there are some wonderful subjects in this passage but very clearly this chapter is a narrative that brings out two kingdoms and their resulting cultures. There is the kingdom of life, the kingdom of God which is the kingdom that moves by grace with His mercy and there is the kingdom of this world, the kingdom of death. This is the tenth study in the book of Genesis. After going through the creation account it was discovered rather quickly that the book of Genesis is divided into ten books. All ten books begin with this phrase, "These are the generations of..." These ten books are narrative accounts giving the reader the origins of things.

In this narrative account the first book begins at Genesis 2:4. This is the generations of the earth and the heavens and what comes forth from this created earth and heavens. The first thing that comes forth is Adam. The second thing brought forth is from Adam's side and it is a woman. Thirdly, a marriage covenant is established between the man, the woman and God imaging the relationship of the triune God; one God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Adam and Eve then fall into sin and sin's curse comes so that all of their descendants are born with a sin nature. The original sin will issue forth into actual personal sin from everyone born of Adam. So in the midst of Adam's labor will now be thorns, thistles and frustrations. Enmity will now exist between those creatures because of sin's curse. More than that there will also be pain in child birth but in the midst of that curse comes the revealing of God's grace.

First God's grace comes with a promise. The kingdom of this world of death and sin will be confronted with the kingdom of our God. God says, "I'm going to send forth a Seed of the woman, Heaven's Champion." This Champion will be bruised on His heel but He will deal the death blow to Satan and the kingdom of this world. A prophesy is then given about God's grace about a woman with a Seed. Then a picture is given of God's grace. Instead of Adam and Eve dying they are restored back to the Lord and the Lord gives a picture of what Heaven's Champion will do as animals are sacrificed in place of Adam and Eve. Blood is shed pointing to an atonement of the Lamb of God. The skins of that animal clothe them even as one day the righteousness of Christ will be provided to clothe His people.

Now what comes forth from the earth? It is the first child. It is Cain who comes by way of Adam and Eve. One can almost see the excitement where Adam and Eve are restored back to the Lord by His grace and mercy. Adam is now walking by faith and what did God tell Adam? He said, "Adam I'm going to give life through the woman." This person he called woman he now gives a new name to her which is Eve and that means mother of the living. Through Eve will yet come life. Eve by faith has received a child. When a child is born there is a birth announcement and that is repeated throughout Scripture. What follows is usually a birth statement by the mother and then a birth blessing usually done by the father. In Genesis 4:1 is the birth announcement

through Eve, "Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, "I have gotten a man with the help of the LORD." The name Cain means acquired and that is basically what she says, "I have gotten a man (child)." One can almost see Eve looking back at what God said about giving her a seed that will defeat Satan and her wondering, "Is this him that the Lord has given me, my first born?" Then Eve has Abel in which there is no birth announcement, no birth statement and no blessing recorded for him.

This reminds me of the time my sisters and I went through my mom and dad's things. It was a challenge to do this but we did have a laugh when we got to the baby books. There were four children in my family and I was the oldest and only boy with three sisters. Some will find this humorous and some will not yet some will find this so true. I had four baby books. My next sister had one baby book completed. The second sister had one baby book with one picture, and one footprint in it. My youngest sister did not even have a book. One can almost see that here in this text. One can almost hear, "Cain, I have a birth announcement/statement" then Abel was born. All of Eve's hopes are fixed on this first born. The name Abel means "a vapor" and it seems as if this "vapor" is not seen as significant at least in Eve's eyes. By faith she is looking the first born as "is this first born the One that God has promised? I have acquired this man child from the Lord."

Now fast forward in this text and a lifestyle has developed. Adam and Eve have given birth to Cain and Abel plus others. Genesis 5:4 says, "*The days of Adam after he fathered Seth were 800 years; and he had other sons and daughters.*" Some have said, "Where did Cain's wife come from?" Here is the answer. There are no laws at this point of not being able to marry within the family. Cain's wife comes from all of that line that comes from Adam and Eve. Somehow in the context of this they have matured to the point that they have entered into vocation. Abel's vocation is that he is a shepherd, a keeper of the flock. Cain's vocation is that he is farmer, a tiller of the ground where he brings forth the fruit of the ground. They have a regular worship dynamic where they come before the Lord in worship. When they come to worship they bring an offering.

There is one worship service that is picked out and put into this narrative that is a fateful day in the context of worship. It is on this day that God decides to reveal His discernment and judgment of the worship that has been brought to Him. On that day only Abel brings worship that is acceptable to the Living God. As Abel brings forth an offering, the first born of the flock and the fat portions, Cain's offering is disregarded by the Lord. A lot of people will teach from this that the reason that Cain's offering is not accepted is because it was not a blood offering like Abel's as he brings the first of the flock. With all due respect, there is no evidence that that was called of by them. The evidence is to the contrary. The word for offering in this text is "mena." Every time the word "mena" is used in the Old Testament it never refers to a blood sacrifice but it always refers to an offering from one's vocation. That is why the Bible takes the time to tell the reader what kind of jobs they did. They would bring the offering from their vocation.

So what was the problem with Cain's offering? Take a closer look at the text. Genesis 4:3 says, "*In the course of time Cain brought **some** of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the LORD.*" (NIV) It was not the first of the ground. It was what was left over, disinterested. It was some. Cain was apathetic in his worship and his offering.

Abel brought the tithe, the first of the flock. One cannot bring the first unless one saves it. Abel saved the first for worship. Abel did not stop with just the first. He added to his tithe, the first of the flock by giving also fat portions as offerings. What would have been appropriate from Cain? The first fruits would have been appropriate from Cain, not just some of the ground. So Cain just indifferently brings in apathy what is left over and Abel with his heart has saved the first and brought the best to give praise to his God who have given him all things in life. The Lord makes clear that the worship of Cain is not acceptable.

Cain then responds how? He goes into depression. His countenance falls. This is not a physical depression that comes through the chemical issues that might result bodily but this one is directly revealed as a spiritual depression. Sometimes there are physical depressions that have spiritual impact but sometimes there is a spiritual depression that has physical impact. In this case it is a spiritual depression that has a physical impact that shows up in the way his face has fallen. His face has fallen before the Lord and the Lord comes to him. The Lord calls him to repentance. The Lord says, "Now listen Cain your worship is not acceptable but if you do well will you not be accepted but if you do not do well this is what I warn you. Sin is crouching at the door. You think you're master? I tell you that's not the case. Sin is crouching at the door and its desire is to master you. You either by faith believe Me and bring praise to Me or by sight walk in your own way and sin will be your master yet you think freedom is at your door and it is actually the bondage of sin that will master you." Cain goes out and spoke to his brother. I have often wondered what happened here. My guess is that it was some kind of allurements into the field. There the farmer, Cain, in the field soaks the ground not with seed but with the blood of his brother. He kills his brother. His apathy has gone to depression which has gone to hatred and which has now gone to violence. How far we have come from lying about a piece of fruit in the garden and now to murder.

The Lord comes and interrogates Cain. He says, "Where's your brother? What have you done to him?" Abel is dead. Cain says, "I don't know where he is?" He lies and then in arrogance he says, "Am I my brother's keeper?" He is basically saying, "I won't be accountable for my brother and God, I won't be accountable to You." He not only lies but in arrogance he stands in opposition to the Living God in his accountability but the Lord will not be mocked. The Lord says to Cain, "The blood of your brother cries out from the ground, therefore from the ground you will now be driven, not just simply the curse of frustration and labor but I'm going to use the ground to drive you. You will have no stability. You will become a nomad. You will become a fugitive. You will become a wanderer throughout the earth. You will be marked by your wandering." It is at that moment that Cain then moves not to repentance because of the consequences of his sin but he now moves to further resentment and arrogance against the Lord and says to Him now in his own self-pity, "Oh my this is too much for me to bear. This is impossible for me to bear. My consequences for sin are too much." Cain does not know that God has actually restrained what should have fallen upon him, the wrath of God. Yet at that moment God reaches out and says, "I'll place a *mark* upon you" which is the same word that is used for "tattoo" in the Bible. God continues to say, "And with that mark I will keep people from bringing vengeance now upon you." In other words, the consequences of his sin are going to be measured for a while before final at judgment.

Now what happens? There is no period. Sin never stops. Here is what happens in the latter half of this chapter, Genesis 4:17-26, **17** *"Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch. When he built a city, he called the name of the city after the name of his son, Enoch. 18 To Enoch was born Irad, and Irad fathered Mehujael, and Mehujael fathered Methushael, and Methushael fathered Lamech. 19 And Lamech took two wives. The name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other Zillah. 20 Adah bore Jabal; he was the father of those who dwell in tents and have livestock. 21 His brother's name was Jubal; he was the father of all those who play the lyre and pipe. 22 Zillah also bore Tubal-cain; he was the forger of all instruments of bronze and iron. The sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah. 23 Lamech said to his wives: "Adah and Zillah, hear my voice; you wives of Lamech, listen to what I say: I have killed a man for wounding me, a young man for striking me. 24 If Cain's revenge is sevenfold, then Lamech's is seventy-sevenfold." 25 And Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and called his name Seth, for she said, "God has appointed for me another offspring instead of Abel, for Cain killed him." 26 To Seth also a son was born, and he called his name Enosh. **At that time people began to call upon the name of the LORD.**"*

Sin did not stop but it escalated. It went from Cain to his son, to his son's sons, to his son's sons, all the way to five generations. By the time one gets to Lamech Cain looks like a piker. There is not just a murderer anymore like Cain. There is now a serial killer, Lamech, the bully of the city. A city has been raised up named Enoch and there is more about this city in Genesis 11. This city is not raised up to honor the Lord but it is raised up in arrogance against the Lord. Not only is a city raised up but in all of the inventions that are there they are not there for the glory of the Lord but for the city that is there, the glory of the culture and the glory of Cain's line of rebellion. In the midst of all this a woman is born who is a sister named Naamah which will be looked at later on. Then one finds out that Adam is receiving another son by Eve to replace Abel and his name is Seth. Seth will have a son named Enosh and at that time people will call upon the name of the Lord.

There are three truths from this text for one to think about. This is an amazing text. The first truth is called in the Bible the way of Cain. The second truth is the way of Abel. The third truth is the way of God. We will begin by looking at the way of Cain. This may sound like something I came up with but I did not make this up.

Cain is referred to in four passages beyond Genesis in the Bible. We will look at a couple of them. The first passage is in 1 John 3 which talks about the call of God's Law which is to love one another. Cain belonged to the kingdom of death, the evil one. 1 John 3:11-13 says, **11** *"For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. 12 We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous. 13 Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you."* So do not be surprised that the kingdom of this world will hate you when you do deeds of Him.

The next passage that talks about Cain is in the book of Jude. Here a curse is upon false teachers. They are defined with a series of Biblical antidotal illustrations. Jude 1:11 says, *"Woe to them (the false teachers)! For they walked in **the way of Cain** and abandoned themselves for the sake of gain to Balaam's error and perished in Korah's rebellion."* So what is the way of Cain? I went back through Genesis 4 and

listed several things. Here is the first man born dead in his sins. God's redemptive grace is not upon his life. Because God's redemptive grace is not upon his life one sees the depravity of this man worked out. What is the way of rebellion against God? What is the way of the kingdom of darkness? What is the way of the culture of death?

Here it is. In Cain's personal life it began with apathy in worship, apathy in worship that expressed indifference in offering to the Lord. Because Cain's worship was not acceptable to the Lord, in the place of repentance came anger. Then in the place of anger came resistance against God's inquiry. Then from apathy and anger there is also mixed into it the spiritual depression that comes with willful disobedience against God. And with all of that now comes hate; hate through anger, anger through murder, hostility toward God. "Am I my brother's keeper? I won't answer to You!" The way of Cain also brings hostility toward God's people as he brings murder against the one who belongs to the Lord, Abel. The way of Cain says, "This one who is accepted, I will kill. Instead of repenting of my sin and coming to the Lord by faith, I will kill the man who walks by faith." Then comes arrogance expressed with resentment; resentment against any measured, not unmeasured, consequences of sin. Finally the way of Cain brings self-pity but that is not all. The way of Cain never stops with Cain. It goes to his family and his sins move from generation to generation. It does not just get handed off. Sin multiplies and it does not just multiply. Sin escalates from murderers to serial murderers, from arrogance of an individual to the arrogance of a city; from the arrogance of one man to the arrogance of his family, from the arrogance of one man and his family to his descendents, from the arrogance of one man, his family and his descendents now to the arrogance of a city and a culture of death and violence is the result.

Matthew 23:35 sheds light on a comment about Abel. It says, "*so that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of innocent Abel to the blood of Zechariah the son of Barachiah.*" Abel is called righteous and innocent. Immediately in one's mind the question comes, "how in the world can Abel born of Adam and Eve with a sin nature be righteous and innocent?" It is grace. By grace Abel had come to faith and the reason it is known that he had come to faith is because first the Bible tells the reader and secondly the Bible gives the reader the evidence. The reader is told in Hebrews 11:4, "*By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, through which he was commended as righteous, God commending him by accepting his gifts. And through his faith, though he died, he still speaks.*" Notice that there is a righteousness that is given to him by faith and his worship becomes the evidence of his faith and not the merits. It is not Abel's worship that saves him. His faith is focused upon the Living God and with his faith focused upon the Living God he has a righteousness that is commended to him.

The way of Abel is the way of grace. The way of grace is to trust only in the merits of the Redeemer for one's salvation. When one trusts only in the merits on the Redeemer then one is a man or woman of faith and faith is never alone. It is not these things that come with faith that saves a person. It is only by God's grace that one is saved through Christ alone but when one believes there will be the evidences. One of the primary evidences is worship. The believer does not love to attend worship or go to worship but to worship. Why do they go? Why do they attend? Why do they assemble? The goal is not attending or assembling but the goal is to worship. Worship

is not a noun describing an event that one goes to. Worship is a verb describing the heart of a man of faith. So Abel comes and he brings worship. He even shows that his work is worship as he brings the first of it and the best of it to give praise to God.

This a tremendous lesson that I long to learn personally more and more and I want to share it with you. One does not go to work like Cain to make one's mark on the world. One goes to work to worship the Lord. One does not go to work to make money. One goes to work to worship the Lord. Colossians 3:23 says, "*Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men.*" I am convinced that until our work becomes worship we will never bring the fruit of our work into worship. We will always be like Cain where we may just tip the Lord on the side and bring some of the fruit of the ground but we will never be like Abel until worship beats within our soul. Abel is a man of worship. Here is a man of work and work that is worship and then worship that brings the fruit of his work as he sees all of his life under the call of God. He sees worship under the eye of God. Please note, worship is judged. Our worship today is judged. The Bible says in John 4:23 that "The Father seeks true worshipers" who will bring Him acceptable worship.

There are two parts to that worship. This kind of worship is in Spirit and in truth. We do from the Word what God says pleases Him and it is our great pleasure to please Him. The Word of God guides us as He tells us what pleases Him. Psalm 103:1 says, "*Bless the Lord O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name!*" This is not done in apathy or indifference or wandering into worship and then wandering out of the presence of the Lord. Worship is seeking the presence of the Lord who inhabits the praise of His people. We need to embrace worship as the primary, glorious pinnacle of the moment of life. He made me for His praise and I will praise Him. He has sustained me and I will bring from my work and my life His praise. I will not let a stone take my place to praise the Lord. I will cry out to the Lord, "Praise His Holy name!" I do not care what it means to connect to the culture; I will not let the culture turn worship into what pleases me. My worship is there to please Him. I do not sit in judgment on this worship God does. There is an audience, not of 3,000, but of one this day and that audience is the Living God. He is the One who is determining whether we bring by sight into religion what we want at a worship service or do we by faith bring our whole heart to Him. God hears the evidence. I bring You the best. I bring You the sacrifice. I bring You the first.

That is the way of Abel. Work to His praise. Worship to His praise. It is a God centered view of life not an apathetic, self-centered, arrogant view of life. Here is a real invitation to the way of Abel. It will kill you. I often wondered in today's preaching that offers to people "believe in Jesus and all Jesus wants for you is the best where you never get sick, you will always have a lot of money and you will have everything you need" which is a perversion of the Gospel and called the "Prosperity Gospel" what would someone do with the first man Abel? He believed the Lord, he worshiped the Lord and he got killed for it. We are as sheep, counted to be slaughtered for Him (Psalm 44:22). One may say at this point, "Is someone going to kill us when we go out?" It should not matter because you should have already died. We die to ourself. That is the way of Abel. Romans 6:11 says, "*So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin (self) and alive to God in Christ Jesus.*" It is manifested at work, at worship

and is seen to all of life. This may be the invitation but when one dies for the Living God, one will speak forever. Abel still speaks to this day (Hebrews 4:11).

So there is the way of Cain, there is the way of Abel and lastly there is the way of God. The way of God is the way of justice. The blood cries out "God will not be mocked" and the soul that sins shall surely die. Hebrews 9:27 says, "*And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment.*" We will give an account but God is so gracious that there is another way of God called common grace. God does not bring the culmination of all our sins upon us at one time. God is very gracious to restrain us from being as evil as we could be. Even in this world the rain falls on the just and the unjust. So Cain was given a mark by the Lord, a tattoo to preserve him. God even allowed him to have a family. God even allowed him have children. God allowed him to have intelligent children that invented the arts and professions. God even allowed him to build a city. Even in the midst of this degenerating family God allowed him to have in his genealogy a woman named Naamah which means pleasant. This is God's common grace that allows all this.

Even more importantly in the way of God are not only His justice and not only His common grace but is His redemptive grace. Is not God's sovereignty surprising? Eve expected the first born to be the hand of God but it was the second born. God is sovereign. Romans 9:15 says, "*I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion (grace) on whom I have compassion (grace).*" Also just like it was not Esau it was Jacob who had God's favor. It is not Cain, it is Abel. When Abel is killed God's purposes are not thwarted by the adversity of the adversary Satan for He now brings Seth. Out of Seth will come an Enosh and when the world is fleeing the presence of the Lord out of an Enosh men and women begin to call on the Lord. The Kingdom of our God is planted in this world for His glory.

Here are a couple of takeaways for one to think about in regards to this study. The first one is sin is personal but it is never private. Never let Satan sell you on that. We may personally sin but it never stops with us. It goes through the family, then to the city and then to the culture. It is never done in privacy. It always multiplies. It is also never done in singularity because it always escalates; from murderer to murderers to more murderers until finally it gets to Lamech and he does not even want God's common grace to protect him. He will kill whether it is an old man or a boy. He was going to do it his way. In the 1980's the most popular songs at funerals were nonreligious. The most popular was "I did it my way." This is the culture of death and violence.

What about that culture? This is so crucial. Today we have the media elite. We have the entertainment elite and academic elite. Thankfully not all but in those three industries there is a conscious deconstruction of anything that is sacred in the culture of this nation. What is their goal? They will let Christians have their meetings as long as they stay on Sundays and not in the public square. The result of that is Genesis 4; crime, arrogance, murder, anger, hatred, perversion of the family (bigamy), preoccupation of sexual immorality (this is seen in the names of the women, the tyranny of men (this is seen in the song of the tyrant, Lamech). The secular culture is a culture of death, anger and violence and it will turn upon the most helpless in youth and age. Make no mistake about it, today we are not at the level of Cain, Irad, Mehujael, nor Methushae but we are at the level of Lamech. We kill the helpless young and we have

judges that will sign death warrants for the helpless old. We are a culture that is fleeing the presence of God with no stability. We cannot even sit still for a week. We are a culture of nomads and fugitives always on the run. But praise God from time to time He will raise up a Seth who will father an Enosh.

Here is the key. You will either master sin by coming to the Master, Jesus Christ or sin will master you and you will become integral part of the culture of death, anger and violence. But if the Master gets you sin will not master you but life, grace, compassion, mercy, tenderness and truth will take hold. Is there an Enosh here? Is there an Enosh church or churches who will serve the Lord and again in our culture men and women might call upon the Lord? Abel's blood cried out vengeance but 2000 years ago One greater than Abel came. His blood at Calvary cries out forgiveness. There is the root of the culture of life in Jesus Christ.

Five bleeding wounds He bears, all received on Calvary's Tree.

They pour out efficient prayers, they strongly plead for me.

"Forgive him O forgive him," they cry,

Nor let that ransomed sinner die but live.

By: Charles Wesley, *Behold the Man*

Prayer:

Father, thank you for the moments together in Your Word. Father the kingdoms in Genesis 4 are still here today. We ask O God that You might do a great work in our midst that we might know and experience the kingdom of life and budding forth would not be the culture of death but a culture of life. Father we think long enough about connecting to this culture, would You let us live to create a culture, a culture of life that comes through the Gospel offer of eternal life through the free gift of Jesus Christ, a culture of life in which people preserve life, a culture of life in which life is precious because of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Oh God I plead with You, raise up an Enosh, raise up a church, raise up a people that in the midst of the currents of the culture of death, arrogance, anger and violence there might be a standard Oh Lord and that standard of life be Jesus Christ. May Your people walk the way of Abel. I pray this through the blood of the One greater than Abel, Jesus Christ, that cries out forgiveness, Amen.