

MCC Midweek Devotion

Thursday - May 14th - 2020

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Scripture Passage: Genesis 4:3-7 – So it came about in the course of time that Cain brought an offering to the Lord of the fruit of the ground. Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and for his offering; but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard. So Cain became very angry and his countenance fell. Then the Lord said to Cain, “Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it.” (NASB)

Devotional: "Why are you angry?"

It's valuable to me when I read scripture to understand how somebody feels. So when God has no regard for Cain's offering, it is easy to understand that Cain would feel anger. It's also important to remember that there are emotions below the anger, and for Cain I sense a feeling of rejection. Accompanying those feelings and emotions are beliefs & messages: maybe thoughts of being unimportant, not being good enough, or maybe the belief there is something wrong with him.

So how does God react to Cain's emotions? I believe God wants to talk to Cain about his feelings, he wants to talk about his emotional state. God starts by asking questions because God knows Cain's anger is fueled by a belief, and He knows that what we believe about ourselves will color what we believe about God. Or maybe what we believe about God fuels our belief about ourselves? I don't think it's an accident the two views are so intertwined.

What else does this scripture tell us? It tells us we have an enemy. And the enemy has a desire for us. Because God wants to talk about feelings and emotions, because He wants to touch the place of hurt, misunderstanding and the belief under it, my assumption is the enemy wants us to not talk about it and to deny they exist, to walk away and pretend it's not important.

But guess what? It does matter. Because sin is crouching at your door, and what you think and what you feel matter. Scripture is full of emotions and hurt and pain and trauma, and Jesus constantly takes us to the point of our pain, and He always expose the lies of the enemy, and shines truth if we are willing to go there. Just ask the rich young ruler, the woman at the well, the lame man at the Pool of Bethesda. How many more did Jesus bring face to face with their stuff, and allow them to choose “do I engage or do I walk away?”

Cain could have just asked God: “Is there something wrong with me? I feel rejected by you! I worked hard for my offering and you didn't have any regard for it. Why? What did I do to deserve this?” And in response maybe God the Father touches the young man's heart and exposes the lie, He speaks the truth, and Cain falls at the feet of Jesus and receives healing. Or he gives in to the lies, the pain, and the trauma, and his anger gives way to action, and when that happens people always get hurt.

Our invitation today is the same as it is every day. Allow Jesus to take you there. Look at the pain, the trauma, the hurts and ask Father for clarity, healing, and truth. “...sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you...”