



## EXPLORE THE BIBLE.

Genesis 1 – 19 Sermon Series  
Supports Session 5: The First Murder  
Sermon Title: “A Heart of Worship” (Gen 4:1-9)

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### Connection to Session 5

Session 5 covers the circumstances and the murder of Abel by his brother, Cain. This message will dig into the attitude behind the sin, helping to show how Cain’s attitude then has application today.

### Introduction/Opening

An old saying states, “Attitude is everything.” While there is truth to this thought, it’s even more important when it's applied to our relationship with God. This is the case with Cain and Abel. The two brothers had two different occupations, but even more important, two very different attitudes. One was hypocritical; one was pure and undefiled.

Today, we are going to look at those attitudes and see what we can learn and apply in our own worship towards God. How can we be sure that we have a heart of worship that honors and glorifies God?

### Outline

#### 1. Attitude in Worship (4:1-7)

- a. First, we learn that Cain and Abel had two different occupations.
  - i. Abel was a shepherd and Cain was a farmer.
  - ii. Why is this important? Each brought a portion of their work to offer to God.
    1. First, we see here that a blood sacrifice of the lamb is honorable to God.
    2. Abel took the first born of his flock, giving the fat portions to God. This God accepts.
  - iii. But what about Cain? Cain offers what Moses calls here “some of the land’s produce” (v. 3) as an offering.

1. We know that in Deuteronomy 26:1–4, the Israelites were instructed to offer God their first fruits.
  2. The readers of the law of Moses knew that a first fruits offering would be acceptable.
- b. So why was Cain’s offering not acceptable? Would a similar offering be acceptable now?
- i. Cain’s offering was not accepted. This was not due to the content of the sacrifice, but rather the attitude behind the sacrifice.
    1. Abel’s sacrifice was accepted, but Cain’s was not. Cain’s response is telling.
    2. In verse 5 the CSB states that “Cain was furious.”
      - (a) He was furious with God.
      - (b) And he was furious with his brother.
    3. Cain’s heart reflected an attitude that was self-centered. (See 1 John 3:12.)
      - (a) 1 John 3:12, “unlike Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his deeds were evil, and his brother’s were righteous.”
      - (b) Genesis 4:7, “If you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is for you, but you must rule over it.”
  - ii. God knew Cain’s heart, and God was not going to allow hypocrisy in worship to take place.

## **2. Attitude in Relationships (4:8-9)**

- a. Cain had a poor attitude in his relationship with others, specifically Abel.
  - i. When Abel’s sacrifice was accepted and Cain’s was not, his anger burned toward his brother.
  - ii. Cain’s abysmal attitude toward worship affected his attitude toward his brother.
  - iii. So, Cain tricked Abel.
    1. He deceived him.
    2. He murdered him.
    3. He lied about him.

- iv. This entire plot thickened when God confronted Cain about Abel's whereabouts. His responses in verse 9 were deceptive: "I don't know" and "Am I my brother's guardian?"
- b. Cain's resentment of the unaccepted sacrifice led to Cain's resentment of his brother.

## Conclusion

Cain's murder of Abel was more complicated than simple jealousy. It was about an attitude of the heart. Today, our worship no longer involves physical sacrifices before God such as grain, animals, or anything else, because we have the once for all sacrifice of Jesus Christ. However, we do come before God regularly in worship with a sacrifice of the heart. Our attitudes matter. Our hearts matter. Our love for God matters.

Jesus said in Matthew 5:23–24, "So if you are offering your gift on the altar, and there you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First, go and be reconciled with your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift." If you have anything holding you back from being wholly devoted in your worship before God, bring it to Him now. Change your attitude and confess your sin before Him. Change your attitude and repair broken relationships with your brother or sister, friend, or anyone you are embittered against. God forgives, cleanses, and is glorified when you have a true heart of unencumbered worship.

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