

See What Sin Becomes (Genesis 4:1-26)

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- [0 : 0 0] This week, we're reading Genesis 4. So that's verse 1 to 26. And yeah, just a reminder that we're not doing this just with the people that we have.
- We have brothers and sisters and friends online as well that are joining our service. And today, just to remind us that we're all one family. I'm actually going to get Ivan to read this out.
- So he's at home currently, but he will try. We'll see if this works. If not, then I'll just read it out. But yeah, Ivan, are you there? Hello. Hi, Ivan.
- Everyone say hi, Ivan. Ivan, say hi, everyone. Hi, everyone. Okay, cool. Thank you for that. So yeah, why don't we, you can follow along on the screen or on your Bibles, on your phones or whatever.
- And then Ivan will read Genesis chapter 4 for us. Yeah. So Ivan, when you're ready. All right. This is 4, 1 to 10. Adam made love to his wife, Eve.
- [1 : 0 6] She became pregnant and gave birth to Cain. She said, With the help of the Lord, I have brought forth the man. Later, she gave birth to his brother Abel. Now Abel kept flocks and Cain worked the soil.
- In the course of time, Cain brought some of the fruit of the soil as an offering to the Lord. And Abel also brought an offering. Fat portions from 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 what is right, sin is cracking at your door. It desires to have you, but you must rule over it.
- Now Cain said to his brother Abel, Let's go out to the field. While they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him. Then the Lord said to Cain, Where is your brother Abel?
- [2 : 0 7] I don't know, he replied. Am I my brother's keeper? The Lord said, What have you done? Listen. Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground.
- Now you are under a curse and driven from the ground, which opens its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. When you work the ground, it will no longer yield its crops for you.
- You will be a restless wanderer on the earth. Cain said to the Lord, My punishment is more than I can bear. Today you are driving me from the land, and I will be hidden from your presence.
- I will be a restless wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me. But the Lord said to him, Not so. Anyone who kills Cain will suffer vengeance seven times over.
- Then the Lord put a mark on Cain, so that no one who found him would kill him. So Cain went out from the Lord's presence, and lived in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

[3 : 05] Cain made love to his wife, and she became pregnant, and gave birth to Enoch. Cain was then building a city, and he named it after his son Enoch. To Enoch was born Erad, and Erad was the father of Mehu-jael.

And Mehu-jael was the father of Mehu-sheel. And Mehu-jael was the father of Lamech. Lamech married two women, one named Adah and another Zillah.

Adah gave birth to Jabal. He was the father of those who lived in tents and raised livestock. His brother's name was Jubal. He was the father of all who played stringed instruments and pipe.

Zillah also had a son, Jubal Cain, who forged all kinds of tools out of bronze and iron. Jubal Cain's sister was Nama. Lamech said to his wife, Adah and Zillah, listen to me, wives of Lamech, hear my words.

I killed a young man for wounding me, a young man for injuring me. If Cain is avenged seven times, then Lamech seventy-seven times. Adam made love to his wife again.

[4 : 14] And he gave birth to a son named, and named him Seth, saying, God has granted me an religion out and placed a babe, since Cain killed him. Seth also had a son, and he named him Minosh.

At that time, people began the call on the name of the Lord. All right. Thank you, Ivan, for reading those names. Yeah, and that's the word of God.

So we'll invite Pastor William. Afternoon, everyone. Thank you for reading that, Ivan. And yeah, thank you as well for not killing your brother in any time this past week.

So, yeah, what a story, hey? Let's pray to the Lord, and let's ask us to help us as we consider his word. Let's pray. Father, we thank you so much, and that, yeah, all scripture is God-breathed, profitable, for reproof, correction, training, and righteousness, that we would be fully equipped for every good work.

And yet, when we come to a story like this, Father, we struggle. Not because we see, yeah, stories that seem so foreign to us, but yet, sometimes we see our own hearts in them.

[5 : 24] The anger, the pride. We see how we have descended into unrepentant sin. So, do help us, listen carefully, and give us hope through your word today.

Father, we pray all these things in Jesus' name. Amen. So, keep your Bibles at, yeah, Genesis chapter 4. We're just going to do a little bit of a deeper dive into it. And, let's see what God has to share to us.

They say, when a butterfly flaps its wings, it might ultimately cause a hurricane on the other side of the ocean. Has anyone heard of that kind of phrase before? Someone calls it the butterfly effect.

And, it actually, I did a bit of research, it's actually an insight that came from a meteorologist, someone who studies the weather. MIT professor, Edward Lorenz, came up with this idea, the butterfly effect, 60 years ago.

And, he was trying to explain why, you know, when he was trying to calculate the weather, he kind of changed one tiny number and then the whole thing afterwards just completely changed.

[6 : 29] Right? How a small change can have such huge consequences later on down the line. And, in one article, it recounts how, yeah, he'd rounded off one variable from like 0.506127 to 0.506, right?

And then, the whole thing just transformed his program and gave him a completely different result over two months of kind of weather forecasts. And so, this kind of study is called chaos theory for the nerds out there.

Chaos theory points out something like this. There's a tiny change, say, in wind speed that can wreck a weather forecast. If there's a tiny argument, it can blow up into World War II or III, perhaps.

And, imagine a tiny pebble that you just throw in the water. It can cause ripples across the entire pond. It's a butterfly effect.

And here, in Genesis 4, we see a little bit of a butterfly effect, don't we? We see kind of the ripple effects from humanity's first sin. Here's kind of the first account of a chaos theory.

[7 : 37] But it's true. Amidst all the chaos that we've seen is a sobering lesson, right, on how not to be human. That's what we saw last week, how not to deal with our sin.

And finally, I think we're going to hear today how much we long for something better, even today here at PCBC. Some of you are new to church. Welcome.

Thank you for joining us. And some of you even maybe online, maybe you've forgotten what we've done in the last three weeks. We've been journeying through the book of Genesis, haven't we? And what have we seen from the world of Genesis, so far?

Our first of seeing God, right? He's the unrivaled creator and sustainer. And yet so personal, so relational. God makes a good and ordered world for us.

He sets it up as a stage for all His creatures to flourish, especially humans, His image bearers. Us, man and woman, we're made to eat, to work, to live, to breathe, to be fruitful and multiply in His paradise.

[8 : 43] And yet, our first parents fell. God gave a whole garden of yes and they had to focus on and taste from the one tree of no, did they not?

And we saw how this was more than just breaking a rule, okay, or crossing a line. It was declaring in their hearts an independence from God. And after that, there was no going back.

Our first parents brought sin and death to all of us. And if you know your own heart, you know that sin is devastating. With sin comes the tendency to blame those closest to us for wrongdoing.

With sin, we want to hide and we want to justify all the bad things we've done or we've thought. With sin comes death and decay. With sin, ultimately, we have humans behaving like animals.

And if you and I think that we haven't sinned, then surely we've not really understood sin well enough or our hearts well enough. And what we see now beyond the Garden of Eden is that sin once unleashed begins to run its course among the whole of the world.

[9 : 55] And so just as throwing a stone ripples the water, what we see is Genesis 4 starts to show us the ripple effects of sin even into our lives today. Right?

In Genesis 3, kind of the big idea was, look what sin has done. In Genesis 4, I think, we get to see, see what sin becomes in the lives of us and the lives of people.

And so let's have a deep dive. So really simple, we're just going to walk through the story and we'll just share some insights along the way and see if you can spot them too. So have verse 1 open in front of you.

Now look, at first glance actually, everything seems fine after the Garden, right? Think about it, you know, Adam and Eve, they get their honeymoon, right?

With God's help, they join the New Parents Club and they have two sons. It all seems very nice. These boys, they grow up and they start to take part in their world.

[10 : 55] They start to work the ground or care for sheep, right? They seem to be fulfilling what God wanted to bless humanity with, right? Remember, Genesis 1, 28, be fruitful and multiply, fill the earth and subdue it.

And so on the face of it, it seems like everything is going well so far. But then keep reading to verse 3 and 4 and we see something start to shift. Now we see two brothers offer now two offerings and there's a whole range of different views about what happens next.

It seems like Cain, the first one, brings some of his produce, right? Sounds like he's a bit of a gardener as well to offer to the Lord. And then Abel, he's more of a shepherd, brings some of his offerings.

Obviously, this is written well before there's like formalized temple worship. So it seems like these are just spontaneous acts of worship, right? Just offering what they have, you know, just from the work that they do.

But then, let's keep reading and then we see something strange. The Lord looks of favor on Abel's offering and yet not Cain's offering. What's going on? Why did Cain's fruit basket just get kind of locked aside?

[12 : 12] What made Abel's lamb chops kind of far better in God's sight? And there's all kinds of speculation. I won't bore you with it. Some people think God kind of preferred meat, over a veg, I'm not sure.

Some people think that maybe Cain was holding back his best and just some of the fruits rather than the best. Some people wonder, is God starting a trend in Genesis?

You think about the rest of Genesis, there's always the favoring of the younger rather than the older, right? Think Isaac over Ishmael or Jacob over Esau. Is that kind of like a trend that's starting?

Look, we need to be careful because the text itself doesn't tell us why. Why does God prefer Abel's to Cain's offering? It seems like actually, you know, if you think about those offerings themselves, both kinds of offerings later get mentioned in the Bible as good offerings to give to the Lord.

So, I don't think it's, I personally don't think one's better than the other, superior in quality. But what we can see clearly, right, is that God does prefer Abel's to Cain's offering.

[13 : 18] And what we can see clearly, even if we don't know why that is, we can see how Cain responds, right? So, Cain was very angry and his face was downcast.

Remember what we saw from Adam and Eve's fruit-picking failure last week. We saw that sin is more than just an outward issue. Sin is what's going on inside our hearts.

It's a heart problem. And I think here we see the principle again. Well, before Cain picks up a knife, he is angry in his heart. He's burning with rage, literally, that's what it says.

And literally, it says his face kind of fell. He was just so downcast. His reaction is what I think we're meant to pay attention to, right? Not his offering or what kind it is. And I don't know.

One person here at church may offer a different kind of gift to another. One serving role at church here could be more visible than others. That's not the point.

[14 : 23] The point is, look, we might be tempted to look on the externals, but God, the Bible says, looks at the heart. Doesn't he? And the Lord is so different to Cain.

Can you see verse 6? Even when he knows every dark thought of Cain's heart, we just sang about it, look how merciful God's heart is to Cain.

He asks a question. Why are you so angry? Why the sulky face? Right? Is this not God's kind of loving parent heart up close?

Do we not see his kindness and patience? I mean, I think about it as a parent of four kids. You know, I think how differently I react when something does not go my way, when I'm pushed to get angry or frustrated.

But the Lord is so different. He asks, he offers gentle questions. Right? If you do what is right, won't you be accepted? But if you don't do what is right, sin is crouching at your door.

[15 : 33] In Genesis 3, last week, we saw how temptation for our first parents came as a serpent, right, ready to deceive. And here, in a similar way, God is portraying sin like an animal, like a hungry animal, right, ready to pounce.

And God actually, you know, if you notice it, in verse 7, he actually uses some of the same language from last week. To the woman, do you remember, he said, your desire shall be for your husband, he will rule over you.

And now, to his firstborn son, the same words appear again. It's almost identical, actually, in the Hebrew. Sin desires to have you, but you must rule over it.

And so, the repetition is pointing us back to Cain needing to make a choice. Cain knows how to work the soil. He's a great gardener. But is he able to work out his heart, his anger issues?

Or is he going to let his anger turn him into a beast? And sadly, as we read on, life takes a darker turn, does it not?

[16 : 39] Right? We go from seeing life outside Eden to seeing a heartless murder. Right? In the fields, we get the Bible's first murder. Isn't it ironic? An image bearer dies.

God's warning, right? If you sin, you will surely die. It comes true. Right here. And it's not God's fault. It's our fault. And when God says, where's your brother Abel?

Look, he's not trying to be Sherlock Holmes. Okay? God knows everything. He's already known what's happened. Again, he wants to uncover Cain's heart. And yet Cain replies, I don't know.

Am I my brother's keeper? Can you see Cain's heart on full display? Unrepentant. Unloving. See what sin can become.

The firstborn of the world meant to be someone grand, someone important. Right? Could have been someone great. Yet Cain becomes resentful. Doesn't care what stands between him and God.

[17 : 42] Gets angry. Instead of receiving God's mercy, he keeps lying instead of owning up to his sin. And you know what?

When God punishes Cain, as we read on in the story, verse 10 onwards, you actually see Cain kind of double down, right? He objects. He says, you know, God gives a punishment and Cain says, no!

You know, that's way too harsh. I'll be hidden from your presence. It's a bit ironic now. You know, he is a killer. He's just killed someone.

He's scared that he'll get killed. What did you expect? And, you know, even this killing, you know, some people ask, you know, is it wrong to kill in any situation?

The word here in the Hebrew is more specific. It's more like slaying someone, like murdering or taking someone's life in a ruthless sort of way. Cain, the slayer, is now afraid of being slayed.

[18 : 37] But all through this, all through his arguing, what you don't see is someone who admits his guilt. What you don't see is someone who is concerned about anyone else's life except for his own.

And I think the Bible is trying to contrast Cain's heart to God's heart, right? Even with all this, how does the Lord respond? Can you see verse 15 in your Bibles?

Isn't it amazing? It says, not so. If anyone kills Cain, he will suffer vengeance seven times over. Then the Lord put a mark on Cain so that no one who found him would kill him.

Isn't that amazing mercy from a loving father to a very rebellious son? Isn't that what God is like? Not just to Cain, but to us as well.

You see, in verse 15, when God protects Cain, we learn. We learn that slaying, killing, murdering a human being in God's image is so wrong.

[19 : 46] It's to deface God's image bearers. And yet we learn that God is merciful and gracious. He is kind in ways that we could never hope to be ourselves. And here, God offers Cain another way out.

But look on and see what he does. Have a read of verse 16. Cain went out from the Lord's presence and lived in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

Look, when a friend is playing cards with you, right? Let's say you're playing a round of, I don't know, Uno, and he's about to drop a massive Uno card on you, right, against you, but he says, no, no, I'm not doing that, I'm not doing that.

Well, you can tell what's actually on his heart by all the cards he's kind of holding in there, kind of stacking up, right? For example, when Putin, right, was denying, no, I'm not invading Ukraine.

You could point to all the tanks at the border that kind of said, I'm not so sure. So yes, Cain can say all he wants and yet what does he do?

[20 : 56] That shows us the state of his heart. Can you see what he does? He went out from the Lord's presence. He stepped away. He goes out. He chooses to live in the land of Nod, literally the land of wandering.

He chooses to go into exile away from God. We sang about the song of ascents. He's going the song of descents away from God. His new address is reflecting his distance from God.

See what sin becomes. Kills a brother, grieves a mother, makes someone run, run, run away from God's presence. And I think here it's worth pausing and to remind ourselves anger that is not controlled by love can only bring sorrow.

I don't know how you guys deal with your anger when something frustrates you, when someone cuts you off, when a friend hurts you or betrays you even. But anger not controlled by love will devastate.

The apostle John, he knew this. He even says to believers when he writes them a letter, he says, don't be like Cain who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother. Instead, we should love one another.

[22 : 18] And remember, as we heard the Sermon on the Mount a few years back, right, he warns about the same issue, doesn't he? Right? You know it says, you know, in the Bible, don't murder.

Anyone who murders will be subject to judgment. But I tell you, Jesus says, if you're angry with your brother or sister, you will be subject to judgment. Our anger is not just a little sin.

It's a big deal before God because it reveals a state of our hearts. And look, whatever it is, a bad relationship, a costly cancellation, deep-seated differences in the life of the church, there's so much that can make us angry.

And our Lord instead would remind us, blessed are the meek, the merciful, those who hunger, rather, for righteousness, not vengeance. Blessed are those who have and show mercy, the peacemakers, not the angry ones.

Let's keep going. Unfortunately, the story just kind of keeps descending in verses 17 to 24. I think we kind of read what Cain's decision in verse 16 brings.

[23 : 32] I'll just kind of put the whole, yeah, all the text from that section there. All right. So just to remind ourselves, but, I mean, briefly you can see, yes, his family grows, yes, Cain's family line is fruitful and multiplies, and yet for all the names that Ivan read so well, Enoch, Kiran, Methushael, Methushael, so on, blah, blah, blah.

Notice there's actually one name that is missing. Can anyone point it out? Whose name is missing? The Lord's name is missing. This story has been filled with the Lord talking, pleading, asking, and yet in this section, once Cain disappears from the Lord, the Lord is missing.

Can you see what the author is trying to tell us? Where is the Lord? Nowhere in Cain's life. Missing in action. Distant, far away.

A Cain's family tree is filled with people raising their children who know nothing of their maker and their promised redeemer. And so, why are we not surprised then?

Right? That by the seventh generation, when we get down to Lamech, God's word to Cain, in verse 15, that kind of kindness and mercy, has been completely twisted into a proud boast that says, I'm proud of murdering someone who wounded me.

[25 : 02] Right? It's not just that he slays a man for hurting him. It is just, that's the first OTT response in Scripture. Can we agree with that? Okay? Surely not justified. And the way it's phrased is he's practically singing about it.

Imagine singing a worship song about murdering someone. This is where, this is where the pattern of sin has gone down to. And yes, notice who he's boasting to. He's boasting to his wives, plural.

What's going on here? We can fudge Scripture all we want, but the Bible is clear. To step away from God's good design of one man, one woman, one life, Genesis 4 is telling us it is godless.

It brings heartbreak. It comes alongside pain and suffering. See what sin becomes. Kills a brother. Grieves a mother.

Spawns this family dynasty that is just proud of evil and sin and suffering. We need to pull back though. I want to share two little asides.

[26 : 07] One is this. It's important to point out that though this is terrible, it's heartbreaking, Cain's descendants are still at work. They're still inventing things.

They're still being image bearers. You see that. Even though they're making tents, they're raising cattle, they're playing music, they're doing things while they don't know God, they are still reflecting His image, reflecting God's kind of hardworking qualities.

And I think we need to remember this, okay? It's easy for us to kind of be the holy huddle and then kind of point out, look at all those godless people, but we need to be careful. Remember when we speak with friends and family who are far from God, or if we speak even of politicians, world leaders, whatever, that's on our screens, they may be harsh, they may be hurtful, they may even be evil, but they still reflect God's image.

And we need to treat them that way as we speak, as we pray, as we think. I think it's worth pausing here as well and think about the issue of where did this curse, this sin, come from?

Is it just something they inherited? Is it just passed down generation to generation? I think sometimes in particularly Chinese cultures, we can kind of go, oh, cannot, you know, all this bad stuff happened in my family, can I escape it?

[27 : 30] Or am I just bound to their fate? Perhaps in your family there's been a history of terrible things. Maybe you worry that I'm not going to be able to escape all the sin in my life, in my family's line.

But I think what we're seeing here, and look, I could be wrong, but I think what we see if I read it right, is that this is a family line that grew up far from the presence of God, right?

That was the main point. Cain moved away, and all his family moved away from the Lord's presence. You see, sin is not just a family-inherited problem. Sin is a moral problem.

Everyone's heart is at play here. And actually, even Lamech, being so cruel and evil, we're going to hear next week that there's going to be another Lamech who's not cruel and evil.

An author explains it well. I think Cain's offspring, this is John Collins speaking, he displayed nothing of a proper relationship to God.

[28 : 29] Because at issue is this, Cain went away from the presence of the Lord. And it seems his children grew up without the Lord. That's what's at issue here. Not an inherited family issue, but generation after generation who don't follow the Lord.

And so the implication, John says, is let not the people of Israel reading this neglect their duty. You see, the main concern in Genesis 4 is not whether my dad or granddad did something bad.

The main issue, look, my own sins are bad enough. The main issue is this, will you and I stay in the presence of the Lord or not? Will we step away like Cain, like his descendants?

And here, I wonder if you can help not thinking about some of the members of PCBC who have maybe lighted these doors through the years and now who have wandered away from the Lord.

I don't know. This is a random photo from our website from last year. Who's here? Who's not? Think about the older photos or the names removed from our group lists.

[29 : 39] They're doing all kinds of human, image-bearing things. Yes, right? They're probably involved in good things in this world and yet they're doing all of this, rejecting God's presence and nearness in their lives.

How do we feel about that? Does it break our hearts? And so, I think as a church we need to, at this point, remember, remind each other who are the children, who are the teens growing up among us?

How can we help them to stay in the presence of the Lord? How can we help them stay and know the Lord's nearness and goodness, His grace and mercy?

Will we instead let them find their own path away from the Lord? I hope our legacy at PCBC, 30 years on, from now, will not be just a cultural club or a holy huddle.

I hope you and I will be part of a church that knows the presence of the Lord, that holds out God's grace and mercy to each other and to the generations to come and that we are praying for God to do this work of reviving our church.

[30 : 53] PCBC, let's not neglect our responsibility. Last week we mentioned that there were two glimmers of hope, right?

These are pretty bleak chapters, I understand this. And so curiously, or maybe God likes to do things, you know, in pairs, I think this week we see also two glimmers of hope for us in chapter 4.

And so let me share them with you briefly. First, we're told in the last two verses of a better lineage, a better family line, right?

Adam made love to his wife again and she gave birth to a son and named him Seth. It's interesting, right? After being banished from the garden, Eve speaks twice in chapter 4.

And both times we get a glimpse into the heart of an almost different woman. I wonder if you noticed that. If you and I need proof that God's mercy can change someone's heart, we should look at Eve's story.

[31 : 58] It's amazing, isn't it? Think about it. Once Eve saw the Lord as mean and unreasonable, right? You know, with the garden. Now, actually, verse 1 of chapter 4, Eve says, with the Lord's help I brought forth men.

You see, she trusts in the help of the Lord, the Lord helping her. Once Eve would hide and blame shift and not admit before her maker what she'd done, now she sees her in verse 25, God has granted me another child.

You see, that language, Eve now sees God as generous and through her son, Seth, a family line begins that one day brings hope to a broken world, to our world.

And look, we do need to fill the caps a little bit. We don't know the kinds of family worship that Eve and Adam would have had with their son, Seth. We don't know what church they would have brought them to or what songs they would have sang or what kinds of offerings.

We do know this, though. Perhaps, before bed each night, Eve could remind her son, God promised a redeemer, right? Our Bible verse of the month.

[33 : 08] A snake crusher, a saviour through our family. So let's keep trusting him. Or maybe, you could imagine Adam and Seth riding their prehistoric scooters around the block.

Maybe they talk about how life was really hard right now, but yet God has still been so good to them, so merciful. Whatever their family did, we know it must have made an impact because verse 26 tells us, as death grows up, as he raises his family, at that time, people began to call on the name of the Lord.

How good is that? For every don't know, don't care daughter that runs from God's presence, there are daughters who keep calling upon the name of the Lord.

For every prodigal son that is running from the Father's love, there are sons returning to his welcoming arms. We need to remember this.

That is a key important glimmer of hope for us as God's family. And let's hold on to that. Let's hold on to that. And finally, the other glimmer of hope comes from a very unlikely place.

[34 : 23] And look, we've barely mentioned Abel, right? Second child syndrome, maybe. You feel a little bit sorry for him. If you had to act the scene out, he'd kind of be like an extra, right?

I don't know. We've been watching the Lord of the Rings and there's an extra called Figwit. So Frodo is great. Who is that? You know, this random elf that stands in the corner. Not a single word of dialogue comes from Abel's lips.

His name literally means breath or vapor. Actually, you know, Abel, right? In the book of Ecclesiastes, the way it starts it, it says, Abel, Abel, everything's Abel, which in Hebrew translated means meaningless, meaningless, everything is meaningless.

So poor Abel, right? I can relate. I'm second in my family too. But don't be fooled. You think about Abel's story, it is completely, seems completely meaningless. And yet the chapter has invited us to turn to the ground where Abel's blood was crying out, right?

Verse 10. Verse 10 was saying, listen to the cries of Abel's blood coming from the ground. And actually, if we listen carefully to even Abel's life, we see a very quiet man, yes, but he was someone who offered God a better sacrifice from a righteous heart.

[35 : 44] And the book of Hebrews, chapter 11, verse 4, the author says, and by faith, Abel still speaks even though he is dead. Imagine that.

Imagine that. Every innocent death like Abel's, right? Whether it's through murder or massacre, whether through a mosque attack or military invasion, every senseless death where there is no voice, there's a cry for righteousness from somewhere, for eternal justice, for everlasting peace.

Do you really feel that right now? That we need someone who can bring eternal peace and justice? Well, for those of us who call upon the Lord's name, that does come.

It comes through another son of Adam, another son of Eve, someone who is more than just a man, right? More than just a tradie, more than just a teacher. And the author of Hebrews puts it this way in chapter 12, verse 22, he says, look, when you come together as a church, you have come to God the judge of all, to the spirits of the righteous made perfect.

How? Because you've come to Jesus who mediates a better, a newer covenant. You're coming to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

[37 : 16] As Abel's blood is staining the ground here in Genesis 4, or as a tank is pummeling innocent children, by faith, you and I can turn to the cross and we can remember another man's blood.

another man's cry. The one who said, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me? The one who is silent as he dies for sinners.

See what sin becomes. The innocent son of God hangs on a tree outside Jerusalem. His murder is just as cruel, if not worse, than Abel's murder, right?

His blood just as callously spilt on the dust. And yet, Jesus' blood does far better. As our Lord and Savior gave up His breath, He was able to bring about a better covenant, a better promise.

His death can fulfill what God wanted all along, right? a peacemaker, a bridge, a connection, a mediator between His people to rescue them away from the curse of sin and death.

[38 : 35] And from Jesus' sinless sacrifice, if you hold on to it, you and I can have a new heart that replaces anger with love, that replaces hate with compassion, that gathers together a bitter family tree, one that can call upon the name of the Lord, one that is filled with people transformed by His mercy and grace.

And maybe we can start a new effect, a new effect of grace and mercy that ripples out to our broken world. PCPC, can that be our hope today?

Can we let the better blood of Christ be our firm foundation? Would you pray with me? Let's pray and ask God to help us with that now. Father, we were once your enemies, running far from you.

Oh Lord, in this chapter we are confronted with how sinful people, not just these people here in the story were, but how we share their same hearts. And yet, thank you so much, Father, through Jesus Christ, you have brought us together into a better family, because your blood was better.

Your blood was shed through an innocent death, and because of that, we can thank you, we can turn to you, and find forgiveness and peace, and we can live for you, the one who loved our souls.

[40 : 20] So, Father, we thank you. We ask all these things in Christ's name. Amen.