

Genesis 4:5-16

Genesis 4 Now the man had relations with his wife Eve, and she conceived and gave birth to Cain, and she said, “I have gotten a manchild with *the help of the Lord.*” ² Again, she gave birth to his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of flocks, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. ³ So it came about in the course of time that Cain brought an offering to the Lord of the fruit of the ground. ⁴ 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; ⁵ but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard. So Cain became very angry and his countenance fell.

⁶ Then the Lord said to Cain, “Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? ⁷ 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.” ⁸ Cain told Abel his brother. And it came about when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.

⁹ Then the Lord said to Cain, “Where is Abel your brother?” And he said, “I do not know. Am I my brother’s keeper?” ¹⁰ He said, “What have you done? The voice of your brother’s blood is crying to Me from the ground. ¹¹ Now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your hand. ¹² When you cultivate the ground, it will no longer yield its strength to you; you will be a vagrant and a wanderer on the earth.” ¹³ Cain said to the Lord, “My punishment is too great to bear! ¹⁴ Behold, You have driven me this day from the face of the ground; and from Your face I will be hidden, and I will be a vagrant and a wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me.” ¹⁵ So the Lord said to him, “Therefore whoever kills Cain, vengeance will be taken on him sevenfold.” And the Lord appointed a sign for Cain, so that no one finding him would slay him.

¹⁶ Then Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

In review...Two sons, two offerings, two religions, two outcomes

Genesis 4:3...Cain brought of the fruit of the ground for the worship of God, but Abel brought a blood sacrifice from the best (firstlings . . . fat) of his livestock, which the Lord respected. This shows that (a) God requires a blood sacrifice which is implied by the earlier covering of Adam and Eve, and (b) Adam had taught both brothers that this was required, since Abel offered his sacrifice by faith (Heb. 11:4), and faith comes by hearing the word of God (Rom. 10:17). God had revealed the way of acceptable worship.

Michael Barrett, RHB

Whereas Cain brought an offering arising from his own work, Abel brought an offering in blood from a lamb that was slain. In this is seen the difference between the two religions that are joined to the two lines of humanity, one of unbelief and the other of faith in God's gift of atonement.

1 John 3 10 By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother. **11** For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another; **12** not as Cain, *who* was of the evil one and slew his brother. And for what reason did he slay him? Because his deeds were evil, and his brother's were righteous.

It is not that Cain believed nothing—he believed in his own works. Abel, however, came to God, trusting in the sacrificial blood that God himself would provide through the offspring of the woman, in the coming of Jesus Christ. Abel was accepted, therefore, by his faith in the gospel of Christ and his atoning work, whereas Cain was rejected because of his lack of faith in the Savior who would come.

Hebrews 11 4 By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous, God testifying about his gifts, and through faith, though he is dead, he still speaks.

God himself had given to Cain and Abel's parents a specific example in the aftermath of their fall... Genesis 3:21 records how God instructed Adam and Eve in the essentials of true religion: “the LORD God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them.”

Adam and Eve had only a small amount of divine revelation, so far as the Bible shows. How prominent it was, then, when God enacted his saving plan precisely in terms of blood sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins.

Justification through Faith

God's acceptance of Abel grounds one of the great teachings of the Bible: the doctrine of justification through faith. This doctrine is at the core of the gospel, the good news that God offers us in Christ, because it declares exactly what we see in the case of Abel, namely, how a sinner can be accepted and declared righteous by the holy God.

We are not righteous by works, which declare our supposed merit—this was Cain’s mistake, and the cause of his rejection as he came to God with a picture of his own works for salvation—but we are justified only through faith, which declares our need and our acceptance of God’s gracious gift.

Abel was a sinner, being the son of Adam and bearing sin’s corruption in his fallen human nature. Yet when he came to God, bearing the blood of a substitute, “the LORD had regard for Abel and his offering” (Gen. 4:4). The blood turned away God’s wrath by speaking of the cross of Christ, and on that basis God received Abel with gladness.

This acceptance was available not only to him; Cain could have been justified this same way. As God explained to bitter Cain: “Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted?” (vv. 6–7).

The Voice of Abel

Hebrews 11:4 concludes its exposition on Abel: “And through his faith, though he died, he still speaks.” ***Faith brought Abel to God, trusting the blood that Christ would someday shed. God responded with acceptance, bearing a testimony of justification, in response to this faith. By this faith, Abel, though dead, still speaks.***

Genesis 15 After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, saying,

“Do not fear, Abram,
I am a shield to you;
Your reward shall be very great.”

² Abram said, “O Lord God, what will You give me, since I am childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?” ³ And Abram said, “Since You have given no offspring to me, one born in my house is my heir.” ⁴ Then behold, the word of the Lord came to him, saying, “This man will not be your heir; but one who will come forth from your own body, he shall be your heir.” ⁵ And He took him outside and said, “Now look toward the heavens, and count the stars, if you are able to count them.” And He said to him, “So shall your descendants be.” ⁶ Then he believed in the Lord; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.

During all the long years and centuries before Jesus Christ, the faith of Abel preached the gospel to the people of God. His offering symbolized a sacrifice that was yet to come and would take away our sin. He spoke of faith, instead of works, as the way of justification. Now that Christ has come, Abel still speaks of God's atoning grace, with a voice that fully rejoices.

Ephesians 2⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is the gift of God*; ⁹ not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

Source...Richard Phillips, "Genesis"

Turning to Genesis 4:5-16...

Genesis 4:5 After God rejected him for unbelief: "Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell" (Gen. 4:5). In his angry attitude, Cain typified the hostility that results from those who reject the grace of God in Christ.
Michael Barrett

God had accepted his brother Abel through his faith in the saving Lamb who would come. In his pride, Cain resented the implication that he required a Savior, and his heart and face were drawn down by unbelief.

The narrative of Genesis 4:6–16, which relates Cain's murder of his brother Abel, reveals the progress of sin in the fallen human nature. Cain's anger toward God is transferred into envy against his brother. Resenting God's acceptance of Abel in his place, Cain executes his own judgment by slaying his righteous brother...

Sin Crouching

Genesis 4:6...Why are you angry? As the Lord dealt with Adam and Eve when they sinned, so the Lord deals with Cain with a question. He confronts him with his sin.

It is noteworthy that a passage focused on sin begins with an appeal from God's grace. Perceiving Cain's downcast attitude, the Lord came to him with a sensitive question leading to generous advice: "The LORD said to Cain, 'Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen?'" (Gen. 4:6).
Michael Barrett, RHB

Genesis 4:7 *Despite Adam's covenant-breaking and Cain's prior failure, God has not removed his fatherly concern.* Moreover, God's grace provides a way of return: "If you do well, will you not be accepted?" (v. 7). **Here is an appeal for Cain not to rebel against the saving way provided by God, but to receive forgiveness through faith in the Savior to come.**

God's invitation to Cain proves his abiding offer of grace to those who oppose him in sin. One of the church's hymns of assurance invites, "Come, ye sinners, poor and wretched, weak and wounded, sick and sore; Jesus ready stands to save you, full of pity joined with pow'r." (Joseph Hart...Come Ye Sinners)

This grace was not a new attitude brought about by Christ, but God's grace appears as soon as sin is revealed. **Here at the beginning of the Bible, we encounter the message contained in all Scripture: God calls sinners to repent and believe so as to receive his salvation.**

Along with an offer of acceptance is a dire warning to anyone who rejects the way of salvation. For just as God's grace is a power sent forth to the lost, so also is sin a power that threatens bondage and destruction. God told Cain: "If you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it" (Gen. 4:7)."

Genesis 4:7 contains the first use of the word "sin" in the Bible. It presents sin as a live force that seeks to dominate us. God warns Cain that unless sin is remedied, it waits like a deadly animal that is crouched to strike. "Sin is crouching at the door," God warns.

Once we have fallen into sin, we wake up with a menace nearby...a deadly predator poised to attack. **When we open our door, sin is waiting to make itself our master.**

Jonathan Edwards described the menace of sin in terms of its guilt. He conceded that when we have sinned, there is often no visible effect, yet "there is something invisible that remains; the guilt of sin remains. There is not one sin that [men] have ever been guilty of, whether openly or secretly, whether in riper years or in childhood, that has vanished and is done with."

Edwards thus reminds us that while we can forget our sins, God's justice never does. Therefore, the guilt of sin places each one of us under the deadly threat of God's wrath...

Edwards writes: "Their sins have already kindled the fire of hell. Their damnation is prepared for them and is waiting for them."

Since the guilt of our sins crouches beside us, how urgently we should seek the remedy that God applies to our guilt through faith in the Savior, who grants forgiveness of sins (1 John 1:9).

Sin is a like a beast crouching at our door and desiring mastery, further, in terms of its enslaving power.

Genesis 4:7...“Sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you.” Like a predatory animal ready to pounce.

Michael Barrett, RHN

Alexander Maclaren writes: “Once a man has done a wrong thing, it has an awful power of attracting him and making him hunger to do it again.” For this reason, he notes, it “is a great deal easier to find a man who has never done a wrong thing than to find a man who has only done it once.”

Because of its controlling power, it is impossible for us to dabble in sin. When we give ourselves permission to cross a forbidden line—when we click on a link to an internet site devoted to sin, or when we decide to let down our guard and permit a vice into our character—henceforth ***sin is a deadly power crouching at our door.*** Once we have sinned, we have attached guilt to our record and exposed our fallen nature to a deadly temptation, the power of which will remain.

God warned Cain about the staying power of sin: “Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it” (Gen. 4:7). ***Notice how sin is personified with a will and a malevolent desire...Sin wants to control us all.***

God thus warns that with our having become sinners, the decisive matter in our lives is whether we will be slaves to sin or whether we will be redeemed from sin’s guilt and power. But how can we be delivered from sin? God said to Cain, “If you do well, will you not be accepted?” (4:7). He was referring to Abel’s faith in the cleansing blood of Jesus Christ. ***Only by coming to Jesus for forgiveness and receiving his indwelling power through faith can we escape the claws of crouching sin. Jesus declared,*** “If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed” (John 8:36).

Sin Striking...

Genesis 4:8 ***Cain goes on to provide a tragic example of one mastered by sin. With sin crouching at his door, he remained hardened to the grace of God.*** Immediately, we find sin striking with deadly force: “Cain spoke to Abel his brother. And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him” (Gen. 4:8).

“Cain rose up against Abel his brother and slew him.” Cain refused the grace that God had offered freely to him. Sin now takes its course and brings forth death (James 1:15). Cain’s hatred against his righteous brother showed that he was the seed of the serpent (3:15; 1 John 3:12).

Michael Barrett, RHB

It is obvious that Abel did not die through a sudden passion arising in Cain during a heated argument. Rather, “Cain spoke to Abel,” luring him into the field. Once there, Cain adopted the form of sin, crouching and striking with deadly violence. This was premeditated murder, revealing a deadly envy and hatred that had festered in Cain’s heart until he hatched a plot and committed the terrible crime. By giving in to sin’s hatred, Cain became the agent of sin’s malice. ***Thus, he is a picture not merely of a particularly wicked sinner, but of the evil that lurks in each of us if we give way to the power of sin.***

We have noted the importance of the word “sin” in this passage. But another vital word is “brother,” which appears six times in Genesis 4:8–11.

Cain rose up not merely against Abel, but specifically “against his brother Abel.” With this filial emphasis, the Bible is making a point about the effects of sin when its power is unleashed. Sin began with Adam’s breaking covenant with God. But sin continues by breaking every other bond. Love gives way to envy and trust to resentment. ***Unless sin is checked, its progress brings untold destruction.***

When God cursed the serpent in Genesis 3:15, he noted that sin would produce two contrary humanities existing side by side in this world. ***Abel represents the line of the godly, while Cain heads the line of the ungodly.***

This division explains why Cain no longer regarded Abel as his brother. Cain’s hatred attached not merely to Abel but also to the divine rule he represented. While Abel lived, Cain faced a daily reminder of his alienation from God, as well as the freely offered salvation that his heart rejected. What Cain hated was God’s way, so he struck Abel to wipe out the way of God that so offended him. For this reason, ***Jude 11 refers to “the way of Cain” as the pattern of blasphemy and spiritual rebellion against God.***

The apostle John states of Cain: “And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother’s righteous” (1 John 3:12)

A matter of the heart...

Luke 6 45 The good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth what is good; and the evil *man* out of the evil *treasure* brings forth what is evil; for his mouth speaks from that which fills his heart.

James 3 13 Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom. **14** But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth. **15** This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic. **16** For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing. **17** But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy. **18** And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

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The Believer against the World...

John then gives this enduring lesson: “Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you” (v. 13). Why is there an enmity in society toward Christians and Christian truth that seems to defy explanation? The answer is given by Cain’s murder of Abel. Those who walk in the way of the Lord will be hated by those who follow the way of Cain. According to Jesus, the list of the righteous slain for their faith runs “from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah the son of Barachiah” (Matt. 23:35). ***If we want to follow Abel in faith, we should not be surprised to find ourselves persecuted by the sons of Cain.***

John 15 18 “If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before *it hated* you. **19** If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you. **20** Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A slave is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they kept My word, they will keep yours also. **21** But all these things they will do to you for My name’s sake, because they do not know the One who sent Me.

Sin Convicted...

Genesis 4:9 *Cain had lured Abel away from inquiring eyes in order to slay him in secret. There was one observer, however, who could not be deceived.*

“Then the LORD said to Cain, ‘Where is Abel your brother?’ ” (Gen. 4:9).

“Where is Abel your brother?” Yet again God deals with sin by asking questions. Like the first question of God to Adam (3:9), this question, “Where is your brother?” echoes down the generations to us. We cannot expect the forgiveness of God, if we do not love our brother (1 John 4:20). Am I my brother’s keeper? One would have expected this famous retort by Cain to provoke God’s immediate judgment by the death penalty, but God was patient.

Michael Barrett, RHB

The question does not reflect God’s ignorance, of course. Rather, he asked to confront Cain for his deed.

Cain reveals the spread of sin in his heart, compounding murder by lying to God. “I do not know,” he answered. Then, as if to dismiss God, he added, “Am I my brother’s keeper?” (Gen. 4:9). ***Cain’s defiance was sharp, his conscience hardened....***The very word “brother” answers Cain’s question...to have a brother is to share mutual obligation and care.

When Jesus was asked what constitutes a neighbor, he taught the parable of the good Samaritan to show that everyone in need is our neighbor (Luke 10:25–37). ***Sin had so stripped Cain of his God-given humanity that even his brother was no longer a neighbor. His descent into the mindset of the crouching beast has been swift!***

John 3 19 This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. **20** For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. **21** But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God.”

John 8 44 You are of *your* father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *nature*, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

Genesis 4:10 The Lord replied to Cain: “What have you done? The voice of your brother’s blood is crying to me from the ground” (Gen. 4:10).

With these haunting words, God declared his knowledge of all things, including sins. Hebrews 4:13 states that “no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.” Here, the forensic evidence was obvious to the all-seeing God.

Psalm 10 ⁴ The wicked, in the haughtiness of his countenance, does not seek *Him*.

All his thoughts are, “There is no God.”

⁵ His ways prosper at all times;
Your judgments are on high, out of his sight...

⁹ He lurks in a hiding place as a lion in his lair;
He lurks to catch the afflicted;
He catches the afflicted when he draws him into his net.

¹⁰ He crouches, he bows down,
And the unfortunate fall by his mighty ones.

¹¹ He says to himself, “God has forgotten;
He has hidden His face; He will never see it.”

Abel’s blood in the ground cried out with convicting force. Sin had infected Cain with a foolish atheism that assumed God’s ignorance. But God saw what Cain had done, and the evidence of sin cried out to God’s holy heart.

“The voice of your brother’s blood is crying to Me from the ground.” The Lord Jesus Himself spoke of Abel’s blood (Matt. 23:35). God does not forget the death of the innocents. Thankfully, there is blood that speaks better things than Abel’s, the saving blood of Jesus (Heb. 12:24).

Michael Barrett, RHB

Barnhouse comments, “Every sin has a voice which cries to God, and though there may be no human witnesses to it, the testimony of God will one day be given.”

Abel was speechless when his throat was being cut, or in whatever other manner he was losing his life; but after death the voice of his blood was more vehement than any eloquence of the orator.

“Thank God that the death of an innocent person cannot be hidden from him; that he hears the cry of the murdered unborn. Thank God that he knows when his people suffer, even if it never makes it into the media. For their blood cries out to him, even in a world where many, quite literally, get away with murder. In God’s world, ultimately there will always be justice.” Alisdair Payne

Genesis 4:11,12 *Outraged by Abel's murder, God not only accused but also convicted and sentenced Cain for his sin:* “And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. When you work the ground, it shall no longer yield to you its strength” (Gen. 4:11–12).

As will prove to be the biblical pattern, God's punishment fit Cain's crime.

“Now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand.” The Lord is constantly alluding to the earth that was cursed at the first sin. The earth has now absorbed Abel's blood. It would eventually receive the blood of the pure Lamb of God who took the curse of sin in our place. Cain was cursed from the earth and would now become a fugitive and a wanderer (vagabond).

Michael Barrett

Remember that Cain was a farmer, and for farmers, the land is everything! But with human blood Cain had stained the ground on which his livelihood depended. Now a horrified God would make the ground return the curse to Cain. Whereas previously only Satan, as the serpent, had been directly cursed by God, now Satan's offspring shares the condemnation: “you are cursed” (Gen. 4:11). The immediate effect will be that Cain's labor in the ground will not produce a yield. God had made the earth good on the third day (1:10). Through Adam's sin, the ground had received a curse that required man to work hard on the ground. Cain's curse goes beyond this. Now his hard work will bear no fruit: the earth “shall no longer yield to you its strength” (4:12). ”

Related to this was the second part of Cain's sentence: “You shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth” (Gen. 4:12). ***Because the very ground continually calls out, “Guilty!” to the presence of Cain, he will constantly be on the move, vainly seeking to escape his open-air prison. Never will he find a home; never will he come to rest.***

Genesis 4:13,14 *The aftermath of Cain's conviction is spelled out in his despair and, surprisingly, God's mercy.* First, Cain despairs: “My punishment is greater than I can bear. 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” (Gen. 4:13–14).

“My punishment is too great to bear!” The common mercy of God is such that God still hears Cain's cries. The Lord sets a mark upon Cain, so that no one can take his life without severe punishment. God takes vengeance seriously (Deut. 32:35; Rom. 12:19).

Michael Barrett, RHB

Notice that Cain laments only for himself, not for his dead brother or his offended God—not even for the land given to his care. He is not grieved for sin, only sin’s consequence. In this approach he anticipates the attitude of all unconverted, unrepentant sinners. Yes, he will be hidden from God’s face. Cain had refused God, and now he would abide without the blessing of God, a living foretaste of the dreadful terrors of hell. Isaiah 48:22 summarizes: “ ‘There is no peace,’ says the LORD, ‘for the wicked.’ ” **For Cain, the loss of God, the Giver, consists solely of the gifts he will miss. Moreover, sensing God’s curse on his sin, Cain fears the retribution of other men: “whoever finds me will kill me.”**

Yet, a word of grace...

Genesis 4:15 Yet the final word comes from God, and it is a word of grace: “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” (Gen. 4:15). **Here we see not redeeming grace, which comes only through faith in Christ, but common grace...God’s restraint of evil for the sake of his purposes. Cain deserves to die, but God’s plans call for Cain to live. Therefore, God puts out the word that the blood of Cain would be costly in the extreme: anyone who touches him will fall under divine judgment. Thus, Cain “is a marked “man, in a positive sense. He leaves God’s presence but not God’s protection.**

We do not know what mark God placed on Cain...**the point was that his sin would go with him in such a way that his vengeance would belong only to God.**

Romans 12¹⁹ Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord.

Sin Conquered...

Genesis 4:16 The last verse of this grievous account tells of Cain’s departure: “Then Cain went away from the presence of the LORD and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden” (Gen. 4:16). “Nod” means “wandering,” a name that it probably derived from its most famous occupant. There, Cain’s presence proved the axiom that sin separates us from God and God’s judgments are carried out.

Clearly, God intended Cain to enter history with a cautionary message for others. His story speaks to those, for example, who have believed the gospel and come to God through faith in Christ.

God's warning to Cain pertains as directly to Christians as it does to anyone else: "sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it" (Gen. 4:7)."

Source...Richard Phillips. "Genesis."

The Gravity of Sin...

A person's life is his most precious possession. Consequently, to rob him of it is the greatest sin we can commit against him, while to give one's own life on his behalf is the greatest possible expression of love for him (1 Jn. 3:16). This, then, is the ultimate contrast: Cain's hatred issued in murder, Christ's love (issued) in self-sacrifice.

John Stott

One sin leads to another. Failure in our love to God always results in failure in our love to our neighbor.

A WPink

Sin has the devil for its father, shame for its companion and death for its wages.

Thomas Watson

35 Reasons Not to Sin:

1. Because a little sin leads to more sin.
2. Because my sin invites the discipline of God.
3. Because the time spent in sin is forever wasted.
1. Because my sin never pleases but always grieves God who loves me.
2. Because my sin places a greater burden on my spiritual leaders.
3. Because in time my sin always brings heaviness to my heart.
4. Because I am doing what I do not have to do.
5. Because my sin always makes me less than what I could be.
6. Because others, including my family, suffer consequences due to my sin.
7. Because my sin saddens the godly.
8. Because my sin makes the enemies of God rejoice.
9. Because sin deceives me into believing I have gained when in reality I have lost.
10. Because sin may keep me from qualifying for spiritual leadership.
11. Because the supposed benefits of my sin will never outweigh the consequences of disobedience.
12. Because repenting of my sin is such a painful process, yet I must repent.
13. Because sin is a very brief pleasure for an eternal loss.
14. Because my sin may influence others to sin.
15. Because my sin may keep others from knowing Christ.

16. Because sin makes light of the cross, upon which Christ died for the very purpose of taking away my sin.
17. Because it is impossible to sin and follow the Spirit at the same time.
18. Because God chooses not to respect the prayers of those who cherish their sin.
19. Because sin steals my reputation and robs me of my testimony.
20. Because others once more earnest than I have been destroyed by just such sins.
21. Because the inhabitants of heaven and hell would all testify to the foolishness of this sin.
22. Because sin and guilt may harm both mind and body.
23. Because sins mixed with service make the things of God tasteless.
24. Because suffering for sin has no joy or reward, though suffering for righteousness has both.
25. Because my sin is adultery with the world.
26. Because, though forgiven, I will review this very sin at the Judgment Seat where loss and gain of eternal rewards are applied.
27. Because I can never really know ahead of time just how severe the discipline for my sin might be.
28. Because my sin may be an indication of a lost condition.
29. Because to sin is not to love Christ.
30. Because my unwillingness to reject this sin now grants it an authority over me greater than I wish to believe.
31. Because sin glorifies God only in His judgment of it and His turning of it to good use, never because it is worth anything on its own.
32. Because I promised God He would be Lord of my life.

Jim Eliff

The Gravity of an Unrepentant Heart...

Hebrews 3:15 *“Today if you hear His voice,
Do not harden your hearts...”*

Delay is a kind of denial. Delays be dangerous, our hearts will cool, and our affections will fall down... Satan hath little hope to prevail unless he can persuade us to omit our duties when the clock strikes, and therefore his skill is to urge us to put off till another time as fitter or better.

Richard Capel

All the while longer thou delayest, God is more provoked, the wicked one more encouraged, thy heart more hardened, thy debts more increased, thy soul more endangered, and all the difficulties of conversion daily more and more multiplied upon thee, having a day more to repent of, and a day less to repent in.

George Swinnock

All the longer your delay, the more your sin gets strength and rooting. If you cannot bend a twig, how will you be able to bend it when it is a tree?
Richard Baxter

By delay of repentance, sin strengthens, and the heart hardens. The longer ice freezeth, the harder it is to be broken.
Thomas Watson

You cannot repent too soon, because you do not know how soon it may be too late.
Thomas Fuller

Appendix...The Blood of Abel (Excerpts from Ligonier)

As if the crime of murder was not atrocious enough, Cain compounds his sin with a lie. When the Lord asks him about Abel's whereabouts, Cain tells God that his brother's location is unknown to him (Gen. 4:9). Furthermore, he addresses the Creator flippantly, claiming no responsibility for the well-being of his kin.

Moses' original audience would have been especially disturbed by this account. First, an Israelite's brother had the primary responsibility to rescue him if he was in trouble (Lev. 25:47–55). Cain does the opposite of what this obligation requires, revealing the flagrancy with which he breaks the covenant. Secondly, Leviticus says life is in the blood (17:11), and so the most defiling substance possible is the shed blood of an innocent person. Thus, Cain's sin is particularly grave.

Again he refuses to repent when confronted with his sin. Cain is graciously given a chance to confess his iniquity, but he is too hardened to submit. John Calvin comments on how this passage warns us when we are convicted of sin. Though the Lord no longer confronts us audibly, "let those, therefore, whose consciences accuse them, beware lest, after the example of Cain, they confirm themselves in obstinacy." We must not harden our hearts as Cain did.

Cain futilely imagines he can hide his trespass from God, for Abel's blood cries out for justice (Gen. 4:10). The verb rendered "crying" in verse 10 is the same word used elsewhere to speak of the pleas of those who have met injustice (Ex. 22:22–23). When the Judge of all punishes Cain (Gen. 4:10–11), He demonstrates in practice what He promises by His word — that He always hears His faithful servants' cries for vindication (Ex. 22:22–24; Ps. 135:14).

This promise is fulfilled in Christ who was vindicated by God in His resurrection (Rom. 8:11; 1 Tim. 3:16). His blood also cried for vengeance, and this plea was satisfied when sin and death were conquered....