
“FAITH WORSHIPS”

TWO CITIES AND TWO WAYS

HEBREWS 11:4

SERIES: “REAL FAITH IN AN UNREAL WORLD” (2)

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Introduction

God’s way has always been the way of faith. Hebrews 10:38 quoting Habakkuk 2:4 – the Lord speaking: “My righteous one will live by faith”.

The Lord sees and accepts faith.
The story of two boys in hospital

Reading: Hebrews 11:4

The story of Cain and Abel – Genesis 4

St. Augustine, the early church father, explained the meaning of this story in his book “The City of God”: *“Cain was the first born and belonged to the city of men; after him was born Abel, who belonged to the city of God.”*

In Hebrews 11:4 - we see 2 cities & 2 ways:
the city of God and the city of man
the way of faith & way of unbelief.

Abel’s faith teaches us three things – there are:

- two ways to worship (genuine & counterfeit worship)
- two ways to live (righteous and unrighteous)
- and two ways to witness (godly and ungodly)

1. Two ways to worship

There is a right way to worship (Abel) and a wrong way to worship (Cain)

“BY FAITH, Abel offered a better sacrifice than Cain did..” -- Hebrews 11:4a

Abel’s worship was right before God because he was obedient to God’s instructions on HOW to worship.

To do something by faith is to do it in response to a word from God.

Romans 10:17

Can we worship God as WE please? NO!!

God had given Cain and Abel explicit instructions on HOW to worship:

- There was a PLACE to worship
- There was a right TIME to worship
- There was a right WAY to worship

Did not Cain and Abel understand the substitutionary, atoning nature of the blood sacrifice: a sin offering to cover their sins?
(Jesus takes our place with regard to the punishment for sin: our punishment is upon him)

“For without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sins”
-- Hebrews 9:22

Each of us need to recognize we are sinners in need of a Saviour!!

Abel offered a blood sacrifice for sin: 1 lamb for 1 man
Later came the PASSOVER: 1 lamb for 1 FAMILY
Then the DAY of ATONEMENT: 1 lamb for 1 NATION
Finally on GOOD FRIDAY - 1 lamb for WHOLE WORLD.

There was nothing inherently wrong with Cain’s offering, but the blood offering had priority, as it dealt with sin. We need to deal with sin first.

The life of faith BEGINS worship, and the acknowledgement that we are sinners in need of God’s forgiveness.

There were significant differences between Cain and Abel’s worship:

- Abel was obedient, Cain was disobedient.
- Abel recognized God’s grace and acknowledged his need; Cain came by works and a self-righteous attitude.
- Abel acknowledged his sin, Cain did not.

Although Cain understood who God was, he worshipped in his own way; his sacrifice was a monument to his own pride and self-righteousness. Therefore God rejected his offering.

Acts 4:12

Proverbs 14:12

Proverbs 3:9,10

John 4:23,24

2. Two ways to live

“By faith he was commended as a righteous man ...” Hebrews 11:4b

Authentic faith produces authentic worship, that produces righteous living.

James 2:17

3. Two types of witness

“And by faith he still speaks, even though he is dead.” –Hebrews 11:4c

APPLICATION

1. Do you have an authentic faith that produces genuine worship?

The basis of our worship is the finished work of Christ.

“Nothing in my hand I bring; simply to the cross I cling”

2. Does your faith produce righteous living?

3. Does your faith produce a genuine witness?