



# BEACON

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## The Way of Cain

*Fred E. Dennis*

Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core (Jude 11).

The “way of Cain” is the way of the transgressor—and this is a hard way. “The way of transgressors *is* hard” (Pro. 13:15). The Bible is full of warnings for the transgressor, but it seems so few will heed the warnings. They insist on finding out for themselves.

Sin is the transgression of the law of God. Cain thought he would offer whatever he cared to as an offering unto the Lord. He was a tiller of the soil. What would be more natural than for him to bring forth the fruit of the ground? The Lord had no respect for Cain’s offering. He will have no respect for us and our worship unless we do it in compliance with His commandments.

Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son (2 John 9).

The “way of Cain” is the way of the substitutor. He substituted his way for the Lord’s way. The religious world is full of just such substitution. The Lord says one thing, but men want something else. We learn from Hebrews 11:4 that Abel offered his offering by faith.

By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained wit-

ness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.

It is excellent to do exactly what God commands in exactly the way He commands it to be done. God counts that righteousness upon our part. Anything else than this is sin. Abel has been dead for thousands of years, yet he speaketh. It is wonderful that a man can speak for truth and right thousands of years after he is dead.

Abel offered by faith. Cain did not so offer. We cannot do anything by faith unless that thing has been ordered of the Lord. God teaches us to sing spiritual songs in worship (1 Cor. 14:15; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). We can render this act of worship by faith. When we add instrumental music, we are substituting our own think-so’s. We cannot use this instrumental music by faith. There is no Word of God for it. The Lord has not commanded it. The Lord had not commanded Cain’s offering. He would have none of it. Why should people of our day think that God will accept worship that He has not commanded? Jesus said, “But in vain they do worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men” (Mat. 15:9).

The Lord commands penitent believers to be baptized for the remission of their sins (Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:37-38; 22:16). Men want to substitute the baptism of babies for believers’ baptism. God will accept nothing of the kind. God says we are to be buried by baptism (Rom. 6:3-5; Col. 2:12; Heb. 10:22). Men have substituted

sprinkling and pouring for baptism. After they set aside the law of God and then make a law of their own, they dare to ask God to accept their human law. They will go so far as to say: "It is just as good as what the Bible commands." This substitution is deceiving millions of honest souls. Many will not learn until the Judgment Day that they have been wrong. They trusted in men and human law rather than in God and His law. Beware of substitution!

The Lord teaches His disciples to meet on the first day of the week to observe the Lord's Supper. The first day of the week comes every seven days. Men have substituted their wisdom for God's wisdom. They will meet every month or so, or every six months, to do what the Lord commanded on the first day of the week. Of course, the Lord knows nothing about a human church, and He made no laws to govern it. Yet, He did make laws to govern His church. We had better abide in the doctrine of Christ in this and in all other things. "Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain."

The "way of Cain" is the way of the evil one. It is the way of the devil. It is an awful thing to be a servant of the devil.

Not as Cain, *who* was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous. Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you (1 John 3:12-13).

The wicked have ever hated the righteous. The Lord will not accept the wicked and their wickedness. Cain was of the devil. Many in our day have the same father! Some brethren seem to marvel because the world hates them. There is just one way to get the love of the world. That way is the way of Cain. Go along with the world, and the world will love its own. Draw the line between the church and the world, wide and deep, and the world will hate you. Yes, and some of the worldly *Christians* will almost hate you.

The "way of Cain" is the way of jealousy and envy. Cain was jealous of his brother. He was

## Just a Little Song

Just a little song, dear,  
When the heart is gay;  
Just a lilting measure  
In the lonesome day;  
Just a thread of melody  
On the weary way.  
  
Just a little song, dear,  
When the burden binds;  
Just a snatch of music  
When the toiler finds  
Life's a little wearing  
And the Day's work grinds.

*Author Unknown*

envious of him. This envy and jealousy caused him to kill his brother. Envy and jealousy will go to hurtful extremes to gain their end. "Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous; But who is able to stand before envy?" (Pro. 27:4). Envy will do anything and everything to accomplish its ends.

The "way of Cain" is the way of the murderer. He murdered his brother. We have many brethren in the church who are doing the same thing. Some may think this statement is too strong, but it is not. "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him" (1 John 3:15). It is an awful thing to hate a brother. Brother, if you go to the judgment with hate in your heart toward a brother, you will land in hell.

If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? (4:20).

We have many brethren who will profess loudly their love to God, but at the very same time hate some of the brethren. God says such folks are murderers and liars. This was Cain's trouble:

Ye are of *your* father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from

the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it (John 8:44).

The “way of Cain” is to deny that we are responsible for our brother. “And the LORD said unto Cain, Where *is* Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: *Am* I my brother’s keeper?” (Gen. 4:9). Many of our day have the mistaken idea that they can do as they please regardless. In a very important sense, we are our brother’s

keeper. Some have filthy habits that will cause others to offend. We had better lay such habits aside. Our examples are powerful things. Many dear souls will be lost because those professing Christianity set a bad example before them. Many others will be saved because some humble Christians have realized their great responsibility to teach and live. May the dear God in heaven deliver us from the “way of Cain.”

*Deceased*

## “A Sad Day”

Israel was the chosen nation. They had the special watch-care of the God of heaven. Yet ingratitude seemed to characterize their relationship to Jehovah. As one reads the story of the nation of Israel, one must wonder **how anyone could have so often departed from God**. Even when they had been delivered from Egyptian bondage, they murmured against their deliverer in the very sight of the Red Sea. The period of the Judges saw no improvement. When the kingdom was divided, their allegiance was divided too, and Israel went a whoring after other gods. Isaiah 9:16 reads, “For they that lead this people cause them to err; and they that are led of them are destroyed.” **It is a sad day** when leaders lead their people into apostasy, but such was the case in Israel. They forgot their God and their salvation. They became a rebellious people, bowing down to gods made by human hands.

The prophet Hosea penned the words of God when he wrote, “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee” (Hos. 4:6). God later said through that prophet, “my people are bent on backsliding from me” (11:7). What sadder day ever dawned in Israel of old than that day when God had rejected them because of a lack of knowledge? Just as the nation of Israel went away from God in the long ago, spiritual Israel, **the church**, can depart from God today. The Israelites

were destroyed because of a “lack of knowledge.” **One untaught generation** is all that is needed today for the church to be destroyed for the same reason. Christians are charged to study the Word (2 Tim. 2:15).

Elders are enjoined to feed the flock (Acts 20:28), and preachers are commanded to preach the Word (2 Tim. 4:2). When Christians, elders, and preachers fail to fulfill their God-given responsibilities, a sad day for spiritual Israel is on the horizon. God’s people **will apostatize because of a lack of knowledge**. Even if preachers failed to preach God’s Word and elders failed to demand that the Word be taught, all would not be lost if Christians would fulfill their responsibility. They should see to it that the church is fed the Word of God. When a congregation becomes satisfied with the **social gospel** that never reproves or rebukes, it is **indeed a sad day**. What more could you expect than full-scale apostasy? Nothing but destruction could come if preachers did not preach the Bible, elders did not feed the flock, and members no longer cared for the teaching of God’s Word. The day the church **fails to preach** the Word is the day it begins its journey away from God. Remember, Hosea quoted God as saying, “My people are destroyed for the lack of knowledge.”

*Author Unknown*

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## Sick

### Remember in your prayers:

Bill & Peggy Crowe

Nancy Travis

Linda Worley

Carla Burleson

Bill & Pam Busch

Linda Parks

## Please Remember

June 21

Birthdays and Anniversaries Get-together will be held in the zone room after the afternoon service.

## Weekly Services

### Sunday

Bible Classes for all ages — 9:00 a.m.

Morning Worship Service — 10:00 a.m.

Afternoon Worship Service — 1:00 p.m.

### Wednesday

Bible Classes for all ages — 7:00 p.m.

## Bellview Church of Christ

**Bishops:** Paul Brantley

Michael Hatcher

Bill Busch

**Minister:** Tim Cozad