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### “Further East”

Genesis 4:1-26

Sunday | December 4th, 2016 | Pastor Patrick Bowler

#### CONSULT THE SCRIPTURES

Genesis 4:1-26  
Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

(See also, Heb. 11:4, 1 Jn. 3:12, Jude 11, 2 Pet. 3:9, Is. 1:11-14, 29:13, Micah 6:7-8,)

#### CONSULT THE SCHOLARS

[John Piper re: 1 Jn. 3:12] *“So what would it be like for any of us to be like Cain? It would mean that anytime some weakness or bad habit in our lives is exposed by contrast to someone else’s goodness, instead of dealing with the weakness or the bad habit, we keep away from those whose lives make us feel defective. We don’t kill them. We avoid them. Or worse, we find ways to criticize them so as to neutralize the part of their lives that was making us feel convicted. We feel like the best way to nullify someone’s good point is to draw attention to his bad point. And so we protect ourselves from whatever good he might be for us.*

*But John’s point is: Love doesn’t act like that. Love is glad when our brothers and sisters are making progress in good habits or good attitudes or good behavior. Love rejoices in this growth. And if it happens to be faster than our own growth, then love is humble and rejoices with those who rejoice.*

*So the lesson for us is: Everywhere you see some growth, some virtue, some spiritual discipline, some good habit, or good attitude, rejoice in it. Give thanks for it. Compliment it. Don’t resent it. Don’t be like Cain. Respond the opposite from Cain. Be inspired by other people’s goodness.*

*Love is humble. Love delights in other people’s good. Love doesn’t protect its own flaws. Love takes steps to change them. What a beautiful fellowship where everyone is rejoicing in each other’s strengths, not resenting them! This is what the love of God looks like when the new birth gives it life in the people of God.”<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup>John Piper, *Finally Alive (Desiring God)*, p. 158-159.

#### DISCUSS

1. Read Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43. How does Jesus’ parable demonstrate the timeless nature of Genesis 1-3?

2. Pastor Patrick said that with Gen. 4 we are meant to feel that things are worsening from Gen. 3. What did he mean by that? How did the use of dominos toppling illustrate the point?

3. How does Cain and Abel’s offerings inform our own worship? What role does the heart have to play in worship? What about faith?

4. Jealousy. What is it? What lies are inherent? Where are you vulnerable to jealousy? How can we overcome?

5. Is there any evidence of God’s mercy and grace in Gen. 4? If so, where? Discuss.

6. What immediate applications can be made in light of this text?

Notes: