

Questions God Asks

Where is your brother?

Read: Genesis 4:1-9

Introduction:

Last week we started a new series entitled “Questions God Asks.” As Paul mentioned, when God asks us questions there are at least three implications: 1) God intends to have a conversational relationship with each of us; 2) God offers us greater dignity in allowing us to sometimes wrestle with answers than in simply giving us answers; 3) Questions have greater power to transform us than answers.

Today’s question: **Where is your brother?** Here is a summary of the story behind the question. Cain, the older brother, and Abel offer sacrifices to God. Abel gives the best of what he has. Cain, on the other hand, doesn’t. Cain treats it more as a formality. God looks favorably towards Abel’s sacrifice and unfavorably towards Cain’s sacrifice. This angers Cain. God notices Cain’s response, and cautions him to be careful with his anger for it might rule over him. Cain ignores God’s warning and lets the anger burn within. He lures his brother Abel into the field and kills him. A little while later, God asks Cain, “Where is your brother?” Cain retorts, “I do not know; am I my brother’s keeper?”

In this week’s sermon Pastor Paul points out two things:

- 1) **God asks this question to convict us of our pride and self-centeredness which can be disastrous.**
- 2) **God asks this question to let us know that we have a responsibility of compassion, care, and concern for others.**

Discuss:

1. As you reflect on the sermon, what stood out to you?

God asks this question to convict us of our pride and self-centeredness which can be disastrous.

2. Why are we so terrified about getting rejected?

3. Why is it that when something good happens to others, we can feel put down? Why do we struggle to be happy for other people’s success?

4. Cain saw Abel as a threat. Can you think of some examples of how people view others as a threat? How have you seen people treat each other when they feel threatened?

God asks this question to let us know that we have a responsibility of compassion, care, and concern for others.

5. Cain is so consumed with anger that he rejects responsibility for his actions. Why do we struggle to take responsibility for our actions?

6. Reflect on Trevor Hudson’s quote:

“What is our responsibility toward each other? Should we mind our own business, not care about what takes place around us, and let everyone be accountable for his or her own life? or do we have a God-given responsibility to ensure the well-being of our loved ones and friends, our neighbors and our enemies, and even our world?”

7. How have you seen our culture’s idols of politics, race, and power prevent us from grasping God’s compassion, concern, and care for others?

Apply

Variations of the question, “Where is your brother?” could be:

Where is your Republican brother or sister? Where is your Democratic brother or sister? Where is your Black brother or sister? Where is your White brother or sister? Where is your Brown brother or sister? Where is your Asian brother or sister? Where is your Immigrant brother or sister?

Take a moment to reflect:

- Have you been living focused on yourself?
- Are you comparing, jealous, or nursing grudges?
- Who is God calling you to have compassion, concern, and care for?