



# Blackfoot Church of Christ

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## Cain Faith & Worship

By Philip Strong

“And Abel was a keeper of flocks, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. So it came about in the course of time that Cain brought an offering to the Lord of the fruit of the ground. And Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock and their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and for his offering; but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard,” Genesis 4:2b-5a.

Our first, and entirely human reaction to the Lord’s rejection of Cain and his offering might be one of confused sympathy. It seems somewhat harsh and reactionary for God to treat Cain so unfavorably. After all, Cain was attempting to worship and honor God. Cain was also sacrificing of his own possessions; deliberately and willingly giving up something that he had undoubtedly worked very hard to produce, in the attempt. Additionally, Cain was using his talents to serve and worship God. And oh by the way, God hadn’t said not to offer fruit and vegetables, had He? All of which creates, initially at least, sympathy for “poor Cain”- he seems to have tried so hard, and done what he could to serve and worship Jehovah! How could a loving, just, and merciful God treat Cain so contemptuously? Why would He have such apparent disdain for Cain’s honest and sincere efforts?

As is always the case when “we” find fault with God, there is more to the story than we understand when we do so. Please consider carefully the inspired commentary of Hebrews 11:4 on the matter, “By faith Abel offered to God a

better sacrifice than Cain..." Those first two words of the verse are of vital importance. What does it mean to act "by faith"? Again, let God provide the inspired answer, "So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ," Romans 10:17. There is just no other possible conclusion: God told Cain and Abel what sacrifices were to be offered, and how they should be presented. What this all boils down to is that Abel did what God said, how God said to do it.

But unfortunately, these things also tell us more about Cain's attitude and actions. He was not honestly and sincerely doing the best he could to use his talents and abilities to serve God the best way he knew. Instead, he was contradicting divine directives by giving God what he wanted to, calling it "worship" and "sacrifice," and then expecting God to accept it. That's rebellion not faith; and that's not worshipping God it's worshipping "self," cf. Philippians 3:19! I realize this may not be how we want to see Cain and his sacrifice, but it is how God saw it.

Now let's get the rubber on the road, so to speak. We are no better than Cain when we today substitute our desires for God's will, call it "worship," and then expect God to accept it because it's what we want to give Him. When Cain did these things, God said he was "of the evil one," 1 John 3:12. Why wouldn't God feel (and say) the same things about us, if we do the same things Cain did? He does, and will, Matthew 15:8-9, "This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far away from Me. But in vain do they worship Me, teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men."

Read your New Testament, it is the law of God under which we are to operate, Luke 16:16. If God didn't specify a particular act as proper "worship," then it cannot be "of faith" and will not be accepted by God as such. Calling something "worship" that God didn't, and then seeking to justify our actions by claiming they are "honest and sincere" uses of the talents God gave us didn't work for Cain, and won't work for us either. We can appeal to all the human reasoning we want to get "our" way, but our end will be the same as Cain's in the judgment of God and after all, it's His judgment that counts!

## Quit Doing Nothing

By Robert Turner

The flamboyant evangelist, Dr. Sam Jones, was well known in some circles for his "Quittin' Meetings." During his revivals he gave people a special opportunity to confess their sins and repent; many quit swearing, quit gossiping, quit drinking, quit smoking, etc. He asked one woman what she planned to quit, and she replied, "I ain't been doing nothing, and I am going to quit doing that!"

Assuming she was true to her word, that was a worthy change. Think what great works most churches could accomplish if about two-thirds of the members would "quit doing nothing."

Yes, I know. The illustration led to an exaggeration. Two-thirds of the members are not "doing nothing." Even those who sleep through the worship are absorbing sound waves, and that makes it easier on the speaker. I learned, long ago, not to expect every called-out person to be all that the Lord says they should be; but I hope and pray I will never give up trying to bring about this condition. When reality becomes cynicism we are done. Aren't you glad the Lord did not give up on you? The Lord was not blinded to the reality of a sinful world when he died for those sins. He must have known that many for whom He died would "do nothing" about it.

Some brethren "do nothing" because they have been conditioned to think the church does it all - an erroneous institutional concept of church. Some equate the Lord's work with public service, and think they have no talent for that. Some excuse themselves with the fear they may do something wrong. And some "tried once, but no one paid any attention to me." In all these, we are too much concerned with what people think of us, instead of acting in faith and with a view to pleasing the Lord.

Somehow we must reawaken the concept of individual and direct relationship of each saint to Christ. The "priesthood of believers" must be re-established in our thinking. I must know that regardless of what others do, or do not do; regardless of popularity or opposition, of affluence or famine; I must serve my Master in all good conscience (Rom. 14:4-12).

## Prayer Requests & Announcements

- Ray recovering from hip replacement surgery and Ginger is sick also.
- Ray & Ginger, as Ray deals with Alzheimer's Symptoms
- Larry, Leukemia Diagnosis
- Sabin's, friends of Brenda Empey
- Jaella Kreh during her pregnancy
- Scott Boucher (Sparks NV) continues in Hospice Care
- Keep April in your prayers as she deals with health issues
- The Christians in the Philippines
- Today is our regular monthly business meeting

## Worship Assignments

### Today

**Song Leader** – Chad Mitchell

**Lord's Table** – Larry Thompson

### Wednesday

**Song Leader** – Tom Mitchell

**Invitation** – Ross Ward

Blackfoot Church of Christ  
370 North Shilling Ave.  
Blackfoot, Idaho 83221

### Meeting Times:

Sunday Morning Classes 10:00AM  
Sunday Morning Worship 11:00AM  
Wednesday Evening 7:30PM



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