

Sin Crouching At The Door?



I started to read through the Old Testament again last night and came across the story about Cain and Abel. We know God looked favorably on Abel's offering but did not look favorably on Cain's. Because of this Cain got very upset and depressed. The Lord asked Cain,

“Why are you so upset? Why are you depressed? If you do what is appropriate, you'll be accepted, won't you? But if you don't do what is appropriate, sin is crouching near your doorway, turning toward you.

However, you must take dominion over it.”

As I read this, I was thinking about how many times people will say that just getting angry is a sin. But this is not true. God gave us our emotions because we are made in His image. As God can get angry, so can we, and one of the reasons anger can occur is by rejection.

I am sure I can say with confidence that when we are rejected, the natural response is anger and then depression. But notice what God said to Cain. He did not rebuke him for being angry and depressed, but because he was, God said sin was crouching near the door. God said he must take dominion over it. Dominion over what? Dominion over the sin he was entertaining, because now he was allowing his emotions to spin out of control rather than rule over it. In other words, his anger and depression began to dominate his thinking. It's like a pregnancy. The emotions (pregnancy) were not the problem. The problem comes when it grows and grows until we have allowed the lust for revenge to fully form and dominate us, which brings forth death. (James 1:15) It kindled until it became a full blown fire and only caused more destruction. Cain ended up killing his brother.

Paul says, **“Be ye angry, and sin not.”** He certainly knew what anger could do. It's not a sin to be angry, but how we react to offenses can be. Pondered thoughts produce actions. If we ponder on unforgiveness, hatred, anger, revenge, jealousy, greed, dishonesty, etc., it will have poisonous effects and affect our relationship with God as well as with one another.

Jesus asked, **“Why do you entertain evil thoughts in your hearts”** (Matt. 9:4). This is what Cain did and the result was killing Abel. He entertained evil thoughts when he could have ruled over it.

When my thoughts wonder off in the wrong direction, the Holy Spirit gently reminds me not to let it get control, but for me to control what I am thinking. It is our decision to let sin crouch at the door or to rule over it.