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Genesis 4:17-5:32

The Genesis of God's People:

Two Families. One Hope.

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Introduction: **(S1-Slides at CornerstoneWestford.com/sermons)**

1. This summer you've probably been spending some time with your family.
2. Have you ever noticed how each family has its own unique flavor?
3. In your family, in your house, how do you do things?
4. Pinterest gives us a nice survey of the types of families out there...

"Our family is just one tent away from a full-blown circus." **(S2)**

"In our family, we don't hide crazy, we put it on the porch and give it a cocktail." **(S3)**

"In this house, we do camo, we lock and load, we drag, we brag, we respect our rifles, we get the lead out, we aim for the game, we hunt." **(S4)**

"In this house, we believe in magic, we have epic adventures once upon a time and in galaxies far far away. We do wibbly wobbly timey wimey stuff while going where no man has gone before. We know the answer to everything is 42 and that the odds are ever in our favor. We do cosplay and passion and we aim to misbehave. And we don't care what others think because in this house we do geek." **(S5)**

5. If you've ever wanted a new family, or wondered what's wrong with your's, today should help.
6. Today we're looking at a story of two families and each one of us are related to one or the other.
7. One family is the descendants of Cain and the second of Seth, both children of Adam and Eve.
8. Each of these family stories starts in Genesis 3:15, which we call the "protoevangelion"—first gospel.

Genesis 3:15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, **and between your offspring and hers;** he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel." (NIV®) **(S6)**

(The first family is the spiritual offspring of the Serpent and are the descendants of Cain.)

(The second family is the spiritual offspring of Eve and are the descendants of Seth.)

I. Cain's family is the offspring of the serpent. (Gen 4:17-24) **(S7)**

A. The family of Cain is exemplified by Lamech.

1. Lamech puts his own wants first. (vv 19, 23) **(S8)**
 - a) Lamech's marriage to two women is the first example of polygamy in the Bible.
 - b) God always intended marriage to be between one man and one woman.
 - c) Anytime we break this pattern—we cause pain and hurt (Abraham, Jacob, Solomon, David).
2. Lamech experiences success and beauty. (vv 20-22) **(S9)**
 - a) His first son Jabal invented living in tents and raising livestock.

- b) Abel was a shepherd (4:2), but not at the level of Jabal (small flock vs. driving heard).
 - c) His second son Jubal pretty much invented the arts (stringed instruments, wind pipes)
 - d) His third son Tubal-Cain created metallurgy, tools, and likely weapons.
 - e) He has a daughter named Naamah whose name means “pleasant, graceful, gorgeous.”¹
3. Lamech doesn’t need anyone, especially God. (vv 23-24) **(S10)**
- a) When Cain murdered his brother Abel, he begged God for mercy and protection (4:13-14).
 - b) God granted Cain seven-fold protection, but Lamech throws off God’s protection.
 - c) He says he’ll kill anyone, man or child—swearing seventy-seven times vengeance.
4. I want you to imagine a situation where a coworker badmouths you and you don’t know why.
- a) You’ve worked with this coworker before, but now they’re saying bad things about you.
 - b) How would a Lamech respond? A Lamech puts his own wants first, getting angry and mad.
 - c) A Lamech is willing to do anything to achieve success and priority in the workplace.
 - d) A Lamech takes full control into their own hands and doesn’t need God to help.
 - e) Does this describe you?... I know sometimes this describes me.
 - f) If we don’t deal with our inner Lamech, our end is destruction (Cain’s family dies in flood).
 - g) That doesn’t solve the problem—the issue is in our hearts (related to serpent spiritually).

(We’re all born into the line of Cain, even if we grew up in a Christian household.)

(We’re all Lamechs, we all need to become members of a new family.)

II. Seth’s family is the offspring of Eve. (Gen 4:25-5:32) **(S11)**

A. Seth’s family are the new offspring of Eve. (4:25-26)

- 1. When Cain was born, Eve said, “...I have brought forth a **man**.” (4:1) **(S12)**
- 2. When Eve gives birth to Seth, she says, “...God has granted me another **child**.” (4:25) **(S13)**
- 3. The word for “child” is the Hebrew word “ze-ra” which means “seed” or “offspring.”
- 4. The ESV says, “God has appointed for me another **offspring**...” **(S14)**
- 5. Eve is saying Seth is the offspring whose family will defeat the serpent (Gen 3:15). **(S15)**
- 6. They do this not by looking to their own strength like Cain and Lamech, but God’s strength.
- 7. Seth’s name means “appointed”—through his family line the savior will come (family of God).
- 8. Seth’s family calls on the true name of God (“Yahweh”)—they see their need (like toddler).

(What is the result of their trust? How does God reward those who call on him?)

B. The offspring of Eve are given long life as a sign of eternal life. **(S16)**

- 1. The genealogy is not making a scientific/mathematic claims about age of earth/pre-flood lifespan.
- 2. 10 generations are specifically selected in Gen 5 and 11—not comprehensive but representative.
- 3. In Matthew 1:8 it says “Joram fathered Ussiah” but skips Ahaziah and Joash (cf Mt 1:11).²
- 4. These names are like the green road signs between cities that tell the distance (not mile markers).
- 5. They’re making this point... God has power to overcome death for those who call on his name.
- 6. The author of Genesis, Moses, wrote Psalm 90:10 saying the normal age is 70-80 years.

¹ New International Commentary on the Old Testament: Genesis 1-17 Victor Hamilton (page 239).

² New International Commentary on the Old Testament: Genesis 1-17 Victor Hamilton (page 254).

7. In Gen 6:3 God limits the lifespan of humans to 120 years—I think limiting those blessed by him.
8. Moses would have lived forever b/c he knew God face to face, but he died at 120 (Deut 34:7).

- C. I didn't know either of my grandfathers, but my grandmothers on my dad's side lived a long time.
1. My dad's mom lived till she was 91, and my aunt Mildred lived to 102.
 2. My great and great grandmothers lived to 99 and 98.
 3. I'm sure you have special relatives who have lived a long time—we speak w/ reverence of them.
 4. Long life is a blessing from God (Proverbs 10:27).

(The offspring of Eve are given long life as a sign of eternal life.)

(The genealogy doesn't say they were all good people—by time of Noah people were wicked.)

(When bad people, recognize their need for God, they change from Cain's family to Seth's family.)

- D. The family of Seth is exemplified in Enoch. (5:21-24)
1. **He calls on God**—he's part of the family that calls on the name of Yahweh. **(S17)**
 2. **Enoch walks with God**—he prioritizes God, seeks him, knows him, and is known by him. **(S18)**
 3. The pattern is years lived, birth of son/descendant, years till death, but not for Enoch (v. 24).
 4. When was the last time people “walked” with God?... God “walked” in the garden (Gen 3:8).
 5. Enoch is experiencing the first taste of a restored relationship with God (Noah/Gen 6:9).
 6. **Enoch puts his faith in God**... the New Testament tells us he is a hero of the faith. **(S19)**

Hebrews 11:5 By faith Enoch was taken up so that he would not see death; and he was not found because God took him up; for he obtained the witness that before his being taken up he was pleasing to God. (NIV®) **(S20)**

- E. Let's go back to the coworker situation—how would an Enoch respond?
1. Would an Enoch lash out like a Lamech or would an Enoch have a different mindset?
 2. The first thing an Enoch would do is **call on God**—“I don't know why God but you do.”
 3. Then an Enoch would try to **walk with Jesus** through the trial, depending on him for the way.
 4. You can walk with Jesus by not gossiping, but telling Jesus, by praying, but humbling ourselves.
 5. All of these are simple opportunities we can **put our faith in God** instead of trusting ourselves.
 6. The good news for Enoch is that one day God takes him away—he will deliver you!

(Enochs walk with God, call on God, put their faith in God, and get rewarded with eternal life.)

(How can I have that? If I'm born a Lamech, how can I become someone who walks with God?)

III. We join the family of God through faith in the Son of God. **(S21)**

- A. Jesus is the **true offspring of Eve**. **(S22)**
1. In Luke 3, we read Jesus is the son of Joseph who is the great descendant of Seth... (final/true)
 2. You are the current sum-total of your family tree—Jesus is the sum total of his family tree.

Luke 3:36b-38 [Jesus is...] the son of Shem, the son of Noah, the son of Lamech, the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch, the son of Jared, the son of Mahalalel, the son of Kenan, the son of Enosh, **the son of Seth**, the son of Adam, **the son of God**. (NIV®) **(S23)**

B. Jesus is the offspring of Eve who **defeats the serpent**. (S24)

1. Jesus defeats the serpent by reversing the hatred and violence of Lamech.

Matthew 18:21–22 Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I **forgive** my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?” Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but **seventy-seven times**. (NIV®) (S25)

2. At the cross Jesus is the offspring of Eve who waged an epic war against the serpent.
3. You can almost hear the serpent declaring, “I have killed the Son of Man for wounding me!”
4. Jesus rose again three days later, crushing the evil one, defeating the serpent.

(Now Jesus offers an adoption certificate for members of Cain’s family.) (S26)

C. **Jesus invites us to join the family**—We join the family of God through faith in the Son of God.

1. **Galatians 3:26** So in Christ Jesus you are all **children of God** through faith, (NIV®) (S27)
2. Just like Enoch walked with God by faith, we walk with God by faith in Jesus.
3. Do you feel like you’re in the wrong family, that you’re pursuing all the wrong things? (S28)
4. We join the family of God through faith in the Son of God.
5. The gospel, the good news, is that Lamechs can become of children of God too.
6. Through Jesus, we who injure others “seventy-seven times” are forgiven “seventy-seven times.”
7. We join the family of God through faith in the Son of God.

Conclusion:

1. My old mentor David Midwood reminds me a bit of Enoch.
2. He used to go to bed at about 8:30pm so he could get up at 5am and sit with God.
3. In that hour he didn’t feel like he had to perform, study like a professor, or do work.
4. He simply sat and received God’s love, he prayed, meditated on the Bible, and loved God.
5. David didn’t get to skip out on death (he died of cancer), but he walked with God till the end.
6. Even as he was dying, he was looking forward to being with the Lord, not truly tasting death.
7. If you know Jesus, you can walk with him too, through hard times and easy ones.
8. God invites you to come and join his family, we’re not perfect, but we’re heading that direction.
9. **We join the family of God through faith in the Son of God.**

Romans 15:13 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. (NIV®)