

Introduction:

1. It could be known as the slap heard and seen around the world (Will Smith). There's been a lot of discussion and coverage regarding Will Smith. The world seems shocked at the violence.
2. While it's been a few years (January 6, 2020) we shouldn't forget what happened when hundreds of people stormed the Capital in D.C. Lives were lost. 250 have been arrested (18-year-old).
3. There's violence in Europe with Russia attacking Ukraine. There's violence at sporting events.
4. While we seemed to be surrounded by violence in real life, music, television, and movies, the reality is violence has been around from the beginning.

The Lesson:

I. Genesis 4: 1-7

- A. In the beginning we find Adam and Eve had children named Cain and Abel.
 1. Both gave offerings to God, Genesis 4: 3-4. Abel's was accepted. Cain was angry.
 2. God warned Cain that danger was at his door, Genesis 4:5-7. Cain should have taken this warning seriously from God, but he didn't. **Will we take God's warning seriously?**
 3. Cain's anger led to physical violence and lies, Genesis 4: 8-10. An innocent man was killed. **What do you do with your anger? Does it consume you? Do you take it to the Lord?**
- B. An innocent man was killed. Cain's violence had a ripple effect the rest of his life.
 1. That is what often happens when we lose control in a moment. There was hatred in Cain's heart, 1 John 3:11-13. What John says of Cain is not flattering: "*He was of the evil one.*" We see the devil working in the life of Cain and the violence from his hands.
 2. Abel and his faith still speak (Hebrews 11:4) while Cain is used as a cautionary tale.
 3. **A question for us is who are we more like: Cain or Abel? Cain failed to take responsibility, lacked self-control, listened to the devil instead of God! Do we blame others for our heart problems?** The devil didn't stop influencing men in the Garden. He wouldn't stop with Cain.

II. Genesis 6:1-11

- A. God would destroy the world because of its wickedness, Genesis 6:5-6.
 1. There was only evil continually. We get a glimpse of what this evil was: Violence, Genesis 6:11-13. Judgment would come. Like in the days of Cain, judgment came.
 2. And there was a righteous man: Noah! While he lived in a world of violence, the world did not live in his heart! **Can that be said about us?**
- B. Noah and his family would be delivered from the flood. You would think things would change.

III. A World full of violence

- A. The men in Sodom acted violently toward Lot in Genesis 19:9-10.

1. Joseph's brothers hated him, Genesis 37:4, 8,11, 18, 22. Hatred, led to jealousy, which led to violence. Jacob spoke of the violence of his sons Simeon and Levi in Genesis 49:5. They retaliated against the men who raped their sister Dinah in Genesis 34:25-30.
- B. There's an entire book in the Old Testament filled with violence: JUDGES! It's a bloody book.
 1. In the New Testament we see violence. One case was with Simon Peter in Luke 22:48-51. Yet notice the response of Jesus. Our King didn't endorse Peter's behavior. Rather, he condemned it. He restored the ear of the soldier. In Matthew's gospel (Matthew 26:50-52) Jesus said, "For all those who take up the sword shall perish by the sword."
 2. These words go against how the world (Babylon) often responds.

IV. What About Us?

- A. Violence may not be a sin that gets a lot of attention until something tragic happens.
 1. Have you ever struggled with anger? I have! Have you ever struggled with desiring revenge? Have you struggled with violence? I have. I'm not proud of any of it.
 2. Has someone ever wrong you? Gossiped against you or your family? Maybe even hurt you? Have you desired to retaliate with violence? Did you? Paul was harmed, 2 Timothy 4:14.
 3. As we live in Babylon, how are we to respond?
- B. While many have murdered like Cain, or cut anyone's ear off, violence can consume our hearts.
 1. The heart issues which can lead to violence like anger, hatred, jealousy can fill our hearts.
 2. What's interesting is that in the same context of 1 John 3 where we read about Cain a warning is given to Christians. Those who hate their brother is described as a "murderer/ manslayer." Hatred can build in our hearts which can manifest in physical form.
 3. Sadly, physical violence has happened in Christian homes against spouses and children.
 4. It can appear in the form of emotional abuse. It can appear in abusive words.
 5. God hates all of it, Psalms 11:5-7.

V. How should we respond?

1. Everyone is talking about Chris Rock because of how he responded! He didn't retaliate!
2. We don't get our cue from Chris Rock, but rather from the Holy Spirit.
3. How we respond in the world matters. How we respond to one another matters.
4. **Be Different:** Matthew 5:38-42; Matthew 5:43-48; Romans 12:17-21.
5. **Pause:** Nehemiah 5:6-7.
6. **Settle matters quickly:** Ephesians 4:25-26.
7. **Eliminate consuming violence:** What we put in our minds and children's mind matters.
8. **Get to the heart of the matter:** Why are you angry? Cain was the problem, not Abel.

Conclusion:

1. In a world full of violence, we can still shine! We can be different.
2. Jesus was mistreated. He was violently handled by wicked men. They spit in His face. They beat Him. Yet He did not revile in return. That's who we are to follow.