

CITIES, SONGS, & SIN

September 20th, 2026

The Search for Significance // Genesis 4:16-26

Message Context

Genesis 4 shows us what life looks like east of Eden. Cain's descendants build cities, raise livestock, make music, and develop metalworking. These are real examples of God's common grace. Yet cultural advancement does not overcome the problem of sin. Instead, sin also multiplies, culminating in Lamech's rejection of God's design for marriage and his boastful celebration of violence. Against Cain's line, however, God raises up Seth as another "offspring" or "seed," preserving the promise first given in Genesis 3:15. The chapter ends not with humanity saving itself through civilization, but with people beginning to "call upon the name of the LORD."

CONNECT – Announcements (page 2) & Building Relationships

1. What is one human invention, cultural achievement, or modern convenience that you are especially thankful for? How does it make your life better?
2. When you think about what our culture considers a "successful" or "flourishing" society, what usually makes the list?

REFLECT - Out of the Word and Into Our Lives

3. **Read Genesis 4:16–26.** What stands out to you most from a fresh reading of the passage, and is there anything from the message that you want to be sure we don't miss as a group?
4. What good things do you see Cain's descendants producing in verses 17–22? What does this passage teach us about God's goodness even toward sinful humanity?
5. How can recognizing common grace keep Christians from viewing everything produced by unbelieving culture as inherently evil?
6. The sermon emphasized that "humanity can become more civilized without becoming less sinful." Where do you see that tension in Genesis 4? What are some examples of genuine progress in our own society that still cannot solve humanity's deepest problem?
7. Why is it dangerous to confuse technological, economic, educational, or cultural advancement with moral progress?
8. What has happened to sin between Cain's generation and Lamech's? What does Lamech's song reveal about his attitude toward violence?
9. The sermon described a pattern in which sin moves from committed → normalized → celebrated. What does that progression look like in Lamech's life? Where can you see that same progression happening in human hearts, families, or cultures?
10. Read Genesis 3:15 and 1 John 3:12. How does Cain begin to reveal the conflict between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent? According to 1 John, what ultimately identifies Cain with "the evil one"? Why is this distinction ultimately spiritual rather than merely biological?

11. Read Genesis 4:25 carefully. Eve says that God has appointed another “offspring” in place of Abel. The Hebrew word is zera (seed), the same important word used in Genesis 3:15. Why is that more significant than simply saying, “Adam and Eve had another son”? What does Seth’s birth tell us about God’s faithfulness when his promise seems threatened?
12. Throughout Genesis, the promised seed will repeatedly appear to be in danger, yet God continues preserving the line that will ultimately lead to Jesus Christ. How does knowing that God keeps his promises change the way we respond when his purposes seem threatened or difficult to see?
13. Read Genesis 4:26. How does the ending of Cain’s genealogy contrast with the beginning of Seth’s line? What does that contrast teach us about true human flourishing?
14. Read Romans 10:9–13. How does Paul’s promise that “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved” help us see the ultimate answer to Genesis 4? What has Jesus accomplished that cities, culture, civilization, morality, and human achievement never could?
15. How would you explain what it means to “call upon the name of the Lord” to someone who does not yet know Christ?

♡ PROTECT – Care for one another (divided, gender-specific groups)

16. Where are you currently tempted to seek significance, security, or satisfaction in something God has given rather than in God himself?
17. Is there any area of sin in your life that you have begun to normalize because you have tolerated it for too long? What would repentance look like this week?
18. Where does the brokenness of the world make it difficult for you to trust that God is keeping his promises? How can the group pray for you in that area?

Announcements

Sportsman’s Banquet: October 17th @ 4:00 pm – More information found at [nvf.life/sportsman](https://my.nvf.life/sportsman)

Parents Night Out: October 2nd @ 6:00 – 9:00 pm – We’re excited to invite you to our exclusive Parents’ Night Out event! Leave the kids with us for a fun-filled evening while you enjoy a well-deserved break. More information and sign-up at <https://my.nvf.life/hub>

Soup & Game Night: October 4th @ 5:00 pm – Come enjoy some soup and games with us. More information at <https://my.nvf.life/hub>

Resources for Going Deeper

- **Further Bible Reading:** Genesis 3:14-19; 5:1-32, Hebrews 11:8-16, Revelation 21:1-5; 22-27 Romans 10:9-13
- **Further Reading of the Conflict of Seeds:** <https://learn.ligonier.org/podcasts/things-unseen-with-sinclair-ferguson/the-central-promise-of-scripture>
- **Further Reading on the Doctrine of Common Grace:** <https://learn.ligonier.org/guides/common-grace>