

Too Much, Too Soon

Ray Stedman

I. Introduction. Text: Genesis 4:17-26.

II. God's ultimate intention was that man would live in a city, but this was a very dangerous life.

A. The city of God is always contrasted with the city of man.

B. Man is not ready to live in God's city because of man's reliance upon himself.

C. Man has reversed this—he assumes that he is able to live in close fellowship with his fellow man and clusters himself in cities as a result.

1. Man wants everything now.

2. In order to accomplish this, man ignores the problem of evil.

D. The city man built was most imposing even though they were evil. The names are significant and point to “the exaltation of man,” God being smitten, “the death of God,” the boasting of man, a traveler, a trumpeter and a medal worker.

E. Man was not ready for the city, but he insisted on it anyway. The city was built on shaky ground.

III. Evaluation of the failure of human culture.

A. The onset of polygamy.

B. Putting the state before the family.

C. Sexual excess.

D. The justifying of violence for rights.

IV. We need changes in ourselves before we are ready to move in close together.

A. Human beings must be healed before they can claim the blessings of God.

B. Humans have to face the facts of their own evil.

C. The meaning of names is suggestive:

1. When the man of faith is taken out of the world, God raises up another.

2. God must heal our hearts before we can begin to live. One must give his life up to God in order for it to be saved. God heals with the working of the gospel.

3. All things are available to those who are in Christ.

Application questions:

1. What are some of the problems in cities today that demonstrate an inability to live together well?

2. How will facing facts help one to be the kind of person God wants to live in close fellowship with others? Explain.

3. In what ways can the church model what it looks like to live in true community today?
