



new life fellowship

Sermon Title: How We Got Here: The Destructive Power of Jealousy

Speaker: Rich Villodas, Lead Pastor

Scripture: Genesis 4:1-16

Adam made love to his wife Eve, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Cain. She said, "With the help of the Lord I have brought forth a man." Later she gave birth to his brother Abel.

Now Abel kept flocks, and Cain worked the soil. In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the Lord. And Abel also brought an offering—fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The Lord looked with favor on Abel and his offering, but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast.

Then the Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it."

Now Cain said to his brother Abel, "Let's go out to the field." While they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him.

Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?"

"I don't know," he replied. "Am I my brother's keeper?"

The Lord said, "What have you done? Listen! Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground. Now you are under a curse and driven from the ground, which opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand.

When you work the ground, it will no longer yield its crops for you. You will be a restless wanderer on the earth." Cain said to the Lord, "My punishment is more than I can bear. Today you are driving me from the land, and I will be hidden from your presence; I will be a restless wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me."

But the Lord said to him, "Not so; anyone who kills Cain will suffer vengeance seven times over." Then the Lord put a mark on Cain so that no one who found him would kill him. So Cain went out from the Lord's presence and lived in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

Sermon Outline:

- The story of Cain and Abel is the origin story of jealousy and envy and how it is the great cause of disruption and violence in the world and in our souls. It also tells us that God wants to set us free from the sin of jealousy.
- In the story of Cain and Abel, both make offerings to God. God is pleased only with Abel's offerings but not Cain's. While we don't know the circumstances of why God was not pleased with Cain's offerings, we do know that Cain was angry. When God speaks to Cain about his anger, God also tells Cain that if he does what is right, then God would be pleased. He also tells Cain that sin is crouching at his door and that Cain must rule over it. Cain's response is to murder his brother Abel.
- In this story, we are Cain and our lives are marked by jealousy. Rarely do we confess our jealousy. Our jealousy reveals what matters the most to us. It reveals the idols in our hearts.
- You can admire others and desire the same things as another person without feeling jealousy.
- Jealousy at its core is my need to succeed based on your failure. It is a zero sum game.

- When Cain sins, God comes to him. When Adam and Eve sinned, God came to Adam and Eve and asked Where are you? When God comes to Cain, He asks Where is your brother? In asking these questions, God isn't after information. After all, God already knows the answers! God is intervening, offering His grace. Cain is unrepentant and God marks him. Jealousy marks us. Everyone can see it.
- How do we get free from the jealousy that ensnares us? Admit your jealousy. We can't be freed from that which we fail to confess. Ask yourself these three questions when jealousy rises up in us: (1) What is the story I am telling myself? Jealousy brings up our own feelings of inferiority and inadequacy. But God tells us we are enough in Christ! (2) What's the lie I am believing? When we're jealous, we believe a lie about ourselves and a lie about others. The truth is that we are all struggling in some way. (3) What gifts do I need to acknowledge? When we ask this, we open up space for the Holy Spirit to transform our hearts.
- Exodus 34:14 Whenever we're jealous, it's about ourselves; it's self-centered. God's jealousy is other-centered. God's jealousy is a healthy jealousy that seeks to see us flourish and not devoured by sin.
- Cain spills his brother's blood, but the good news is that God doesn't spill our blood for our sin of jealousy. Instead He offers up and gives His blood through Jesus.
- We are to be marked by a healthy jealousy. How do we rule over it? We are to live in the center of God's love believing that we are enough. When we live like this, we no longer need whatever we are jealous of to fill the longing in our souls.

Sermon Summary:

This Sunday Pastor Rich continues our current sermon series How We Got Here by discussing the story of Cain and Abel, highlighting the ways jealousy and envy has damaged our world and our souls and the subtle ways jealousy creeps up on you.

Sermon Questions

1. How does this scripture connect for you the topic that was discussed today? What words resonate with you? Why?
2. In your family of origin, how did you handle feelings of jealousy and/or jealous behavior?
3. Even though we don't know the circumstances of God not being pleased with Cain's offerings, why do you think God wasn't pleased with Cain's offerings? Have you ever felt God wasn't pleased with your "offerings?"
4. Cain's jealousy so consumed him that he murdered his brother. When confronted by God and by God's grace, Cain refused to repent of his sin. Is God confronting you with His grace to repent of jealousy-induced "murder"?
5. Admitting our jealousy is the first step to becoming free from our sin. What blocks you or keeps you from confessing your jealousy?
6. What do you feel God is revealing through your feelings of jealousy?
7. When have you felt jealousy rise up inside of you, and what story do you tell yourself when this happens? How do you hear the words that God tells us we are enough in Christ?
8. What is the lie you believe about yourself and others? How do you hear the truth that we are all struggling in some way?
9. What gifts do you need to acknowledge before God?
10. What thoughts and feelings come to mind from Exodus 34:14, that God is a jealous God and that He is jealous for you?