

## **Kill the Green-Eyed Monster at the Door!** **Genesis 4:1-16**

Have you ever been envious of someone? Envy (and a host of other sins) seem to be the driving force behind much of what you see.

Story of Pastor John's struggle with envy.

Envy is a green-eyed monster that is lurking behind the door. If you open that door and let him in, he will possess you and drive you to do a host of other sins, all of which will destroy your relationship with God, with others and it will destroy you. Envy has an insatiable appetite that will torment you all the days of your life unless you slay this monster with loving kindness towards God and your neighbor.

### **I. The Definition of Envy**

Envy is "a feeling of discontent and resentment aroused by another's good fortune."

Envy compares what you are or have to what someone else is or has and concludes the other has it better and you do not like it. Envy will not be satisfied until it has succeeded in taking away from the other to quench its appetite. If it cannot take away, it will do whatever it can to discredit the other. It loves to see the other person fail. It lives by the motto - "I want what you have, but if I can't have it, then neither can you."

Envy is related to, yet different than, jealousy. Jealousy is being very watchful or careful in guarding or keeping what one is or has. It can also mean someone requiring exclusive loyalty like "the Lord is a jealous God."

Envy is not jealousy. It is never good; it only wants, and it always destroys.

Scripture passages that show how envy is tied to other sins: 1 Peter 2:1; Galatians 5:19-21; 2 Corinthians 12:20; 1 Timothy 6:3-5; Titus 3:3; 1 Corinthians 3:1-3

When the door is opened to envy, these other sins are sure to follow. Envy often begins a progression of other sins that often happens so quickly, you seem to have no control over who you are or what you do. It seems as if a monster or a demon has control of you.

### **II. The Pathology of Envy**

To understand how envy can possess and destroy you and me, let us look at the story of Cain and Abel in Genesis 4:1-16.

Cain and Abel seem to be equals; no hint that one is evil while the other is righteous, but there is a difference.

A. In vs 3 we are told that Cain brought some of the fruits from the ground as an offering to the Lord, but in vs. 4 we are told that Abel brought fat portions from the first born of his flock. Notice the difference in offerings. Cain brought some, but Abel brought the best. *Their offerings reflected their attitude towards God and themselves.* The source of envy is self-worship, which is pride, which is idolatry. You think and believe you are God and the most important person in the world. This distances you from God, leading you to think you know better than him. You know what is best for you. Who or what you worship dictates your behavior.

B. In vs 4b and 5 we are told that God looked with favor on Abel and his offering but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor. As a result, Cain became frustrated, depressed, and

angry. Why? because he saw who Abel was and what he received, and he became envious. Cain wanted what Abel had, but he wanted them according to his standards and not God's standards. Cain had no purpose or meaning in his life.

The beginning of envy, people of God, is when you compare yourself to others instead of looking at who you are and what you are doing considering who God is and what He desires for you. When you compare yourself to others, you devalue your self-worth by looking outside of yourself to others to find purpose and meaning. Instead, you need to look too God for your purpose and meaning. If Cain would have looked to God and not himself, he would have shared in Abel's joy.

C. It is at this point that God confronts and warns Cain about his attitude. In vs 6 and 7 God tell Cain that if he loves God and others above himself and does what is right, God will accept him. But if he does not, something else will fill the vacuum left in his heart and soul - self and sin. "Sin is couching at your door, and it wants to possess you. If you don't control it, it will control you." The sin lurking behind the door is envy. If Cain allows envy to possess him, it will control him and lead him to commit other sins. And these other sins will come in quick succession, and you will not be able to stop it. God is saying to you, "*Kill the monster before it kills you!*"

Cain did not listen and obey. Instead, he opened the door, and the monster possessed him. And he murdered Abel.

Envy can become an uncontrollable monster, driving people to do things they never dreamt they would do. *The lie of envy is that you can have what you want when you want it by exercising your selfish actions to satisfy your selfish desires.* Envy is never satisfied. You allow yourself to do one sin to satisfy it, it will only beg for more.

Why did Abel go with Cain to the field? *Abel did not know what was in Cain's heart.* Envy is a secret sin that no one desires others to see. Because of this, it is hard for anyone to be held accountable for this sin. No one sees it. Therefore, envy can grow until it becomes a monster within you that needs to be released. It is then that you open the door to more sin in your life. Envy destroys community. It destroys trust and unity within the body of Christ, in our homes, between friends and relatives, even within societies and cultures. It spoils our enjoyment of others. We cannot love others.

D. The result of Cain's opening the door was being driven from the presence of God. In vs. 10-12, Moses tells us his eternal punishment was to never see God's face again. And as Cain said in vs 13, "It is more than I can bear."

### **III. The Killing of Envy**

So how do we kill this monster behind the door?

1. Jesus Christ must control you. Surrender all to Him. Repent of your envy and other sins, pledging loyalty to Him through your obedience which He will help you to do. He is jealous (exclusively loyal) for you and asks that you be jealous for Him. You cannot slay this green-eyed monster unless Jesus is in you, fighting for you.

2. Love God and love others before yourself. Don't compare yourself or your situation to others. It leads to all kinds of problems,

3. In two weeks we will consider Romans 12:9-21 and James 3:13-18, to show you that loving kindness slays envy in your life. In the meantime, take the initiative to know the person or persons with whom you envy. You might just become good friends and allies in both your fights against envy.