

The Perfect Offering

(Genesis 4:1-7)

Yearly Theme: “Love Is...”

Series Title: *Don’t Be Jealous*

June 2nd, 2019

Something to think about:

We begin a new series today as we go through this year’s theme of love. In this new series we will focus on the aspect of love that is *not jealous*. If love is not jealous, then what does that look like in everyday life? In order to understand this better, it’s good to have clear definitions of what we’re exploring. The *Random House Unabridged Dictionary* explains that to be “*jealous*” means...

Jealous (*adjective*):

1. feeling resentment against someone because of that person's rivalry, success, or advantages¹

The story of Cain and Abel in the Old Testament is a great illustration of this. Cain’s jealousy of Abel in the face of God’s response to their offerings to Him led Cain to do the most hideous thing imaginable. Let’s take a look:

Genesis 4:1-16 (NLT)

¹ Now Adam had sexual relations with his wife, Eve, and she became pregnant. When she gave birth to Cain, she said, “With the LORD’s help, I have produced a man!”² Later she gave birth to his brother and named him Abel. When they grew up, Abel became a shepherd, while Cain cultivated the ground.

³ When it was time for the harvest, Cain presented some of his crops as a gift to the LORD. ⁴ Abel also brought a gift—the best of the firstborn lambs from his flock. The LORD accepted Abel and his gift,⁵ but he did not accept Cain and his gift. This made Cain very angry, and he looked dejected.

⁶ “Why are you so angry?” the LORD asked Cain. “Why do you look so dejected?”⁷ You will be accepted if you do what is right. But if you refuse to do what is right, then watch out! Sin is crouching at the door, eager to control you. But you must subdue it and be its master.”

⁸ One day Cain suggested to his brother, “Let’s go out into the fields.” And while they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother, Abel, and killed him.

⁹ Afterward the LORD asked Cain, “Where is your brother? Where is Abel?”

“I don’t know,” Cain responded. “Am I my brother’s guardian?”

¹⁰ But the LORD said, “What have you done? Listen! Your brother’s blood cries out to me from the ground!¹¹ Now you are cursed and banished from the ground, which has swallowed your brother’s blood.¹² No longer will the ground yield good crops for you, no matter how hard you work! From now on you will be a homeless wanderer on the earth.”

¹³ Cain replied to the LORD, “My punishment is too great for me to bear!¹⁴ You have banished me from the land and from your presence; you have made me a homeless wanderer. Anyone who finds me will kill me!”

¹⁵ The LORD replied, “No, for I will give a sevenfold punishment to anyone who kills you.” Then the LORD put a mark on Cain to warn anyone who might try to kill him.¹⁶ So Cain left the LORD’s presence and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

Just taking a look at the first seven verses tells us something significant about the character of a man who had become consumed by jealousy and anger. If unchecked it leads to anger. And, that’s the key point this morning...

Key Point: “*Jealousy, when unchecked, drives us to anger.*”

So, jealousy, when unchecked leads to anger. And, anger, when unchecked, leads to sin. But, how does all of this tie together? Well...

● Apathy toward God leads to rejection from God.

Genesis 4:3 (NLT), When it was time for the harvest, Cain presented some of his crops as a gift to the LORD.

● Rejection from God is an opportunity for correction.

Genesis 4:4b-5a (NLT), The LORD accepted Abel and his gift, ^{5a} but he did not accept Cain and his gift.

● Correction from God is a chance for redemption.

Genesis 4:6-7 (NLT), ⁶ “Why are you so angry?” the LORD asked Cain. “Why do you look so dejected? ⁷ You will be accepted if you do what is right. But if you refuse to do what is right, then watch out! Sin is crouching at the door, eager to control you. But you must subdue it and be its master.”

Something to take home:

We’ve all had our lesser moments in life. Those moments we’d rather forget and move beyond; moments that left an indelible mark of embarrassment or shame. And, maybe even moments that left a devastating mark on the life of another (even someone who’s closest to us).

But, life is like that. It’s a series of choices to do right, or to do wrong, and all-too-often our tendency toward the wrong leaves the ugly residue of sin and death. Innocently it starts with apathetic tendencies to shirk our responsibilities; to fluff off our priorities for the sake of our selfish desires, and it’s ever so subtle. This usually leads to correction from God, and oftentimes feels like rejection from Him. At this place of correction is an opportunity for redemption, but only if a person doesn’t allow their emotions of sorrow to turn into emotions of defeat, anger, and jealousy. It’s here where sin crouches at our door waiting to pounce and devour us.

1 Peter 2:1-3 (NLT), ¹ So get rid of all evil behavior. Be done with all deceit, hypocrisy, jealousy, and all unkind speech. ² Like newborn babies, you must crave pure spiritual milk so that you will grow into a full experience of salvation. Cry out for this nourishment, ³ now that you have had a taste of the Lord’s kindness.

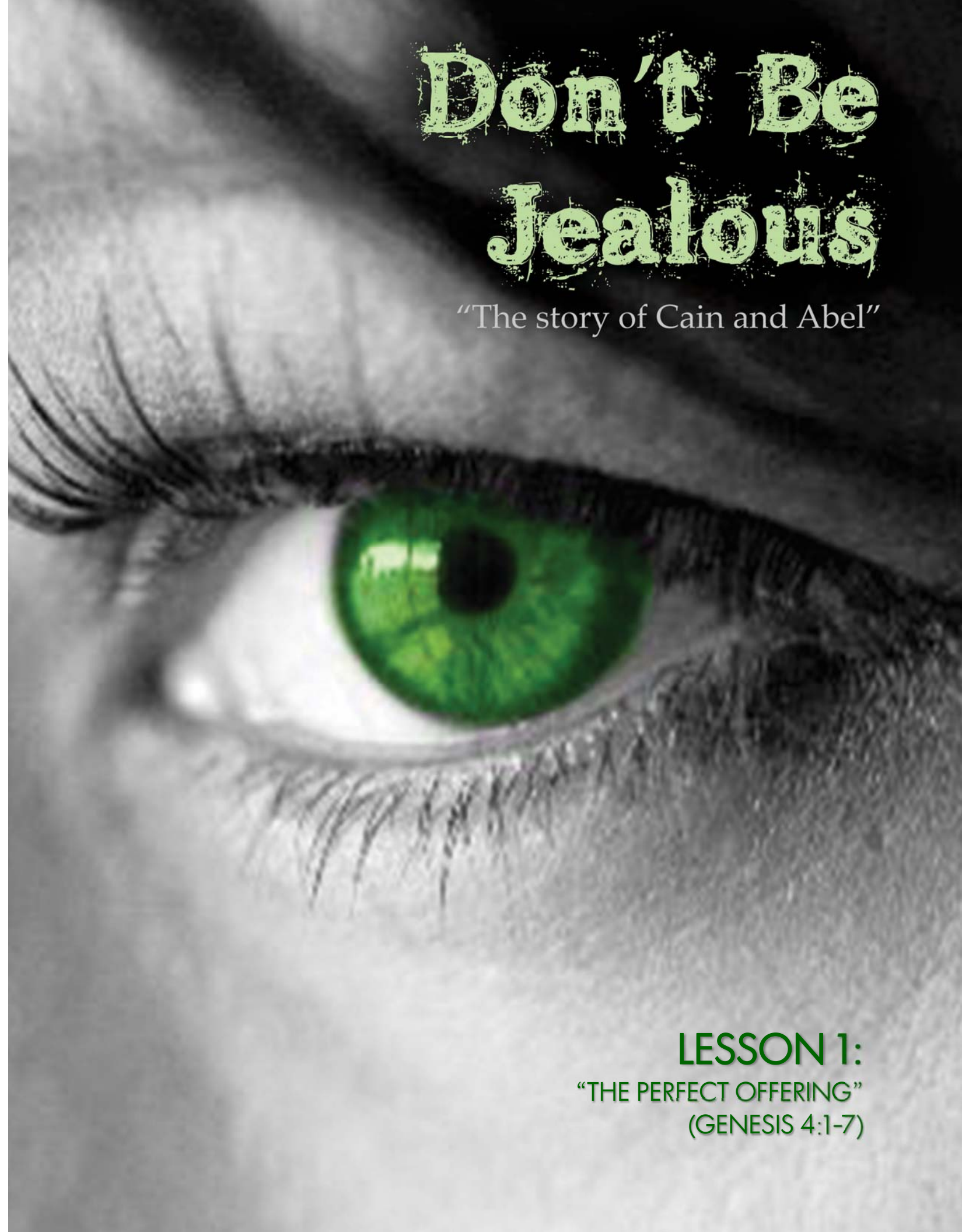
NOTES:



North Main Exists to...

"Develop completely committed followers of Christ who:
Know Christ intimately,
Grow in Christ continually, and,
Go for Christ daily;

Through:
 Core Families,
 Community Partnerships, and
 Global Connections."



Don't Be Jealous

"The story of Cain and Abel"

LESSON 1:
"THE PERFECT OFFERING"
 (GENESIS 4:1-7)

The Perfect Offering

(Genesis 4:1-7)

Series Title: *Don't Be Jealous*

KICK STARTERS:

- ⇒ How would you define the word “jealousy?”
- ⇒ If you're willing, tell about a time when you were jealous...

SCRIPTURE: (Before studying this material, consider listening to the corresponding message online at: <http://www.northmaincog.org/media/sermon-media>)

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GROUP DISCUSSION:

1. Give a brief synopsis of what is going on in the text for today’s study. Specifically focus on verses 1-7.

2. What professions did Cain and Abel do (vv. 1-2)?

3. At the time of harvest both Cain and Abel made offerings to the LORD. What were their offerings (vv. 3-5)?

4. The LORD accepted Abel’s offering, but not Cain’s. Why is this the case?

5. The LORD gives a solemn warning to Cain after he became angry and dejected. What was the LORD’s warning to him (vv. 6-7)?

6. Read Malachi 1:6-14. Compare Cain’s gift with how the Israelites were offering their gifts to God. What have you offered to the LORD? Do you give Him the *first* and the *best*, or just *some* of what you have? What kind of offering does the LORD desire from us (Romans 12:1)?

7. Our apathy toward God leads to rejection from God. Our rejection from God is an opportunity for correction. Correction from God is a chance for redemption. How was Cain apathetic toward God? How did God try and correct Cain? Has this ever happened to you? If so, explain...

8. Read 1 Peter 2:1-3. What is the follower of Christ supposed to do with regard to evil, jealous behavior? Are you living this way?

SELF-EVALUATION/APPLICATION:

- ⇒ **WE’VE ALL HAD OUR LESSER MOMENTS IN LIFE.** Those moments we’d rather forget and move beyond; moments that left an indelible mark of embarrassment or shame. And, maybe even moments that left a devastating mark on the life of another (even someone who’s closest to us).
- ⇒ **LIFE IS LIKE THAT.** It’s a series of choices to do right, or to do wrong, and all-too-often our tendency toward the wrong leaves the ugly residue of sin and death. Innocently it starts with apathetic tendencies to shirk our responsibilities; to fluff off our priorities for the sake of our selfish desires, and it’s ever so subtle. This usually leads to correction from God, and oftentimes feels like rejection from Him. At this place of correction is an opportunity for redemption, but only if a person doesn’t allow their emotions of sorrow to turn into emotions of defeat, anger, and jealousy. It’s here where sin crouches at our door waiting to pounce and devour us.
- ⇒ **MEMORY VERSES:** *Genesis 4:7; Romans 12:1; 1 Peter 2:1.*