

# My Brother's Keeper

(Genesis 4:9)

Yearly Theme: "Love Is..."

Series Title: *Don't Be Jealous*

June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2019

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## Something to think about:

Have you ever gotten caught? You know what I'm talking about; you tell a lie to cover your tracks so that others don't know details of something you've done, only to have the truth revealed because you can't tell enough lies to cover up the truth?

Cain's jealousy of Abel in the face of God's response to both of their offerings led Cain to do the most unimaginable thing; he murdered his brother Abel. In order to cover-up what he did he lied about it when confronted by God about Abel's whereabouts. Let's take a look:

## *Genesis 4:8-9 (NLT)*

**<sup>8</sup> 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.**

**<sup>9</sup> Afterward the LORD asked Cain, "Where is your brother? Where is Abel?"**

**"I don't know," Cain responded. "Am I my brother's guardian?"**

Commentator, Matthew Henry, writes, "Observe the pride, unbelief, and impenitence of Cain. He denies the crime, as if he could conceal it from God. He tries to cover a deliberate murder with a deliberate lie."<sup>1</sup>

This is what sin leads a person to. This is what the sin of jealousy led Cain to do. And here's the point this morning...

**Key Point: "Jealousy avoids admission of wrongs."**

There are three elements to this one verse of Scripture that illustrate this today:

- **There's a question.**

*Genesis 4:9a (NLT),* Afterward the LORD asked Cain, "Where is your brother? Where is Abel?"

- **There's a lie.**

*Genesis 4:9b (NLT),* "I don't know," Cain responded.

- **There's avoidance of responsibility.**

*Genesis 4:9c (NLT),* Cain responded. "Am I my brother's guardian?"

## Something to take home:

Victor Hugo wrote, "Men hate those to whom they have to lie."

How much must Cain have hated his brother to kill him, and what's more, how much must Cain have hated God in order to lie to Him about it?

The question of truth's veracity always looms when evidence is lacking. In the case of Cain, the truth of Abel's absence looms heavy on the scene when God calls into question Abel's whereabouts. Cain knew, and God knew, but the truth remained hidden, but only for a time. Truth always brings light to darkness; and, the darkness that penetrated and emanated from the hardened heart of Cain pointed directly to his misdeed toward his brother Abel. The sin that crouched at Cain's door was allowed into his heart. That sin became an action toward his brother Abel in the form of murder. And, that murder cried out from the ground in condemnation toward Cain and the pitiful lie of the offence he not only committed against Abel, but also against God.

Jealousy avoids admission of wrongs, and sin leads us down paths of deceit and destruction.

Is there something you've hidden from others (and are trying to hide from God) that you need to come clean with? Are you harboring a dark secret that has poisoned your soul, your relationship, and your faith in God? Have you allowed lies to perpetuate ongoing denial of the truth?

You can be set free, but it takes confession!

***Psalm 51:17 (NLT),* The sacrifice you desire is a broken spirit. You will not reject a broken and repentant heart, O God.**

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<sup>1</sup> Matthew Henry, *Matthew Henry Concise Bible Commentary*.



# My Brother's Keeper

(Genesis 4:9)

Series Title: *Don't Be Jealous*

## KICK STARTERS:

- ⇒ How would you define the word "lie?"
- ⇒ Have you ever gotten caught in a lie? Explain...

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

## Genesis 4:1-16 (NLT)

<sup>1</sup> 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!" <sup>2</sup> Later she gave birth to his brother and named him Abel. When they grew up, Abel became a shepherd, while Cain cultivated the ground.

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

<sup>6</sup> "Why are you so angry?" the LORD asked Cain. "Why do you look so dejected?" <sup>7</sup> 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."

<sup>8</sup> 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.

<sup>9</sup> Afterward the LORD asked Cain, "Where is your brother? Where is Abel?" "I don't know," Cain responded. "Am I my brother's guardian?"

<sup>10</sup> But the LORD said, "What have you done? Listen! Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground! <sup>11</sup> Now you are cursed and banished from the ground, which has swallowed your brother's blood. <sup>12</sup> 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."

<sup>13</sup> Cain replied to the LORD, "My punishment is too great for me to bear!" <sup>14</sup> 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!"

<sup>15</sup> 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. <sup>16</sup> So Cain left the LORD's presence and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

## GROUP DISCUSSION:

1. Give a brief synopsis of what is going on in the text for today's study. Specifically focus on verse 9.  
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2. Soon after Cain murdered Abel in the field, God came looking for Abel. When God asks Cain where Abel is, what is his response (v. 9)?  
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3. Now, there are a few things to consider in this verse. 1) Did God really not know what happened to Abel? 2) If he did know, why did He go through all the trouble of asking Cain? 3) If God knows, and he asks Cain, could it be that He desires confession and admission of wrongs for the purpose of redemption? What do you think?  
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4. Cain's response to God's questioning is a lie. Why do you suppose Cain lied to God about Abel's whereabouts?  
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5. How did Cain allow sin (that was crouching at his door—i.e., Gen 4:6-7) to master him? How does sin gain control of a person and snowball out of control?  
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6. Cain's rhetorical question to God: "Am I my brother's guardian/keeper?" is an interesting one. How would you answer this question? Are we our "brother's guardian/keeper?" If so, who is our brother and what does it mean to be his/her guardian/keeper (Luke 10:25-37)?  
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7. How does the sin of jealousy keep us from admitting wrongs and taking responsibility for our actions?  
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8. Why is *confession* important in breaking the curse of sin in our lives (e.g., Leviticus 5:5; Psalm 32:5-6; Proverbs 28:13; Hosea 14:2; James 5:16; 1 John 1:8-10; Psalm 51:17)?  
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## SELF-EVALUATION/APPLICATION:

- ⇒ **JEALOUSY AVOIDS** admission of wrongs, and sin leads us down paths of deceit and destruction.
- ⇒ **IS THERE SOMETHING YOU'VE HIDDEN FROM OTHERS** (and are trying to hide from God) that you need to come clean with? Are you harboring a dark secret that has poisoned your soul, your relationship, and your faith in God? Have you allowed lies to perpetuate ongoing denial of the truth? You can be set free, but it takes confession! Read 1 John 1:9 and Psalm 51:17 and apply them this week...
- ⇒ **MEMORY VERSES:** *Genesis 4:9; 1 John 1:9; Psalm 51:17.*