

The First Family

(Genesis 4:1-26)

Yearly Theme: *“Patience is...”*

Series Title: *“Family Dynamics”*

October 2nd, 2022

Something to think about:

Quick question... Does this ever describe your family trips or vacations?

Let’s face it, every family has a level of dysfunction that is a result of the fall in Genesis 3. Paul reminds us in Romans that we have all sinned and fallen short of GOD’s glory. Given this fact, it’s not difficult to understand that family dynamics across the world have suffered as a result of sin and bear the marks of pain and trauma respectively. This doesn’t mean that everyone has experienced severe pain and trauma within their families, but it does mean that all families have some level of conflict from time to time.

In this series, over the next 5-weeks, we will be looking at several dysfunctional families of the Bible, and exploring the different core issues that caused breakdown and conflict within them. And I’m sure that many of us will be able to relate to their struggles, frustrations, and shortcomings. In addition to this, we will be taking a look at how GOD worked with, and through, those families to bring about His good and perfect will in the long run.

Today, we start with the first family of the Bible: Adam, Eve, Cain, and Abel. Let’s take a look...

Turn in your Bible to: Genesis 4:1-26

Though this passage has so many different angles and topics that can be unpacked, for the purposes of this message, we will be focusing on the destructive nature of jealousy. That being the case, it stands to reason we should have a good, working definition of jealousy. According to the dictionary, jealousy is...

noun,

- 1) jealous resentment against a rival, a person enjoying success or advantage, etc., or against another’s success or advantage itself.
- 2) mental uneasiness from suspicion or fear of rivalry, unfaithfulness, etc., as in love or aims.
- 3) vigilance in maintaining or guarding something.¹

It was Cain’s jealousy is what drove him to do the unthinkable. Not only did it cause a murderous feeling in the heart, but it also resulted in the *act* of literal murder toward his brother Abel.

Here’s the takeaway this morning:

Key Point: *“Jealousy within families breeds dysfunction which leads to destruction.”*

So, how is jealousy so destructive? Let’s break it down with regard to this passage:

- **Jealousy causes an unhealthy obsession with “me” over and against a focus on “GOD.”**

Genesis 4:2b-7 (NLT), 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 portions 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.”

- **Jealousy has a way of not only killing us, but killing our relationships.**

Genesis 4:8-11 (NLT), 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.”

- **The ultimate consequences of jealousy are isolation and loneliness.**

Genesis 4:12-16 (NLT), 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.

Something to take home:

The solution to overcoming the crouching sin of jealousy is to shift our focus off of ourselves and on to GOD, working to please Him in all that we are and all that we do.

Key Point: *“Jealousy within families breeds dysfunction which leads to destruction.”*

¹ “Jealousy Definition & Meaning.” Dictionary.com. Dictionary.com. Accessed September 28, 2022. <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/jealousy>.