

WEEK 3: ENVY

Read the Text

Genesis 4:1-16

4 And the Lord had regard for Abel and his offering, 5 but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his face fell. 6 The Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? 7 If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it."

8 Cain spoke to Abel his brother. And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him. 9 Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" He said, "I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?" 10 And the Lord said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground. 11 And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. 12 When you work the ground, it shall no longer yield to you its strength. You shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth." 13 Cain said to the Lord, "My punishment is greater than I can bear. 14 Behold, you have driven me today away from the ground, and from your face I shall be hidden. I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me." 15 Then the Lord said to him, "Not so! If anyone kills Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold." And the Lord put a mark on Cain, lest any who found him should attack him. 16 Then Cain went away from the presence of the Lord and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

Main Point

The tragic story of Cain and Abel is a sobering reminder of how envy destroys and kills. ***Envy is the feeling of discontent and/or ill will because of another's advantages, traits or possessions.*** It's about getting what others have in order to be the person we feel we deserve to be. We're not always conscience of envy's existence though. We can easily minimize it, deny it, or even defend it, as we see with Cain. ***Envy can hide itself in a sense of entitlement, constant comparison with others, and self-pity for what we don't have.*** So what do we do when this sin of envy comes crouching at the door? ***The only way we can defeat envy is by reaching a place of pure contentment in where God has us and experiencing heart transformation that leads us to serve.*** Jesus calls us to seek first the Kingdom of God. If our priorities are in order, and the purposes of God become first, the rest of our lives will fall into line.

Reflect Together

- 1. *Who is God?*** How has God freed us from ever needing to feel envy? How can we remind ourselves of this truth in moments or seasons when envy creeps into our lives?
- 2. *What has He done?*** How has envy shown up in your life? How do you invite God into that? Share about how He has grown and challenged you through those times. What did redemption and healing look like?
- 3. *Who are you?*** When you do experience envy, what is going on beneath that? On Sunday, we talked about entitlement, comparison (which is exacerbated by social media usage), and self-pity. Did any of those resonate with you? How so?
- 4. *What are you to do?*** A great antidote to envy is both contentment and service. How could you invite the Spirit in to turn your envy into service? Do you feel any resistance to this? How can your MC or DNA support you?

Abide Together

As an MC, pray together about what was revealed during this discussion. Pray that the Spirit would move you to explore your envy and grow in service.

Mission Together

Service can be a great antidote to envy. What is an act of service you can commit this week to help subdue your envy?