

Dealing With Jealousy

Hello from the Holy Spirit. Hello from God. Hello from Jesus. They are all here to help you. They all love you. One of the Holy Spirit's jobs is to correct you. He also guides you and He helps you and He comforts you, but one of His jobs is to correct you. Today, we are going to talk about an affliction that is common to everybody. I have heard it said that 85 percent of the world struggles with jealousy. It might be more than that. We have to fight it in ourselves. We are human and yet we want to live for God. We all want to be divine, do we not? We love God and we want to be like Jesus. We want Him to free to be Himself in us. Then we struggle. That is okay because God has answers. He sent the Holy Spirit to correct us. It is like having the world's best basketball coach, football coach or soccer coach, the world's best. Some men are extremely good coaches. You can see it. No matter where they go, they always have winning teams. Everywhere they go, because they know how to correct things that need to be corrected in order to refine their players and make them better than ever. That is the way the Holy Spirit is with you. He knows how to take care of these things.

Today, we are going to talk about jealousy and what causes that and was it in the Bible. Did the people in the Bible suffer with jealousy? Did they have then green-eyed monster come? Absolutely. I will talk about some of the people in the Bible and see if you remember those stories. How about Cain and Abel? I mean right off the bat, God has hardly gotten the world started and there we go, two sons. One is jealous of the other. Maybe that is in your family with your children and you think, what is the matter? I love them both the same. I want to help both of them. They are different, but I want to help both of them. Instead, they got at each other. Cain just looked over there at Abel and he was jealous of the relationship Abel had with God. He could have had his own relationship with God. He just needed to do it God's way. He did not want to do it God's way. He wanted to do it his way. Then he looked. There is somebody doing it and I do not like it. I do not like them. They do this and they do that. Jealousy from the very beginning. Sin came in followed right behind by jealousy.

Where else is there jealousy in the Bible? Sarah was jealous that Hagar could have a baby. It was her idea. She said, "Hey, sleep with my maid and we will get us a baby." Hagar got the baby and she let Sarah know, I have the baby and you do not. Sarah was jealous.

How about Joseph's brothers? Sometimes you can make people jealous of you by your actions, by not being humble, by not keeping things to yourself that you should not share with others or by not thinking I wonder how this is going to sound to them. Joseph was young. He was a teen-ager. He was probably cocky. He probably had this dream. "Hey, you big guys, you are all going to bow down to me. How do you like that?" His brothers were jealous of him. Already they were jealous because he was his father's favorite. You parents need to be so careful not to have favoritism over one child. If you are in a blended family, you need to be so careful that you love all of the children the same. There should not be any difference. They should not be able to tell you love one more than the other. There is something wrong when you do because God has a heart of love. He loves us all the same. You need to be like that in your own family. Joseph's daddy did not do a good job of setting things up the right way. He preferred Joseph and he showed it. Look what happened. It nearly ruined Joseph's life. Joseph's way of saying things that angered his brothers so much nearly ruined his life. By all practical purposes it did. He was sold off to another country, lived in another country and lost his family for all of these years until he was a grown man. There is a lot to be said about learning how to deal with jealousy within yourself and with others.

Saul was so jealous of David. David did not do anything but try to help Saul. Do you remember the story that Saul was in a cave going to the bathroom and David snuck up behind him and cut off part of his robe. His men wanted him to kill him. They said, "There is your enemy, kill him." He did not. Instead of Saul appreciating David and his integrity, it made him hate him more. He was more jealous of him. I tell you what really made him jealous is when the women began to sing, "Saul has slain his thousands." I bet Saul thought, "Hey, how about that?" Right after it they sang, "And David has slain his ten thousands." Instantly, jealousy came in.

There are all kinds of reasons for jealousy. Think about the prodigal son. He was not living right. He spent all of his inheritance on partying, drinking, crazy partying. He did it all. But, his older brother was jealous of him. The older brother was doing everything right, why would he be jealous? He was

right there with his father, but he was. He did not want to share anything. He certainly did not want that boy getting any kind of praise from the daddy.

Even the nation of Israel as it divided into tribes and as they began to go through the years, they were jealous of one another and they fought each other. It is still going on today, is it not? Do you not wonder how much of what is going on in the Middle East is based on jealousy? Nobody has ever talked about it have they? There is something to that.

What does the Bible say about jealousy? I want to read you what James said. James was the brother of Jesus, the actual brother of Jesus. Those brothers did not believe in Jesus at first. Oh, I bet they were jealous of Him. Jesus grew in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man. The older He got, the more people loved Him and appreciated Him. How do you think His natural brothers felt toward Him? They were probably jealous and at the same time thinking he is wacko. What did one of them say? He realized Jesus is the Messiah and he wrote the book of James. He says, "If you are wise and understand God's ways, live a life of steady goodness so that only good deeds will pour forth. If you do not brag about the good you do, then you will be truly wise." Why does he say that? Because bragging creates jealousy. Here is what he says in James 3:14. I am reading out of the New Living Bible. "But if you are bitterly jealous (that is a deep jealousy) and there is selfish ambition in your hearts, do not brag about being wise." That is the worst kind of life. "For jealousy and selfishness are not God's kind of wisdom. Such things are earthly, unspiritual and motivated by the devil." There is a spirit of jealousy. "For wherever there is jealousy and selfish ambition, there you will find disorder and every other kind of evil."

I will tell you about a time I was jealous. We do not like to admit it, but we all are. I was just learning about deliverance. I was reading books on it. I realized that the demonic influence in the world on Christians is very strong. It is on people who are not Christians. What spirit seemed to attack you? What do you deal with? This was at a time that my son was about three years old and I began to notice he wanted to be with his daddy more than me. I wanted that child. I wanted that child to love me. I thought, "I am jealous. I am jealous." That is something is it not, where a husband and wife are supposed to be pulling together and I am jealous of my son preferring my husband. I got on my knees. Remember, I had just been learning about deliverance. I thought that I am really struggling with this and I cannot seem to get a hold of it and I cannot seem to conquer it. I wonder if there is a spirit of jealousy. Maybe that is it. I got on my knees in the living room and I said, "I do not want to be jealous Lord. I am happy he loves his dad and I want to be happy, but I have this feeling in my heart. I am sorry. You, spirit of jealousy get out of me. In Jesus name, get out." I felt something just kind of flutter out. I do not know how else to describe it. It was gone. I was happy. I was happy for their relationship. My son is now 38. He wants to be with his daddy so much when they come to see us or when he calls he wants to talk to his dad. All over again, here it is 35 years later and I am thinking he wants to be with his dad more than me. Why does he not want to be with me? It is not true. He loves me. He loves to spend time with me. He is just drawn one man to another. I need to understand that and just accept it and be happy that it is like that. Praise God that it is. I have to trust the Lord. Just take any jealousy out of my heart Lord. I get pretty honest with you. I hope you get honest. I try to be transparent. I try to let you see what I am really like because it is so easy with television preachers or pastors to think, "They do not live where I live they do not know what life is really all about. They do not struggle with things." Everybody is the same. We all struggle so I try to be very transparent and tell you where I struggle, where I have weaknesses, where God helps me, because Jesus is here to help us. As I told you at the beginning of the lesson, the Holy Spirit's job is to correct us so we can become stronger than ever.

There is God saying that jealousy is not from Him. Proverbs 14:30 says, "A relaxed attitude lengthens your life. Jealousy rots it away." Have you ever known a jealous person? Have you ever really looked at their life? They have lost so much time, so much of life. It really does rot your life away. You can master it. God said that to Cain. Sin is at your door, but you can master it. You can master jealousy. It will stop everything happening in your life. You think when you are caught up in jealousy that maybe this will help me, but it does not help. It does not help at all.

You have to have such love for other people that even if they are promoted ahead of you, you can rejoice. Can you do that? That is a sign of a really true Christian when you can laugh with those who laugh, cry with those who cry and rejoice with people over their promotions and the good things that are happening to them. That has happened to me. One time about 20 years ago I was waiting and waiting on the Lord to open up the next door of ministry for me. Waiting and waiting, and it never seemed to happen. A lady came up to me one time and said, "God has told me that you are like in a waiting room. God keeps coming to the door of the waiting room and says you come in, you come in, you come in and you just sit there. They all go in through the door with God and you are still waiting. He is going to answer you in due season." I had to learn that. I will tell you something

else that I had to learn that I did not tell the last time I told that story is that I had to watch being jealous. It was like, "Look, they are getting to do everything I want to do and I am not getting to do it. I want to do it. I do not like that." You have to pray. You have to say, "God, I am just going to be honest with you. See this in here. That is not You. That is not how You want me to be. Get it out of my heart. I am sorry. Fill me again with the Holy Spirit because He is not jealous."

The Bible does say, "I am a jealous God. You cannot have any gods above Me." What is that kind of jealousy? That is the kind of jealousy where a husband watches his wife and makes sure other men do not come around. That is not a bad kind of jealousy, it is more of a watching carefulness. I am not talking about the marriage where the husband is insanely jealous. That goes with domestic violence. It is one of the attributes of domestic violence and it is not good and it is not right. The person who has that kind of jealousy does not realize they are smothering the other person, trying to keep a grip on them and not let them get away. It is based on insecurity. God is secure. There is nothing about God that is insecure. He just does not want you having any gods ahead of Him.

What are the basic areas where you can encounter jealousy? One is relationships. I talked about that one. Another is things. In our world there is so much materialism, especially in America.

Sometimes America looks like the land of plenty and life looks wonderful. When I travel to other countries where life is so much harder, I do not see some things there that we have here. There is less of an interest in materialism. Unfortunately, with television being the way it is today and they see America it can change. There is another type of jealousy that is over authority and position. You just get jealous over people rising up ahead of you. Maybe you are jealous of your boss. It is possible even in the ministry to get jealous over growth, size, position, fame. It is possible to let people put pressure on you or to put pressure on yourself for that. Right before I started doing these television shows the Lord took me through about a year of dying. I felt like I was dying to everything. I just felt like I was going further and further back. Nothing was happening. How long, Lord? How much longer do I have to wait? Are You ever going to do it?

The Lord sent a prophetic word to me. I do not even know who gave this to me. I live by it now. It is concerning success and how to judge success. Are you a success? That is where jealousy comes from primarily too. It just gets down to success. Here is what the word was. "Do not judge success by ministry size, fame, prominence, money, position. Instead, judge success by humility, compassion and a Christ-like spirit." That applies to every area of life and every business. It is not just in ministry. You can have humility and have a very high position in a company. You can own the company. It can be an international company, but you can still have humility. You can still have compassion. You can still have Christ-likeness. When I was thinking about all of this, I felt like Jesus spoke to me and said, "Betty, most of the world and many, many people in the ministry are going that way. Fame, money, size, position, visibility, but Betty I am not going that way. I do not go that way, Betty, I go this way. I go in the direction of humility, compassion for other people and Christ-likeness or godliness." He said, "Betty if you want to go with Me, you have to die to all of that and you have to go this way with Me." Dying is painful. I went through a lot of experiences that were embarrassing, painful, humiliating or just yucky. I discovered something folks. I discovered that the Jesus way is very peaceful. It gets you out of that that does not have meaning anyway.

We are not here to impress people. We are not here to do anything except what does God want us to do. What has he called us to do? That usually starts small. You may have had a dream from God or a vision from God or you have a dream that you just want to be this. I just want to be that Lord, up there. God may say, "Okay, that is my dream too. Come with Me and we are going to do it, but you are going to have to start out small. You may have to be on the shelf while all of the other people go ahead. Can you do that? You may start out high and I may need you down low, so I will put you back down low again. Can you handle that? Can you deal with that and be happy? Can you rejoice at other people's success? I am watching you." When you pass those tests, then He can put you somewhere and it does not affect you.

I do not know if you think this is a big deal for me to be on television internationally like this. I think it is. I am amazed. I am shocked that God put me here. I will tell you something. I do not struggle with it. I do not struggle with pride. I do not struggle with getting a big head. I do not struggle with "Hey, I am better than you are. Hey, look what I am doing." It is because I have had to wait so long on God and He has had to change me so much and I have gone through so much in learning all of it that. I am here and I do not want to be caught up in all of that stuff. I do not want to be caught up in jealousy. I do not want to be caught up in comparison. I want to be caught up in Jesus and doing what He wants done and the honor of getting to serve Him.

We have two basic needs in life when you get right down to it. One is security, am I going to be taken of and another is significance. Do I matter? Do I count? Does my life amount to anything?

When you die, there is a judgment for Christians called the great white throne judgment. It is not about if you are really going to get into heaven. If you know Jesus and you have received Him into your heart, ask for forgiveness of all of your sin and said I know you are the Savior and I need you to forgive me, come into my life and change me. Make me the kind of person You want me to be. I believe You are the Son of God. I believe You died for sins. I believe You rose from the dead. I believe and I receive it. It gives you security if you have done all of that. It lets you know you will be taken care of. God has a call on your life that is different from anybody's around you, anybody's. I do not care if they look like your identical twin, it is still different. With that, you get the significance and this need for significance. When you go to that great white throne judgment, Jesus is going to say, "You, come forth." Nobody is there with you and you cannot say I should have done it but I did not. He is going to say, "I created you to do this. I created you to touch these people. I created you to touch these situations. I called you to do it. Now give an account of what you did." Can you imagine how you would feel standing there thinking "I was so busy being jealous of everybody else and feeling so insignificant myself. What God called me to do was not important and what He called them to do was so much more important, I did not do it Lord." You do not want to be there.

God's will for your life is tailor-made for you. It is what you love to do. It is what you are created to do. It is what you are good at doing. It may not be what I am doing. I have two people who help me in the accounting end of my business because I want to be sure everything is done right.

Anybody can inspect my books and they know exactly that if I said all of the money from Pennies From Heaven goes to feed people, I want to mean it. I do not want to have anything that looks wrong at all. I am not a very good person with paperwork. In fact, I am pitiful. I should show you the notes I have right here for doing this lesson. You probably would have had it real organized. I have arrows going up here. I have things marked out. I have stuff moved around. I am really not good with paperwork. I just am not. I lose things. I know my call and I do not go that way. I find somebody to help me who can do that and who is good at it. They do not need to be jealous of me of what I am doing and I do not need to be jealous of them at what they are doing and when they are raised up. I can be like God, full of God. I can be led by God and rejoice at everything that is happening to them.

What is God's cure for jealousy? Is it not great to know He has a cure? What if He was said, "Figure it out yourself. Do not ask Me, I do not like it." God is not like that. He has a cure for it. The first is to admit you have it. Just say it. Just agree with God. "You are right. I am jealous of that. I am jealous over here. I am sorry. Help me." What is God's cure? The first thing is to realize that God hates jealousy. He says, "I hate it. It is devilish. It will rot you. It will ruin your life." No matter how much envy you feel toward what people are doing, just remind yourself I have to get away from that. It is going to rot my bones. It is going to eat me. No matter what, I am not going to be jealous anymore. God, by Your power and strength, I will not be. You know that you were bought with a very high price. You are very valuable to God. I do not care what country you are in watching this show, I do not care if you do not even really know that much about Jesus or God, you were bought with a price. A king wanted you, a king gave up His life to get you. Amazing. You are so valuable. You are special. You are made in His image. God says, "I have your name written on My palm, right here. I have your name." It says in Psalms 139, "I knew you before you were born. I scheduled every day of your life. It is all planned out."

The next thing besides understanding your position in God and that is what I have just named for you, you need to know who am I in God. What does the Bible say I am? The next thing is to understand promotion. You usually have to wait longer than you think you would. When you get it, you are supposed to remain humble in it and walk in it in your new area. Another is, with God's timing comes increased accountability. When He promotes you, He holds you to a higher standard. Somebody said to me, new levels, and new devils. How do you handle them? It is hard sometimes. I had somebody call and chew me out on the phone about these television shows, really ran me down. God has a purpose. Find out God's purpose for your life and rejoice in it and then rejoice in others.

QUIET TIME QUESTIONS

1. What does the Proverbs 14:30 say about jealousy
2. What is the outcome of people in the Bible who were jealous?
3. What are the causes of jealousy?
4. Can jealousy ever be good?

4. Can jealousy ever be good?

5. What does it mean to you that God is a jealous God?

6. What is God's cure for jealousy?

To watch the video on DEALING WITH JEALOUSY, Pillar Five, Relational Skills, go to www.bettyswann.com.

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