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Jealousy

Getting Started

Jealousy is often called “the green-eyed monster.” Why green? Because hundreds of years ago, there was a very strong poison that was green in color. Jealousy is like a poison. It can kill friendships, and destroy families. The Bible tells us jealousy is like a sickness. It grows inside us and slowly destroys us from the inside out. How can we stop jealousy from controlling our lives? How can we learn to be happy with what we have?



Improving Your Vocabulary

jealousy (n) – fear of losing position or affection; unhappiness because someone else has something you want

robe (n) – a type of clothing like a coat

slave (n) – someone forced to work without pay

famine (n) – an area where there is not enough food for the people

recognize (v) – to know who someone is

consequences (n) – the results (usually bad) of an action

interpreter (n) – a person who translates one language to another so others can understand

Reading God's Word

This is the story of a man named Joseph and his family. Joseph's father was named Jacob. Jacob had twelve sons, and Joseph was his favorite.

Genesis 37:3-4

3 Jacob loved Joseph more than all his other sons, because he had been born to him when he was old. He made a long robe with full sleeves for him. **4** When his brothers saw that their father loved Joseph more than he loved them, they hated their brother so much that they would not speak to him in a friendly manner.

Joseph's brothers were so angry they decided to kill Joseph. But one brother, Judah, had another idea.

Genesis 37: 26-27

26 Judah said to his brothers, "What will we gain by killing our brother and covering up the murder? **27** Let's sell him. . . then we won't have to hurt him; after all, he is our brother, our own flesh and blood." His brothers agreed.

The brothers sold Joseph as a slave into Egypt. They told their father that Joseph was dead. When there was a famine in Egypt, Joseph became a powerful leader there. He saved enough food for the whole country to have enough. But Jacob and his other sons did not have enough food. They went to Egypt to buy food. In Egypt, they met their brother Joseph, but they did not recognize him.

Genesis 42:21, 23 (the brothers speak)

21 They said to one another, "Yes, now we are suffering the consequences of what we did to our brother; we saw the great trouble he was in when he begged for help, but we would not listen. That is why we are in trouble now." **23** Joseph understood what they had said, but they did not know it, because they had been speaking through an interpreter. Joseph left them and began to cry.

Joseph forgave his brothers. His whole family moved to Egypt to be with Joseph, and he gave them enough food to live through the famine.

For further study, see Genesis 37:5-11, 31-36.

Taking a Closer Look

1. Why were the brothers so jealous of Joseph?

2. What did they decide to do to him?

3. Do you think the brothers were sorry for what they did?

4. How many people were hurt because of the brothers' jealousy?

5. What would have been a better way for them to solve the problem? A way that wouldn't have hurt so many people?

6. How did God use this bad situation for good?

Taking Action

1. The memory verse tells us true love is not jealous. But sometimes, jealousy is a big problem between people who love each other, often because they do not trust each other. How can we increase trust in our relationships?

2. If we are jealous of someone, we are only thinking about what we want. We are not being thankful for what we have. Write down some blessings you are thankful for.

Memory Verse: 1 Corinthians 13:4

Love is patient and kind; it is not jealous or conceited or proud.

Practice the Vocabulary

Share your answers to the following questions with a classmate.

1. Have you ever struggled with **jealousy**?

2. What are the **consequences** of jealousy?

3. What can cause a **famine**?

4. If you saw one of your classmates from 1st grade, do you think you would **recognize** him?

5. Do you think being an **interpreter** would be a good job? Why or why not?



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