

When You're Jealous

Why does she get to be so beautiful?

Why does she get to have such a nice house/car/husband?

Why does she get to be so talented/popular?

We've all wondered why that one certain person seems to have everything going for her, while our own lives are falling apart. We've asked ourselves—or asked others, or complained to God—about why people who don't seem to deserve it get “all” the blessings.

“Why not me?” is what we really want to know. “Why don't I get that?”

It's tough to see someone else getting the things we desire—the things we put all our energies toward, but can't seem to attain. “What about me?” our heart cries. “Why not me?”

We're jealous.

We don't like to admit that, because we know jealousy is a sin. We try to pretend we're not jealous. We try to squash the jealousy down so we don't have to confront it. We plaster smiles on our faces and pretend like it's not eating at us.

But it is.

We become jealous (or its close cousin, resentful) because we want what others have.

Sometimes, that is. You see, we don't always want what others have.

Here's what I mean. We ask why someone else gets (fill in the blank here with the name of the thing we want). We never ask questions like these:

Why does she get to be only 53 years old and dying from ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease)?

Why does she get to bury her son, who is dead by his own hand?

Why does she get to live in a shelter, because her husband was abusing her and her children?

The questions at the top of the page are questions I have struggled with in the past. I've never asked myself the three questions above this paragraph.

All of these situations—ALS, a child's suicide and spousal abuse—are circumstances that friends of mine are currently facing. Yet I've never asked why I don't get things like that.

We take blessings for granted, and we don't spend much time being thankful for them. Instead, we ask why we don't get the things we want.

But the real question is not "Why doesn't God give me the things I want?"

The real question should be: "Why does God spare me from the terrible things I don't want?"

The first question leads to a sense of entitlement. The second leads to a deep, profound gratitude.

Why don't I get some of the things I want? I don't know, but this, I do know: I also don't get some of the things I really don't want. And those are the things that are more important.

A large, pretty house? Nice ... but not as big a blessing as my health.

Physical beauty? Nice ... but not as big a deal as physical safety.

Being talented or popular? No comparison to having my children alive and here with me.

If you want to ask why you don't have what someone else has, be fair about it: Ask that question in regards to everybody.

You will find that you are grateful that you don't have what others have far more often than you are jealous.

"Let your lives be without love of money, and be content with the things you have. For He has said: 'I will never leave you, nor forsake you'" (Heb. 13:5).

*Adapted from **Megan Breedlove's** blog, *Manna for Moms*. Megan is the author of *Well Done, Good and Faithful Mommy* and *Manna for Moms: God's Provision for Your Hair-Raising, Miracle-Filled Mothering Adventure* (Regal Books.) She is also a stay-at-home mom with five children.*