

**THEME: SEVEN DEADLY CONTROLLERS**

**TOPIC: WHAT IS POSSESSIVENESS & WHY ARE PEOPLE POSSESSIVE?**

**TEXT: ROMANS 8:5-8, 14, 1 CORINTHIANS 13:4-8**

### **Introduction**

The fourth of our consideration for the Seven Deadly Controllers is *Possessiveness* and today we will be exploring by asking the questions; “What is Possessiveness & why are people Possessive?”

What exactly is possessiveness and when does “Loving you” become “hurting you”? Or when does loving you become controlling you?”

In his great chapter on love, Paul expresses to us what love is. **1 Corinthians 13: 4-8**

The elements or ingredients of love Paul mentions here are long-suffering, kindness, not being envious, not parading oneself, not proud, not being rude, not self-seeking, not easily provoked, thinking no evil, not rejoicing in iniquity but appreciation of the truth concerning the one we love, bearing things on behalf of the one we love, believing all things on behalf of the one we love and hoping for good things, enduring for the one we love and not failing the one we love.

All these virtues stand in stark opposition to possessiveness.

### **WHAT IS POSSESSIVENESS?**

1. Possessiveness is an excessive desire to dominate another person to the point of owning them. It is an attempt or a desire to control another person’s life.
2. Certainly, possessiveness has a strong element of jealousy. **1 Samuel 15:23.** Being jealous may not necessarily be an expression of love, it is rather an attempt to control the other person either by legal or illegal means.

**Scenario 1** – Sam was dating a lovely girl whom he met in church. They had agreed to marry. She was probably the first who accepted his hand in marriage.

As the date for the wedding was coming close, Sam became different and unpredictable in his behaviour. He was particularly possessive and suspicious of the girl he was dating. He made up stories about her so that whenever they met, he accused her of seeing other men. These were stories he made up to try to ensure her faithfulness.

He would accuse her of being seen by different people in different parts of the city of London. About a week to their wedding, as they took a taxi cab to go and collect some items needed for the wedding day, Sam accused his fiancée by saying that she was making signs through the mirror in the car to the cab driver.

3. Possessiveness is not only exclusive to females like some people tend to believe. It is a trait that can be found in all genders.

## WHY ARE PEOPLE POSSESSIVE

People are Possessive based on their background and life experience when growing up, let's consider the case of Jenny.

**Scenario 2** – She grew up with her grand-mother, therefore did not form any strong relationship with her father and mother. Her parents were separated and when she eventually lived with one of them, it was her mum. Their relationship was not strong and it wasn't out of love. Jenny did not know her dad very well and when she would eventually meet him as an adult, he did not even know she was his daughter. He was making a pass at her.

Life was hard and relationships were difficult with her mother. When Jenny met the man she would marry, his love and care seemed so overwhelming. It seemed too good to be true that she would meet a man who worked for one of the arms of the United Nations.

Jenny became very possessive, being fearful that she might lose this wonderful person she had met unknown to her that she had not dealt with her own inadequacies.

Having not been raised in the atmosphere of love and acceptance, she became fearful for anyone who came close to her man.

1. Possessive people are very territorial. They draw lines around the persons they feel they are courting and do not want anyone else around them. It may be the root of the words of the daughter of Saul when she accused David of making himself look less in the front of his subjects. **2 Samuel 6:20**
2. Possessiveness may be a by-product of idolising a fiancé or spouse. People who feel inadequate and therefore meet someone so great may feel that they are undeserving of the person who has chosen to court them. Therefore they become very possessive and watch out like a hawk to scare away whoever comes too close.
3. Possessiveness might also come out of love, particularly intense love – that is intense love without boundaries. As we have seen earlier, love does not mean control or taking over the other person's life.
4. True love allows the other person a room to inhale and exhale. Certainly, it is exhibited by people with a low self-esteem (Scenario 1 & 2). They've struggled all their life with a poor self-esteem, having not had their emotional cup filled by their parent in their days when their emotional boundaries were being formed.
5. Possessiveness may be an exhibition of a lack of trust. The person who exhibits this behaviour cannot be said to trust the one they are possessive about but rather it is an act which suggests fear of losing them or fear because of what they know about the person they seem to be possessive about, particularly if the person they are possessive about has had a background of sexual laxity or unfaithfulness.
6. The possessive tend to be overprotective and they do this with the expressions of suspicion. They become preoccupied about the person they are courting. Possessiveness can lead to making demands that are very difficult for the other person.

### Conclusion

It should be noted that people may become too possessive in relationships as a result of underlying insecurities, fear of desertion or past emotional trauma. Possessiveness is generally motivated by a strong need for control, approval or fear of losing the partner. The only One capable and legitimately allowed to control us should be the Holy Spirit of God ([Ephesians 5:18](#)).

