

Welcome

Good morning! My name is Ashley and I'm on the preaching team here at Catalyst. Today we're going to be talking about Encanto and the Enneagram, so today is Pepa. So, Pepa and I are both Fours, which is why I asked to preach this sermon. And I just want to give you a little insight into what it's like for my husband to have to live with a Four. So, I'm a part of this coffee group with some derby friends and one of them recommended this 4 book series to me. So, I started listening to it on audiobook and I got really invested in it. I mean, I devoured these books in like 2 weeks. So, I got really emotionally invested in the characters and in the storyline and I got to the end and it was a fine ending, I mean, it was a *happy* ending, but I felt a little cheated out of the ending because endings aren't always happy and it felt a little forced. And some of you know what I'm talking about - whether it's from books, tv shows, or even movies.

So, all day I'm thinking about the series and the characters and stuff and I got in a bit of a funk. My husband gets home and asks me if I'm okay (because he can tell something's bugging me) and I just got off on all the reasons why this was a good ending, but it wasn't the best ending and blah blah blah.

So, 15 minutes later and I'm crying over these book characters and the ending they didn't get and my husband goes, "so, if they had gotten the much more sad ending that you were thinking of, would you be happy then?" and I was like, "well, no because it would have been sad, but not all endings are happy endings." and he basically looks at me and says, "you realize most people would just be happy that they got a happy ending, right?"

So, I guess the moral of the story is that... I can't enjoy happy endings. That's a little bit of a joke, but really what it gets at is that Fours have lots of big emotions, which can be both a good and bad thing. You see that with Pepa in Encanto because her mood affects the weather. So, often she has a rain cloud around her, or if she's happy, the sun is shining and there are rainbows.

Now maybe you also resonate with that, or maybe you know somebody just like that. A coworker or friend who is always kind of...melancholy, or who always has these deep emotions that might feel... draining to you.

We're going to find today, much like Pepa finds in Encanto, that Fours have value in our spiritual circles, just like everyone else. We're going to talk about these people who seem to live under a rain cloud and what the healthiest versions of themselves look like. AND how you, as someone who may be very different from them, can interact with them and love them and grow with them in our spiritual community.

Let's start with singing and praising our God, who has created all of us uniquely and has brought us all into a spiritual community together so that we might learn from one another.

Message

Welcome to Summer at Catalyst! This year, we're going on a quest for spiritual transformation. To help us get at that, we're spending our summer with La Familia Madrigal from Encanto. The nine magical Madrigals correlate with a tool utilized in Spiritual Direction called the Enneagram. [Slide: Enneagram] On its surface, the Enneagram looks like a personality profile - like Myers-Briggs or Strengthsfinder. In the Enneagram, you identify yourself as one of the numbers 1-9, which then goes on to describe how you interact with the world. Ian Cron, a Spiritual Director who has written about the Enneagram a lot, says it like this: "Personality tests tell you who you really are. The Enneagram tells you who you're really not."

In other words, what the Enneagram helps you identify in yourself is something theologians and mystics call our shadow self. Personas we all create to help us cope with the world.

[Slide: Triads] Throughout this series, we're investigating the type embodied by each member of La Familia Madrigal, allowing them to illustrate for us the various personas. Then we'll dive into Scripture to see how these personas keep us from being fully who God created us to be.

The end goal is that we come to know our creator better by better knowing God's creation. By the end of the summer, I hope we come together as a spiritual family, closer than ever and a source of healing and hope for our community - just like La Familia Madrigal!

We've explored the first two in the anger triad. We began with the Anger triad - Abuela the Eight, Mirabel the Nine and Isabela the One. Today we're meeting the last person in the Shame triad. First was Julieta the Two, who externalizes her shame, leading her to be helpful because she needs others' approval to feel loved. Last week, Vanessa introduced us to Luisa the Three, who avoids shame by doing amazing stuff all over town. [Slide: Pepa] Today, we're investigating the Shame internalizers, the Enneagram Fours. And as I already mentioned, I'm a Four. And so is Tia Pepa.

So what is a Four? Fours are motivated by this feeling that they have something missing from them that they must find. Because of this, average Four's find it difficult to and struggle with accepting themselves as they are. Because that feeling seeps into everything: how they work, how they interact in relationships, why they pursue certain hobbies, etc.

So, often, they seek to exaggerate their uniqueness, if only to mask their own feelings of inferiority. In a Four with unaddressed trauma, this looks more like manipulation or playing the victim so that they can find relationships that tell them over and over that they are whole and not broken.

That's Four's in a broad stroke: they have a deep well of feelings that seem to swirl around them often and that they feel repeatedly. Often it's said that Fours feel the same amount of emotions

in one day that most others feel in a week or more. They direct these feelings inward: seeking the missing piece that they might find something to fill that void.

If you do feel this way, you're probably feeling really exposed right now. If so, buckle up because we're only going to get deeper from here. If you don't feel this way, I imagine you know someone who acts like this. Maybe you work with someone who is draining in their emotional outbursts, or in their unreliable responses to things. It might feel like you're walking around on eggshells because you don't want to say something that will cause them to act like a victim or cause them to be emotionally manipulative in some way.

That sounds like an unhealthy four, who look like this: [unhealthy fours slide](#). On the other hand, average fours look like this: [average fours slide](#).

Here's what I will tell you: Fours don't *have* to be this way. In fact, healthy fours are more emotionally insightful: [healthy fours slide](#).

So, a Four is a part of the Shame triad. ([Shame triad definition slide](#).) Which essentially means they are motivated by an internal shame and Fours deal with it by focusing it inward. Fours discovered very early on in life that they were different from their family or siblings. This may have been because they were physically different: smaller in stature, while the others were larger in stature; or different in another way: maybe they really enjoyed books, whereas the rest of their family didn't. This "black sheep" feeling ultimately results in the core lie that drives their life: [Core Lie: "There's something wrong with or missing from me."](#)

For me, I was always really socially awkward as a kid (and kind of still am) and then early on I realized I wanted to do something different with my life than what my family was doing. So, this feeling of a deep, irredeemable deficiency about me is something I'm very accustomed to. And it can consume me if I let it, AND it can lead to unhealthy and overall unhelpful behaviors like, trying to find unique hobbies that I can throw myself into. I probably have 15 different hobbies that I enjoy and will randomly decide I have to do. Or, I may play the victim when my husband says something that I perceive is mean, causing a larger fight to blow up over something that only marginally upset my feelings.

For anyone who isn't a Four, this all may sound really harsh. And to all of you I would say, get out your umbrellas. Because there's going to be some rain for a bit. But all those Four's out there are just like, "Yep I feel that way. And yep that's me 100%." To you I would say this: I know you probably don't feel this right now, but the feeling that "there is something wrong or missing from me" is a *Core Lie* for a reason - because it's not true. I'm not going to give you some placating announcement that you are wonderful as you are and all that. I'm just telling you this as an objective truth, but there is nothing missing or broken about you; you are whole as you are today. I'm going to repeat that. And I want you to hold it inside until you're really able to feel it: there is nothing missing or broken about you; you are whole as you are today. One more time: there is nothing missing or broken about you; you are whole as you are today.

For all you Fours out there, I want to remind you of Ephesians 2:10, which says, “**For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.**” (Ephesians 2:10, NLT). There is nothing missing or broken about you - You’ve been created by God’s hands to be exactly who you are. I know that some of you may not be able to fully internalize that right now and that’s okay. But, we’re going to enter into a time of worship where I want you to take that verse/reminder with you: there is nothing missing or broken about you.

Song

Out of this core lie comes our Signature Sin: Envy. This is the way we act because of this Core Lie. As a Four, I am not envious of the things you have, but of this ineffable wholeness that you are. This authenticity and comfortability you have in who you are and how you fit into the world.

Actually, the Bible talks about something similar in the 10 Commandments. In Exodus 20 it says, “**You must not covet your neighbor’s house. You must not covet your neighbor’s wife, male or female servant, ox or donkey, or anything else that belongs to your neighbor.**” (Exodus 20:17, NLT). ‘You must not covet’ is the command. It sounds like coveting is when you act on it. You covet your neighbor’s spouse, so you seek out the relationship and may end up cheating on your own spouse because of it. That’s destructive in its own rite, but it relies entirely on action. That’s not the only thing with coveting. Because if you’re sitting at home, coveting your neighbors spouse, that’s going to be as destructive to your relationship as actually cheating would be, but often Fours think, “well i’m not actually *doing* anything bad, so i’m fine” But I’m tell you: that’s not true.

So, how do we, as Fours, deal with this? Since we know it’s a lie AND that acting on it causes external havoc? Well, the Bible actually also speaks to this. In Proverbs it says, “**A peaceful heart leads to a healthy body; jealousy is like cancer in the bones.**” (Proverbs 14: 30, NLT). Leave that slide up there for a second. The problem with envy is that it doesn’t only affect me when I act on it. It doesn’t wreak havoc on my external world, but it wreaks havoc on my internal world. Those thoughts are inevitably toxic, because they’re bound by this pervasive lie that echoes and echoes in my mind, leading to toxic feelings and behaviors that come out at those around me. And that’s what this verse is saying - your internal life leads to the way your external life is lived, and God wants that inner self to be healthy and whole.

When we first look at that verse it seems to say something like, controlling your emotions is the way to health and when we let our envy take over, that is like a cancer. Fours are told often, “well just don’t feel that way,” but that’s not a realistic option for Fours. Their feelings are going to feel things and they’re not going to ask their permission. Eliminating your emotions isn’t the answer for Fours, but disciplining them is more appropriate. What does that mean? Well, eliminating them says, “don’t feel that way.” Discipline says, “i understand that i feel that way, but this is why those things aren’t true.”

This is what I'm saying: discipline your thoughts and your actions and reactions will follow suit. Sometimes you have to look at your emotions and say, "you're wrong." And remind yourself why those emotions are wrong. Remember, as a Four, even though you have a deep well of emotions, you don't have to let those emotions drive you. Because they are ultimately rooted in that Core Lie: that you must seek something that is missing.

So, how do we do that? Everyone can benefit from this, but Fours in particular should build what I'm calling "affirmations" into your life. These are things at your core you need to be reminded of. I'd suggest about 3-4 things. Find those core truths you need and say them to yourself daily. Or multiple times a day.

So, for example, one of mine is, "I am safe, both physically and emotionally." This is something that I regularly need to be reminded of because if I'm constantly fearful/anxious/worried that I'm not, then I inevitably lash out at those closest to me because I feel like I'm a cornered animal that must protect myself. But when I remind myself of the fact that I'm safe. Over and over and over again. Then I can ground myself in that truth and I find that it's much easier to act in that safety, rather than in the protective way that my emotions tell me I should act. So, I urge you, Fours: find those truths you desperately need to hear and put them on a sticky note, create a reminder in your phone, write them on your mirror - whatever you need to do but remind yourself of them at least daily.

In addition I'd say, add meditation into your normal routine. Meditate on those core truths for 10-15 minutes daily. This can be done in the car on the way to work, while you're getting ready in the morning, or at night before bed. There are podcasts, too, that can lead you through some meditative practices.

Now, for all you non-Fours, I'm sure you have someone who you've been thinking of - someone who maybe you're hoping to show this sermon to so that they might learn something. Someone like Pepa Madrigal. I hope you all are thinking, "okay so what's the best way to interact with or show love to someone like Pepa?" I have some tips for you.

The biggest thing that I would say is this: we all know at this point that they have a lot of feelings and some very big/deep feelings. It's okay to be honest with them about how those feelings affect you, but don't ask them to stop. As we've established, their feelings are going to feel things and they're not going to ask anyone's permission. So, being honest with them about how their feelings are affecting you can be an important and life giving reminder, which can help ground them in reality. My husband regularly tells me, "it feels like I'm getting the brunt of how upset you are about this other thing. And that's not okay." and usually it follows that I apologize and process through why I'm upset about this other thing.

The other thing I would recommend is this: Initiate a connection with them and stay connected. They may drift away on a tide of their own feelings, and it's okay to go after them in a boat, so to speak. Sometimes they need that. It's also okay to just step away, if you need that too, but

come back and reengage with them whenever you're ready. Being there for them when they get off that tide of emotions can be very important to help bring them back to reality.

As we enter into a time of communion, I want us to remember that Fours are driven by this feeling or thought that they are irredeemably deficient. This causes internalized shame, which leads to a lust after others' easy wholeness. Fours, remember that truth from Ephesians 2:10 - **“For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.”** -- Ephesians 2:10 (NLT). There is nothing missing or broken about you - You've been created by God's hands to be exactly who you are. And only reminding yourself of that over and over again will help you be a healthier version of yourself.