

September 23, 2021

Love Does Not Envy

1 Corinthians 13:4c

30 Theses On Culture Shaping

In 2020, New Saint Andrews College published a booklet entitled *30 Theses On Culture Shaping*. Just as Luther nailed his famous 95 theses to the Church door in Wittenberg challenging Rome, these 30 theses challenge the myth of cultural neutrality. Each thesis proclaims the Lordship of Christ over all of life, and in particular culture. But it was #16 that caught my eye.

Q.16 What is the great destroyer of civilizations?

Envy is the great destroyer.

“WE AFFIRM our fallen world contains many destructive sins, but few of them are as ruinous as envy is. Wrath is cruel, and anger outrageous, but who can stand before envy (Prov. 27:4)?...The hidden driver in many of the destructive ideologies of the modern world is envy. For example, envy in economics is socialism, and envy in sexual matters is feminism. Envy has devoured millions of human lives. To [disciple Christians]¹ to be shapers of culture without teaching them how to counter the the foul workings of envy is like educating doctors without teaching them anything about cancer. If we want the healing leaves of the tree of life to be applied to the nations, we must understand that the actual disease the nations will be healed from is the disease called envy.”²

¹ original—“educate students”

² *30 Theses On Culture Shaping*, New Saint Andrews College, (Moscow, ID.: Canon Press, 2020), pg. 34, 16

Envy is the great destroyer. Paul has given us two positive attributes of love thus far: 1) love is *patient* 2) love is *kind*. Now he begins the negative work.³ Love *does not envy*. Why? Because envy destroys everything it touches.

The Big Idea...

Envy *is* the great destroyer of civilization, therefore love does not envy

★ Our Doctrine

★ Our Duty

★ Our Delight

I. Our Doctrine

The anatomy of envy

The English word *envy* is found only this one time in all of first 1 Corinthians. Therefore we might conclude that Paul is *merely* giving general principles of love here, unrelated to the specific problems the Corinthians had. But that would be a mistake. Consider an analogy from the study of bones. As one author put it: “When researchers find a bone [in this case this single word *envy*], they know it implies a complete skeleton, which they are increasingly adept at reconstruction by comparative anatomy. Moreover, skeletons belong to animals who live in specific social environments, have a certain kind of locomotion, eat a particular diet, behave in predictable social ways etc. One bone invites reconstruction not only of [the] skeleton, but of [the entire] social

³ cf. Rousa John Rushdoony, *The Institutes of Biblical Law Vol. 1*, (Vallecito, CA.: Chalcedon/Ross House Books, 1973, 2020), pg. 103-108 on ‘the negativism of the law’

world.”⁴ So here we have this single bone of envy in 13:4. Can we reconstruct the whole skeleton in the life of the Corinthian Church? Yes.

The envy bone is connected to the _____ bone

Please turn to 1:10. I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree, and that there be no *divisions* among you...” Mark that. They had divisions. v.11 “For it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there is *quarreling* among you...” Mark that. They were quarreling. v.12 “What I mean is that each one of you says, “*I follow Paul,*” or “*I follow Apollos,*” or “*I follow Cephas,*” or “*I follow Christ.*” Mark that. There was competition over spiritual pedigree. Now look how Paul *summarizes* these vices in 3:2-3 “I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now you are not yet ready, ³for you are still of the flesh. For while there is *jealousy* and strife among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving only in a human way?” Jealousy is the same Greek word as *envy*—ζήλος *zēlos*. The KJV actually translates jealousy as envy. v.3 “For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you *envying*, and strife...” Paul moved from **the particular sins**: divisions, quarreling, and competition to **the root sin**: envy.⁵ In other words, the reason *why* they divided and quarreled and competed with each other is because of envy. That's *why* they took each other to court in ch.6. Envy was the root sin of their problems. So when Paul says to the Corinthians “Love does not envy...” He's connecting all their vices to this root vice. It's like the song: “The foot bone's connected to the leg bone. The leg bone's connected to the knee bone. The knee bone's connected to the thigh bone.” Only in this case, Paul is showing how the envy bone is connected to the division bone, and the quarreling bone, and the competition bone.

⁴ Source: <https://www3.nd.edu/~jneyrey1/envy.html> accessed September 25, 2021

⁵ If someone remains unconvinced of this principle, I would remind them of James 3:16 “For where jealousy [ζήλος *zēlos*] and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice.”

The sound of boiling water

So what is envy? ζήλος *zēlos* in the Greek. It can be a good word. We are commanded to be *zealous* in spirit and serve the Lord (**Romans 12:11**). But here *zēlos* is entirely negative. The word *zēlos* is an onomatopoeia. An onomatopoeia is word that sounds like what it is trying to describe. So “Common onomatopoeias include animal noises such as oink, meow, roar, and chirp.”⁶ In this case, the word *zēlos* imitates the sound of boiling water. Listen next time you boil water, and you will hear *zēlos*. Therefore if someone is envious or *zēlos* they boiling, and sizzling inside because of what they see others have that they do not have.

Defining our terms

Here’s our definition: **envy** is that spirit of discontentment that comes alive when you discover someone has a greater honor than you.⁷ One author put it succinctly: “envy consists of pain or distress caused by someone else’s success.”⁸ The envious person boils inside, sizzles inside that someone else has something more than they do. Remember the Count of Monte Cristo. The root conflict of the entire story was that Fernand was envious of Edmond. Edmond had a girl who loved him, Edmond had the glory of being made captain, and that made Fernand boil with envy. He couldn’t stand that Edmond had more happiness and honor than he, so Fernand betrayed him. C.S. Lewis puts it like this: “If I am [an envious]⁹ man, then as long as there is one man in the world more

⁶ Source: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Onomatopoeia> Accessed September 23, 2021

⁷ Webster’s 1828

- a. Verb: “To feel uneasiness...or discontent, at the sight of superior excellence, reputation or happiness enjoyed by [someone else]; to [lament] at another’s prosperity; to...grieve...at the real or supposed superiority of another, and to hate him on that account.”
- b. Noun: “Pain, uneasiness...or discontent excited by the sight of another’s superiority or success, accompanied with some degree of hatred...usually [accompanied by] a desire or... effort to depreciate the person, and with pleasure in seeing him depressed.”

⁸ Source: <https://www3.nd.edu/~jneyrey1/envy.html> accessed September 25, 2021

⁹ original—proud

powerful, or richer, or cleverer than I, he is my rival and my enemy.”¹⁰ “Honor provokes envy.”¹¹

Honor is the great commodity

You see the Corinthian Church is just like us.¹² Being honored, being made much of, is the great commodity among men. If you can just see that I am better than you, then I can rest satisfied. As John Piper says we get “...some kind of high if we can just find someone less effective than we are.”¹³ But if you possess some good that I don’t have, then my sinful proclivity is to boil and sizzle in envy.

Envy is different from...

Let’s see this through contrast. **First**, envying others is different than emulating others. We emulate others when we see some good they have but we don’t. So we seek to copy them or imitate them so we can gain that good.¹⁴ Emulation is not accompanied by hate, but envy is.

Second, envy is different than jealousy. Jealousy, properly speaking is defensive. A husband is jealous over a rival seeking to woo away his wife. That’s *why* God can be said to be a jealous God. **Exodus 20:5** “I the Lord your God am a jealous God.” He is jealous for the praise that belongs to him alone. Envy, on the other hand is offensive, it is exceedingly displeased with anyone

¹⁰ C.S. Lewis, *The Complete C.S. Lewis Signature Classics*, (New York, NY.,: Harper Collins Publishers, 2002), pg. 70

¹¹ Source: <https://www3.nd.edu/~jneyrey1/envy.html> accessed September 25, 2021

¹² "Augustine looks back on Rome and describes what seems to him the pivotal value which drove Romans in all their endeavors, the love of praise: "For the glory that the Romans burned to possess, be it noted, is the favourable judgment of men who think well of other men" (City of God 5.12)." *Ibid*

¹³ Source: <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/what-is-that-to-you-you-follow-me>, accessed March 24, 2018

¹⁴ Paul tells us to emulate him as he emulates Christ so that we can learn how to be more Christ like. **1 Corinthians 11:1** “Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.”

who has more than himself. As one author put it: “The *have nots* are envious of those who have, [while] those who *have* are jealous of what they have.”¹⁵

Third, envy is different than coveting. Coveting is sinfully desiring what someone else has. Envy goes further. The envious person wishes ill upon the person who has more. If someone else has more, then he is a rival and an enemy.

Principle: Envy is the great destroyer of civilization

And so we arrive at our main principle: *Envy is the great destroyer of civilization, therefore love does not envy.* I want to prove this with 7 propositions.

Proposition #1: Envy destroyed the harmony in Heaven

Satan was banished from Heaven because He envied the praise and power and glory of God. **Isaiah 14:12-14** “How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low! ¹³You said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high...[v.14] I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.’” Satan will make his bed in hell because of envy.

Proposition #2: Envy destroyed the innocence of humanity

How did Satan tempt Adam and Eve to eat the fruit? Through envy. **Genesis 3:5** “For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, *and you will be like God.*” The human race fell because our first parents envied God, and were told they could be just like him.

Proposition #3: Envy destroys human life

The first murder in human history took place because of envy. When Cain saw that God accepted Abel’s offering but did not accept his own, he boiled over with envy. **Genesis 4:8** “Cain spoke to Abel his brother. And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him.” That’s

¹⁵ Source: <https://www3.nd.edu/~jneyrey1/envy.html> accessed September 25, 2021

why Church Fathers Cyprian and Basil called envy the mother of homicide.¹⁶ Just as lust gives birth to adultery, so envy gives birth to murder.¹⁷ **James 4:2** “You desire and do not have, *so you murder.*”

Proposition #4: Envy is the destroyer of family relationships¹⁸

Jacob received the blessing instead of Esau and as a result **Genesis 27:41** says “Now Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father had blessed him, and Esau said to himself, “The days of mourning for my father are approaching; then I will kill my brother Jacob.”¹⁹ Envy gave birth to animosity between Rachel and Leah. **Genesis 30:1** “When Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, *she envied her sister.* She said to Jacob, “Give me children, or I shall die!” The Scriptural record shows that there was constant contention between these sisters born from the same womb. Then we have Joseph and his brothers. **Genesis 37:4** says “But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not speak peacefully to

¹⁶ Source: <https://www3.nd.edu/~jneyrey1/envy.html> accessed September 25, 2021

¹⁷ That’s why LCQ 136 calls envy a violation of the 6th commandment.

Q. 136. What are the sins forbidden in the sixth commandment?

A. The sins forbidden in the sixth commandment are, all taking away the life of ourselves, or of others, except in case of public justice, lawful war, or necessary defense; the neglecting or withdrawing the lawful and necessary means of preservation of life; sinful anger, hatred, **envy**, desire of revenge; all excessive passions, distracting cares; immoderate use of meat, drink, labor, and recreations; provoking words, oppression, quarreling, striking, wounding, and whatsoever else tends to the destruction of the life of any.” The LCQ also identifies envy as a violation of the 8th, 9th, and 10th commandments. Truly envy is a violation of all the commandments. James 2:10 “For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it.”

¹⁸ cf. <https://drawingontheword.com/bible-envy-and-comparison-killed-relationships/> Accessed September 24, 2021

¹⁹ Envy destroyed the relationship between Jacob and Laban’s household. Genesis 31:1-3 “Now Jacob heard that the sons of Laban were saying, “Jacob has taken all that was our father’s, and from what was our father’s he has gained all this wealth.” ² And Jacob saw that Laban did not regard him with favor as before. ³ Then the Lord said to Jacob, “Return to the land of your fathers and to your kindred, and I will be with you.”

him.” v.11 says “And his brothers *envied* him.”²⁰ Envy is what caused Joseph’s own brothers to sell him into slavery.²¹

Proposition #5: Envy is the destroyer of political relationships

Why did Saul have a falling out with David? **1 Samuel 18:7-9** And the women sang to one another as they celebrated, “Saul has struck down his thousands, and David his ten thousands.” ⁸And Saul was very angry, and this saying displeased him. He said, “They have ascribed to David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed thousands, and what more can he have but the kingdom?” ⁹And Saul *eyed* David from that day on.” Why did the Babylonian princes hate Daniel? **Daniel 6:3-4** “Then this Daniel became distinguished above all the other high officials and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him. And the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom. ⁴Then the high officials and the satraps sought to find a ground for complaint against Daniel...” Envy reduces empires to dirt.²²

Proposition #6: Envy is the destroyer of church relationships

Why did the Apostle John rebuke the pastor Diotrephes? Because his envy caused him to shut out any perceived threat of superiority. **3 John 1:9-10** “I have written something to the church, but Diotrephes, who likes to put himself first, does not acknowledge our authority. ¹⁰So if I come, I will bring up what he is doing, talking wicked nonsense against us. And not content with that, he refuses to welcome the brothers, and also stops those who want to and puts them out of the church.” Envy destroys the relationship between pastors and the people of God.²³

²⁰ NKJV

²¹ also cf. the older brother and the prodigal son – Luke 15:11-32

²² Also read in Esther how Haman sought to destroy Mordecai because of envy but ended up being hung on his own gallows.

²³ Why did the Jews oppose the ministry of Paul? Because they envied the crowds his teaching received. **Acts 13:45** “But when the Jews saw the multitudes, *they were filled with envy*, and contradicting and blaspheming, they opposed the things spoken by Paul.” also cf. Acts 17:5

Proposition #7: Envy is what destroyed the Son of God

Please turn with me to **Mark 15**. Jesus is on trial before Pilate. Pilate is amazed that Jesus doesn't answer any of the charges against him. So Pilate decides as it was by custom to release one of the prisoners to the Jews. Picking up in v.7 "And among the rebels in prison, who had committed murder in the insurrection, there was a man called Barabbas. ⁸ And the crowd came up and began to ask Pilate to do as he usually did for them. ⁹ And he answered them, saying, "Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?" ¹⁰ For *he perceived that it was out of envy* that the chief priests had delivered him up."²⁴ Wow. The wicked pagan Pontius Pilate had an incredible insight. *The motive* behind the crucifixion of the Son of God was *envy*. A cursory read of Mark's gospel shows us why the chief priest were so envious of Jesus.

Mark 1:28 "...his fame spread everywhere throughout all the surrounding region of Galilee.

Mark 1:45 the "...people were coming to him from every quarter."

Mark 5:20 "...everyone marveled."

Mark 6:14 "King Herod heard of it, *for Jesus' name had become known.*"

The chief priests saw that the whole world had gone after Jesus and they boiled with envy. And they couldn't bear it. So they had him crucified.

The agent of death

Dear congregation, do you see how envy is the greater destroyer of civilization? Envy cast Satan down from Heaven. Envy caused the fall of man. Envy is the mother of first and all subsequent murders. It is the destroyer of

²⁴ cf. Matthew 27:18 (John 12:19)

family, political and church relationships. And envy is the reason Christ was crucified. That's our **first point**: Envy *is* the great destroyer of civilization, therefore love does not envy.

II. Our Duty

1. Experimental Use

So the first duty is to *examine* ourselves. Dear loved ones, are you an envious person? Do you find yourself boiling and sizzling in your heart when others have more success or more honor or more understanding or more wealth than you? Do you find yourself dissatisfied when you compare yourselves to others? Do you find yourself rejoicing when one of your 'rivals' stumbles in some way, so that now you feel to be above them again? Let me answer for you: *Yes*. You and I are an envious people. We are just like the disciples who were always arguing over who is the greatest among them. As one poet put it:

All human virtue, to its latest breath,
Finds *envy* never conquered, but by death.²⁵

Beloved this is why there are constant commands in Scripture forbidding us from envy, because it is our natural state. Yes the Christian still is envious. Here's the difference between the Christian and the non-Christian: the Christian hates and loathes his envious spirit because he knows envy does not belong to love. The Christian can say with the Apostle Paul "For I do not do the good I want, but the evil [then envying] I do not want is what I keep on doing...O Wretched [envier] that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?"²⁶ The Christian when he catches himself envying, he knows its evil, and he hates that about himself. The non-christian only hates his envy when his reputation

²⁵ Source: <http://webstersdictionary1828.com/Dictionary/envy> Accessed September 25, 2021

²⁶ Romans 7:19, 24

suffers because of it. He doesn't hate his envy because Christ forbids. He doesn't hate his envy because it makes his neighbor his enemy.²⁷ Dear congregation, test yourself: do you hate the envy that you see in your heart? Do you hate it when you blood boils when another is seen to be wiser, more powerful, more loved and admired, and has greater gifting than you? Love does not envy.

2. Admonitory Use

Our second duty is to *rebuke* ourselves. **First** I want to address *truly* born again Christians. Loved ones, have you stopped hating your envious spirit? Has your heart become hardened? Are you grieving the Spirit by walking in envy? Are you holding a grudge against others because they have it better than you? Are you secretly hoping that so and so will be brought down, knowing that you would take joy in their loss? You are not walking in love. Consider what Scripture says against you.

Proverbs 14:30 "A tranquil heart gives life to the flesh, but envy makes the bones rot." To continue in envy is to invite rottenness into your most inward self. Would anyone inject themselves with cancer or drink poison? But by continuing in envy, that's what you are doing. You are hurting yourself.

Proverbs 23:17 "Let not your heart envy sinners, *but* continue in the fear of the Lord all the day." In other words, when your life is marked by envy, you are not walking in the fear of the Lord. You are not fearing the Lord when you secretly hope and desire such evil things. You are acting as if the Lord of Heaven and Earth cannot see your heart. Will not the Father discipline you for such things? Do not deceive yourself, He will not let you continue in that state.

²⁷ Envy is the unbeliever's motive for labor - Ecclesiastes 4:4 "Then I saw that all toil and all skill in work come from a man's envy of his neighbor. This also is vanity and a striving after wind."

To those outside of Christ

Secondly, this passage rebukes those who are still outside of Christ. Why? Because if Jesus Christ has not redeemed you, then you are a slave to envy.²⁸ And God threatens terrible things against you. **Galatians 5:19-21** “Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality,²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions,²¹ envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.” Two things to take away from that. **1)** Envy is placed right next to the worst of sins. you may think you are a moral person because you pay your taxes, or you haven’t murdered others, or haven’t stolen, that you are basically a decent human being. Wrong. God sees your envy, and it is rotten to the core. It’s on the same level as idolatry and sorcery. **2)** This Scripture says those who do such things — *those who envy* — will not inherit the kingdom of God. Those are not empty words. God has judged the envy in the past in such a way that we could never forget. When the Israelites were traveling from Egypt to the promised land, there was some wicked men named Dathan and Abiram who were exceedingly envious of Moses. They sneered at him and accused him of exalting himself above the rest of the people, even though it was God himself who exalted Moses.²⁹ Do you know how God punished them? **Psalms 106:16-17** “When they became *envious* of Moses in the camp, And of Aaron, the holy one of the Lord, The earth opened and swallowed up Dathan, And engulfed the company of Abiram.”³⁰ Dear friend, that judgment is a foretaste of what is to come for you. You will not be able to escape. Where will you flee

²⁸ Paul says in **Titus 3:3** “For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, *slaves* to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and *envy*...” Envy is a mark of Pharisee-ism (Mark 15:10); it’s a mark of the reprobate mind (Romans 1:29); and it’s a mark of being controlled by demonic forces (James 3:14-16). Envy is a work of darkness (Romans 13:12-13).

²⁹ cf. Numbers 16:1-5

³⁰ Also consider how God struck Miriam with leprosy over her envy of Moses - Numbers 12:1-10

when God requires your soul? Where could you hide? Your only hope is to turn to the Savior.

This is the gospel message: the Jesus Christ was punished for sinners, and was buried for sinners, and was resurrected from the dead for sinners.

You are a sinner.

He offers Himself freely to you, to be your Lord and Master, to be your Savior and Sanctifier and if you receive Him by faith *alone*, apart from any good works. **John 5:24** “Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.” There is no greater change that could happen to you. Conversion to Jesus Christ is the greatest change any man can experience. Then you will start to hate your envy, *because* it hurts your neighbor and *because* it offends God.

3. Hortatory Use

The third duty is *exhortation*. Dear congregation, since love does not envy, certainly Paul is *urging* us: mortify envy, to kill it to put it to death. In order to kill envy consider these three things.

3.1 Envy grows in the soil of wrong doctrine

First in **1 Timothy 6:3-4** Paul says that envy is produced by *wrong doctrine*. When you believe wrong things about God, how He ought to act towards you, then you are fertilizing envy in the soil of your heart. If you believe that God owes you an easy life, a life without trials, a life where you are honored by all, a life of success and blessing, then you *just are* nurturing envy. Beloved God doesn't owe you the life you think you deserve. Think soberly about yourself. Inequality is part of God's design. Go read the parable of the talents. The Lord distributes things unequally, on purpose. Don't you understand that God has

perfectly ordained all things in your life not chiefly for your comfort or for your honor, but rather so that you would be conformed to the image of His Son. That's His *main* concern. That's why we can sing:

Whate'er my God ordains is right, His holy will abideth;
 I will be still whate'er He does, and follow where He guideth.
 He is my God, though dark my road; He holds me that I shall not fall;
 And so to Him I leave it all, and so to Him I leave it all.
 [...]
 Whate'er my God ordains is right, Here shall my stand be taken;
 Though sorrow, need, or death be mine, Yet I am not forsaken.
 My Father's care is round me there; He holds me that I shall not fall;
 And so to Him I leave it all, And so to Him I leave it all.³¹

I urge you loved ones, kill your envy by trusting that God has apportioned for you exactly need. Contentment kills envy. Trust that the Father has provided everything you need to conform to His blessed Son.³²

3.2 Envy grows in the soil of wrong practice

Second, in **Romans 13:13** Paul says that envy is produced by *wrong practice*. Living a fleshly life, produces envy. How could it not? Whatever you feed gets stronger. If you feed the spirit, the spirit grows strong. If you feed the flesh, the flesh grows stronger. Envy is a work of the flesh. If you walking according to the flesh you are feeding envy. Here's the remedy: "Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires" (**Romans 13:14**). How do you put on the Lord Jesus Christ? It's a word picture. Just as you put on your clothes, put on Him. You see if you are walking in the flesh then you have forgotten that He is your Lord. He is your

³¹ © 2018 Getty Music Publishing (Admin. by Music Services, Inc.) and Matthew Merker Music (Admin. by Music Services, Inc.)

³² Psalm 37:1 Fret not yourself because of evildoers; be not envious of wrongdoers! [v.7] Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him..."

Master. Fight the flesh by telling yourself the truth: “I with body and soul, both in life and death, am not my own, but belong to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ.”³³ I have been bought with a price, and that price is the blood of the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me.³⁴ That’s how you kill the flesh. That’s how you kill envy. You don’t have the right to think evil thoughts of others. You are the slave of Christ.

3.3 Envy is mortified by praise

Third, kill envy by rejoicing at the honor of others. Paul already told us in **1 Corinthians 12:26** that “...if one member is honored, *all rejoice together.*”³⁵ Loved ones, when another Christian is honored, don’t you know that you belong to the same body as them? Ought your lungs be envious of your arms and legs? That’s foolishness. The honor of another Christians should be your great joy! Trace that honor back to it’s source. Where did it come from? From God! When another Christians receives some good thing that you don’t have, that’s God’s grace on display. How could you withhold your praise? How could you prevent your heart from rejoicing in God’s grace being given to sinners! You will slay envy, if you praise God for the good that He gives others.

Objection: “But I’m envying the wicked.”

Someone may object: ‘But it’s not the saints I’m envying, I’m envying the wicked. They don’t follow after God and nothing bad is happening to them. It seems that this life of seeking God is all in vain.’ Go read Psalm 73. This is precisely the objection of the Psalmist. 6 days a week he sees the wicked flourishing, and happy, and proud. He begins to envy them for the carefree life they have. But then he comes to his senses when he comes into the sanctuary of God and he remembers the end that will meet them. **v.18** “Truly you set them in

³³ Heidelberg Catechism Q.1

³⁴ D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Romans: An Exposition of Chapter 13, Life in Two Kingdoms*, (Carlisle, PA.: The Banner of Truth Trust, Reprint 2015), pg. 318

³⁵ This is also a command. Romans 12:15 says to “...rejoice with those who rejoice.”

slippery places; you make them fall to ruin. ¹⁹ How they are destroyed in a moment, swept away utterly by terrors!” And then he remembers his true prize. His true prize is not a care-free life. His true prize is gaining God. **v.25-26** “Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you. ²⁶ My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.”

Summary

That’s our duty. **First** we examined ourselves and found that we all envy. But the difference between the Christian and the non-Christian is that the Christian hates his envy because it offends God and hurts his neighbor. **Second**, we rebuked those who have stopped hating their envy, because to do so is to fail to walk in the fear of the Lord and it’s inviting rottenness in your bones. **Third**, we saw how to kill envy, namely, *by* believing right things about God, *by* putting on the Lord Jesus Christ, and *by* praising God for the honor you see in others.

III. Our Delight

Two reasons *why* the Christian doesn’t have to be a slave to envy.

1. You don’t have to be a slave to envy *because* God has given you everything.

The heart that envies essentially accuses God of withholding his blessings. But the Christian can never say this. Beloved if we just restrict to ourselves to the book of Corinthians, we can see that God has never back from blessing us for one moment.

1:4-5 “I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that was given you in Christ Jesus, ⁵ *that in every way you were enriched in him...*”

It is this God who v.8 says "...who will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ." Beloved God is promising you that He will be with you to the end of the line, that He will sustain you, and that when you stand before the great judgment, he will hold you guiltless.

Why? v.30 Because "...you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption." Everything you need is found in Jesus. Do you need righteousness? Jesus is your righteousness. "...being found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith" (Phil. 3:9) Do you need sanctification? Jesus provides that. He "...works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure" (Phil. 2:13). Do you need final redemption? Jesus provides that too. "I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also" (John 14:3).

Don't you see? God has never begrudged you one blessing. And this is only the beginning. Paul says in 2:9 that "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."³⁶ Therefore if God has not held anything back from you then you are free to love others. You have nothing to envy, "For all things are yours, ²²whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all are yours, ²³and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's" (3:21-24)

2. You don't have to be a slave to envy because even if you lose everything, Jesus will be enough.

The heart that envies essential says that Jesus is not enough. But the Christian know better. Jesus has told us "I am the bread of life; whoever comes

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to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.”³⁷ Our persecuted brothers and sisters may be being starved in prison right now, but their spirits are fat, and the bellies are full of living water because they have tasted the true bread from Heaven and they have drank from His rivers of delight. They have lost everything, but Jesus is enough. Jesus is enough for you beloved.

Jesus has told us “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, ²⁶ and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die”³⁸ Beloved you are never going to die. You are never going to perish. Your happiness will never end. You will be resurrected on the last day, and you will live for everlasting ages with the Son of God who loved you and gave Himself for you! Jesus is enough. He’s enough. Therefore you are no longer a slave to envy. You are free to love others. No one is your rival. You have Jesus, there is nothing more you could possibly want.

³⁷ John 6:35

³⁸ John 11:25-26