



On The Path Of Jealousy

By

Mark McGee

Teaching Notes are Bible studies we taught before GraceLife Ministries began publishing articles online in 1995. Some were presented as sermons, others as group studies.

Our hope is that these older studies will be a blessing to you in your life and ministry. Please use them in any way God leads you.

These teaching notes are from a series of 1970's radio broadcasts about dealing with jealousy in your life.

[These notes are from more than 45 years ago.]

Recently in a counseling situation the question was asked, “How can I get rid of my jealousy and rebellion?” It was interesting that this person identified having both of these problems because they do go together. If you have a piece of paper, let me draw you a chart that I call “The Path of Jealousy.”

Jealousy begins when we get discontented about our lifestyle, job, salary, talents, intellect, etc. When we get *discontented* we begin looking at others from this new vantage point that becomes *jealousy*. We’re jealous of the other person or persons and wish that we had what they had. This is *covetousness*. Our covetousness becomes *envy*, which grows into *resentment* of the person who has what we want. If this resentment is not cured through forgiveness and confession, it will fester into *bitterness* which eventually shows itself outwardly as *rebellion*.

If we were going to chart this path of jealousy, we would do it like this:

Discontent > Jealousy > Covetousness > Envy >
Resentment > Bitterness > Rebellion

The outsider probably wouldn't notice that anything was wrong until the *rebellion* stage or possibly the *resentment* stage, but all the while it had been festering deep inside of the person who let *discontentment* become *jealousy*.

Practical Steps

I want us to look at two things on today's broadcast:

1. Practical steps for solving this problem
2. How not to get into this condition again

Step #1 – Jealousy (envy) is sin and must be confessed as sin. Don't try to butter up God with a different name or rationalization. Just call it what God calls it. If you are rebellious, the Scripture says that "rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft" (1 Samuel 15:23). God is telling us that rebellion is just like worshipping Satan. That's pretty strong language and we had better take some strong steps to see that this Satanic sin is wiped from our lives. Confess your jealousy and envy as a wicked sin that nailed Jesus to the Cross and be done with it! Forsake it forever.

Step #2 – Pray for the welfare of others. Philippians 2:3-4 reads, “Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.” If you’ve had a problem with jealousy and envy, which is really saying that you have a covetous heart, you need to begin getting your eyes off of yourself and onto the needs of others. It’s an interesting thing that when we take our revival team to a crusade we so often find bitterness, rebellion, and strife among Christians who attend the meetings. They tend to be very critical about what others are doing and they try to make you believe they are more spiritual and in a more right relationship with God. After the conviction of God’s Spirit in a revival crusade, these same people often confess their sin of jealousy and envy that led to their critical spirit and self-righteous attitudes.

The signs of jealousy and envy that lead to rebellion and a critical attitude are many and varied. Let me list several for you.

- They will oft-times be angry without a cause
- They shift blame to others
- They will feel a constant twinge of guilt about what they are doing
- They will wallow in self-pity
- They will have problems with muscular tension and headaches
- They will be very sensitive, touchy, and irritable
- They will often become verbally or physically violent to the amazement of family and friends
- They will have either an increased appetite to the point of excessive eating or they will have a great loss of appetite
- They will have trouble with people

- There will be constant communication breakdowns between themselves and others
- They can suffer physical ailments. Even colitis can be caused by this chain of jealousy and envy. It can built to the point that the jealous person actually becomes physically ill about the entire matter.

This entire process can be overturned and turned around when Christians obey the Scriptural principle of Philippians 2:3-4. How can you possibly be jealous of someone when you're been praying that God would pour out His richest blessings on their lives? The best thing to do in that case is to ask God to specifically bless them in the exact area that you are having problems with jealousy and envy. Then when the person is blessed in that area, instead of being jealous you will be happy because God answered your prayer.

Step #3 – Share your happiness with them about their success! Tell them how pleased you are that God blessed them and gave them such success in a particular area (e.g. spiritual blessings, personal or business finances, material things, job, salary, talent, position, etc). This is excellent therapy. The Scriptures teach that a thief was to make things and give them to others (e.g. Ephesians 4:28). This was therapy for his particular problem. Therapy for the problem of jealousy and envy is to praise the person and share your pleasure at their success.

How To Avoid The Problem

The next thing we want to look at is how not to get into this same condition of jealousy again. The answer is “love.” That’s right. Really loving our neighbor, just like Jesus commanded. If you have had problems with this before or are having a problem with it now, it is because you have not obeyed the Word of God that teaches love to the first and greatest commandment. In fact, God says that the Law and Prophets are fulfilled in that brief word – love.

The end of the commandment is love. All of the laws briefly comprehended is love. Love is the key. Look with me to 1 Corinthians 13:4 and see if you are really loving your neighbors, friends, and brothers and sisters in the family of God the way you ought. “Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up.” Love (charity) suffers long and is kind. It doesn’t envy. Do you suffer with people? Are you really and truly kind? Are you envious of another person? If you are, you have just proven

that you are not obedient to God's Word. The problem is not with the other person; it's with you.

Love doesn't "vaunt" itself; it's not "puffed up." Are you critical of other people? Do you think that you're better than they? If so, do you think you're following Christ's example?

Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth. 1 Corinthians 13:5-6

I'll tell you something. If my heart isn't right with God, those three verses can literally tear me up. God told us to love our brethren and if we didn't really love them, He said, "He that loveth not his brother abideth in death" (1 John 3:14). That's strong language, so we need to pay attention.

Romans 15:2-3 says, “Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.”

You say, “Okay. I believe all that, but how do I apply that to my everyday life?”

Project One

I’m glad you asked! Let me give you two projects to do every day that will help in this area of jealousy and envy. Take a piece of paper and write the names of all the people you see on a regular basis. Include family members, neighbors, friends at school and work, people at your church, etc. Each day take two names from the list and plan a project of love and concern. Begin by praying for them in their various areas of life. Talk to them or write them and share your love for them, and your happiness about their success in some area of work, life, or ministry. Ask them for some specific prayer requests that you could share with them. When God gives the answer to those prayers be the first to contact them about

your pleasure in hearing their good news. In other words, you should be praying for then talking to or writing two people a day and sharing your love for them.

Let me suggest that you put the hardest people to like at the top of the list and share with them first. Jesus said, “For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.” Matthew 5:46-48

Jesus was presenting the principle of loving your neighbors **and** your enemies.

Project Two

The second project that I would suggest would be on becoming *content* with what you have. The Apostle Paul wrote, "I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content .. but godliness with contentment is great gain. And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content .. be content with such things as ye have." (Philippians 4:11; 1 Timothy 6:6-8; Hebrews 13:5)

Take another piece of paper and write at the top the word **Contentment**. Draw a line down the middle of the page and on one side write the word "Needs," and on the other side of the page write the word "Wants." List under "Needs" everything that you absolutely have to have to live and exist. Be very careful and weigh each choice and make sure it's something that God would call a *need* in your life. After you've listed every need, move to the other column and list everything that you want in your life. These would be what is left over from the Needs column. When you're finished with the entire listing, ask yourself this question: "Has God met my every need? Do I have everything that I absolutely need?" If

the answer is “no,” I would suggest that you go over your list again because God promised to meet every physical need. Remember that Paul said, “And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content.” If the answer is “yes,” then rejoice that God has met His promises and has indeed met every need of your life. Then settle back and learn to be content with what God has provided for you. Every time you notice a twinge of jealousy or envy in your heart, pull the sheet out and be reminded that God has met all. your needs and “therewith be content.”

[Thank you for reading these teaching notes from more than 45 years ago. My prayer is they will be a blessing to you and your life and ministry.]

GraceLife