

Love Is Content Which Enables Us To Be Givers, Not Takers

When Love Breaks Through, Part 4

1 Corinthians 13:4c-5a

I. Sacrificial Love Demonstrates Contentment, Not Envy

A. The Foundations For Envy

- Envy – a burning desire to have something that someone else has (Prov 14:30, 23:17)
- Jealousy – a burning desire to keep what you have from someone else (Prov 6:34; 27:4; SS 8:6)

B. The Focus Of Envy

1. Envy Focuses On Another's _____ (Num 16:3; Ps 106:16)
2. Envy Focuses On Another's _____ (Gen 26:12-14)
3. Envy Focuses On Another's _____ (1 Sam 18:7-9)
4. Envy Focuses On Another's _____ (Acts 4:14-17)
5. Envy Focuses On Another's _____ (Phil 1:15-16)
6. Envy Focuses On Another's _____ (Lk 15:25-30; Gen 37:3-4,11)
7. Envy Focuses On Another's _____ (Gen 4:4-5; Esth 5:12-13)

C. The Fall Out From Envy

1. Envy Brings Destruction (Prov 14:30; Gen 4:8; Job 5:2)
2. Envy Brings Division (1 Cor 3:3-4)
3. Envy Brings Depravity (James 3:16)
4. Envy Brings Denunciation (Gal 5:19-21)

D. The Feat Over Envy

1. Choice: Take Responsibility For Your Choice To Envy (Prov 3:31; 1 Pet 2:1)
2. Comparison: Toss Away Your Tendency To Compare Yourself With Others (Gal 5:26)
3. Carnality: Type Your Envy As A Sinful Work Of The Flesh (1 Cor 3:3-4)
4. Charge: Target Your Zeal Towards The Lord (Prov 23:17)
5. Charity: Transform Your Heart With Love Towards Others (1 Cor 13:4)
6. Contentment: Thank God For The Privileges And Opportunities You Do Have (Lk 15:31-32; Phil 1:15-18)
7. Completeness: Find Your Completeness In Christ (Phil 4:12-13)

II. Sacrificial Love Boasts Of Christ, Not Self

III. Sacrificial Love Demonstrates Humility, Not Pride

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1. Envy Focuses On Another's Power (Num 16:3; Ps 106:16)
2. Envy Focuses On Another's Possession (Gen 26:12-14)
3. Envy Focuses On Another's Popularity (1 Sam 18:7-9)
4. Envy Focuses On Another's Performance (Acts 4:14-17)
5. Envy Focuses On Another's Profession (Phil 1:15-16)
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1 Corinthians 13:4 Love is patient and kind; **love does not envy** or boast; it is not arrogant

I. Sacrificial Love Demonstrates Contentment, Not Envy

- In the Greek text, "love" does not appear before "envy" or the other 8 negative depictions of love
- Erotic love (*eros*) deeply desires to have our needs met (ego driven, sexual, expectations)
 - "Lovers are jealous because erotic love is born of need." (Lewis Smedes, *Love Within Limits*, p. 20)
 - Smedes: "Erotic love demands total possession, exclusive rights to another person ... to want always to be included in the other person's agenda." (pp. 20-21)
 - The wife can't share in a husband's work success.
 - The husband can't participate in the joy of parenthood on the same level as the wife.
 - Smedes: "But erotic love wants all, and to miss one dimension of a loved one's life is to sense a threat to the rest. So jealousy easily turns to resentment, anger, even hatred." (p. 22)
- Agape love is giving – thus does not envy, but is patient and kind.
 - Agape love wants success and blessing for a spouse, church member, sibling, friend and enemy.
 - Knowing God loves us with His agape love fills us to be able to love others
 - We are not desperate, thus not jealous
 - Smedes: "To be loved with this love and to share its power it to overcome fear – even the fear of loss, even the fear of being left out. In other words, this love enables us to transcend jealousy. It overcomes fear as it overcomes self-pity and the insecurity and suspicion of erotic love. So, this love is the power of sharing without being threatened." (p. 25)

Ie/ Kermit the Frog made famous the song "It's Not Easy Being Green". Though he sang about frogdom, we can easily apply it to our struggle with envy.

- We are green with envy
- Shakespeare called jealousy the "green sickness"
- John Locke: "Envy is uneasiness of the mind, caused by the consideration of a good we desire, obtained by one we think should not have it before us."
- We think the grass is always greener on the other side of the fence
- Cyprian of Carthage: "To be jealous of what you see to be good and to be envious of those who are better than yourself seems in the eyes of some people only a slight, petty wrong. Being thought a trifle of small account, this sin isn't feared. Not being feared, it's not taken seriously. And not taken seriously, it's not readily shunned. In this way it becomes a dark and

hidden mischief. Since the prudent don't see it as something to guard against, it can secretly trouble the minds of those who don't take sufficient precautions against it. So let's consider where, when, and how jealousy begins. We'll more easily shun this mischievous evil if we recognize both its source and its magnitude." ("Beware Of Jealousy And Envy," <http://www.navpress.com/magazines/archives/article.aspx?id=11055>)

- **Envy – a burning desire to have something that someone else has**

Proverbs 14:30 "A sound heart is life to the body, But **envy** is rottenness to the bones"

Proverbs 23:17 "Do not let your heart **envy** sinners, But be zealous for the fear of the LORD all the day"

- "Envy is an expression of anger, frustration and resentment from being personally discontent in light of someone else's successes, opportunities or advantages."
- Jerry Bridges: "**Envy** is the painful and oftentimes resentful awareness of an advantage enjoyed by someone else. Sometimes we want that same advantage, leading to the further sin of covetousness." And sometimes we just resent the other person having something we don't have." (*Respectable Sins*, p. 149)

- **Jealousy – a burning desire to keep what you have from someone else**

Proverbs 6:34 "For **jealousy** is a husband's fury; Therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance."

Proverbs 27:4 "Wrath is cruel and anger a torrent, But who is able to stand before **jealousy**?"

Song of Solomon 8:6 "**Jealousy** as cruel as the grave; Its flames are flames of fire, A most vehement flame.

- Shakespeare: "It is the green-eyed monster" (*Othello*)
- Lehman Strauss: "There is a difference between jealousy and envy in Scripture. They are two entirely different words in the Greek New Testament. Jealousy involves the desire to have what somebody else has. That may be wholesome, particularly when we desire to develop in our own lives the positive spiritual qualities we see in others, or when we seek to enjoy the spiritual riches which are ours in Christ just as we see others enjoying them. In like manner, God wants what is His: the exclusive devotion of His people. It is only right and good that He should. But for us, jealousy may degenerate into something bad, as when we feel frustrated and bitter because we cannot obtain what we want, or when we find fault with those who have what we want or who keep us from getting it. God is not capable of experiencing that sinful jealousy. The point is, jealousy can be either good or bad.

"On the other hand, envy is nearly always bad. It is a feeling of displeasure over the blessings others are enjoying and it makes us want to deprive them of that enjoyment. Jealousy wants what others have, while envy wants to keep them from having it. It is a

vicious and malicious trait which Solomon calls "rotteness to the bones" (Proverbs 14:30 KJV)." ("A Jealous God")

Types Of Jealousy

(by Alia Hoyt, "How Jealousy Works," <http://www.howstuffworks.com/human-nature/emotions/other/jealousy.htm>)

- **Romantic jealousy:** Dr. Hupka and many others believe that romantic jealousy is probably the most frequently experienced type of normal jealousy. In fact, according to PBS Nightly Business Reporter, the first fight romantic couples have usually involves jealousy, although couples usually move onto fighting about financial issues later on. Interestingly, a 2004 study published in *Evolutionary Psychology* found that, when asked about sexual versus emotional infidelity, respondents of both sexes reported more jealousy about their partner's emotional infidelity.
- **Work or Power jealousy:** Simply enough, this form strikes people who are jealous about a "missed" promotion, salary level or other work-related issue.
- **Friend jealousy:** As mentioned in the section about adolescent jealousy, people are often fearful of "losing" a friend to an interloper.
- **Family jealousy:** Sibling rivalry is one trademark characteristic of this type of jealousy.
- **Abnormal jealousy:** Abnormal jealousy is often described by any one of a number of adjectives, including morbid, psychotic, pathological, delusional or anxious jealousy. According to Dr. Hupka, abnormal jealousy can be attributed to common issues including extreme insecurity, immaturity and being a "control freak." In some cases, however, it is due to a mental illness, such as paranoia or schizophrenia, or a chemical imbalance in the brain.
- **Traits Of Envious People:** (Les Carter, *Mind Over Emotions*, p. 52)
 - Work extremely hard to present themselves right and good
 - Find it easy to examine others with a critical eye
 - Have hidden feelings of inferiority
 - Readily complain about not getting fair treatment or good breaks
 - Have an insatiable desire for success
 - Need much overt recognition of their achievements
 - Enjoy the feeling of being in control
 - Tend to be status-conscious
 - Are impressed by titles
 - Cringe at the idea of examining their own weaknesses
 - Find it hard to pay compliments
 - Have difficulty giving generously
 - Tend to hold grudges
 - Keep score of their own good deeds and of the good deeds of others
 - Prefer to avoid successful people
 - Are willing to pass along negative rumors about a successful person
 - Often put on a false front in order to appear impressive
 - Have frequent fantasies of what it would be like at the top
 - Prone to hold "pet peeves"
- **Envy/Jealousy in the Church**

- Alexander Strauch: "Jealousy divided the church at Corinth, and it belied the Corinthian's empty boast of being spiritual people." (*Leading With Love*, p. 52)

1 Corinthians 3:3 for 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?

- Paul was chiding Corinth's jealousy as a carnal, fleshly behavior
- Galatians 5:20 calls jealousy a work of the flesh

James 3:14-16 14 But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. 15 This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. 16 For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice.

- Jealousy is not wise or godly
- It is earthly, unspiritual and demonic
- The devil will inspire your jealousy to destroy you
- Sometimes pastors are threatened by others in the church who are working dynamically through their spiritual gifts.
- Churches envy other churches – college group, children's program, having a pastor who's published and blogged
- Missionaries envy those who get supported faster
- Worship team members can envy other people's ability
- elders can envy elders, deacons can envy deacons, sponsors can envy sponsors,

A. The Foundations For Envy

- "**Envy** is an expression of anger, frustration and resentment from being personally discontent in light of someone else's successes, opportunities or advantages.
- **Zelos** – to burn zealously
 - used 34x in NT
 - root: "to seethe," "to boil"
 - our English word "zealous" is derived from this Greek word
- **Positive Usage:** Enthusiastic, competitive. Eying and emulating someone else's advantage as a motivation to improve one's self. To possess a zeal spurred on by competition. (John 2:17 ; Rom 10:2 ; II Cor 7:7,11, 9:2, 11:2; Phil 3:6 ; Col 4:13 ; Heb 10:27)

2 Corinthians 7:7 When he told us of your earnest desire, your mourning, your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced even more

2 Corinthians 11:2 For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present *you as* a chaste virgin to Christ.

- **Negative Usage:** Jealousy, resentment, disdain, bitterness. Eying someone else's advantage with disdain. To arouse a zeal that motivates one to sin by attacking or

humiliating the one he/she is jealous of. (Acts 5:17, 13:45; Rom 13:13; I Cor 3:3, 12:20; Gal 5:20; Jas 3:14,16)

- “*Zelos* (Ζηλος) in its evil sense refers to envy, the desire to make war upon the good which it beholds in another, and thus to trouble that good and make it less; or, where there is not vigor and energy enough to attempt the *making* of it less, there may be at least the *wishing* of it less; with such petty carping and fault-finding as it may dare to indulge. (Kenneth Wuest, *Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament*)

Acts 5:17-18 ¹⁷ Then the high priest rose up, and all those who were with him (which is the sect of the Sadducees), and they were filled with **indignation**, ¹⁸ and laid their hands on the apostles and put them in the common prison.

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.

Romans 13:13 Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and **envy**.

James 3:14,16 ¹⁴ But if you have bitter **envy** and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth.... ¹⁶ For where **envy** and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there.

- **Phthonos**

- *Phthonos* (Φθονος) is the meaner sin,... being merely displeasure at another's good." (Kenneth Wuest, *Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament*)
- Mt. 27:18; Mk 15:10; Rom 1:29; Gal 5:21; Phil 1:15; I Tim 6:4; Tit. 3:3; Jas 4:5 ; I Pet 2:1

Matthew 27:18 For he knew that they had handed Him over because of envy.

Romans 1:29 ...full of envy...

B. The Focus Of Envy

1. Envy Focuses On Another's Power

Numbers 16:3 They gathered together against Moses and Aaron, and said to them, "You take too much upon yourselves, for all the congregation is holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them. Why then do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the LORD?"

Psalms 106:16 When they envied Moses in the camp, and Aaron the saint of the LORD

- Alexander Strauch: "Envy makes one resentful of others' good fortune. It covets others' gifts, possessions, or positions of influence. It is suspicious and critical of another's popularity.

Ie/ Every Democrat will be envious of the power of the Republican party when the Republicans are in the White House and control congress. The Republicans also are envious when the Democrats control the government.

Ie/ Who would be "The Man" of the Laker's team: Shaq or Kobe?

- Who's got the power at the church?
- Elders, deacons, congregation?
- Which pastor has the most influence?
- At some church's there are power people who recycle pastors every few years (sometimes months) so the pastor doesn't become more powerful than them
- How about at home? Is there a powerplay?
- Kids feeling they want the freedom their parents have.
- Spouses arguing who has the most control over the checkbook.
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2. Envy Focuses On Another's Possession

Genesis 26:12-14 ¹² Then Isaac sowed in that land, and reaped in the same year a hundredfold; and the LORD blessed him. ¹³ The man began to prosper, and continued prospering until he became very prosperous; ¹⁴ for he had possessions of flocks and possessions of herds and a great number of servants. So the Philistines **envied** him.

Ie/ The walk into the church's parking lot will make one envy – see the new car, the new clothes and the new hairstyle

3. Envy Focuses On Another's Popularity

1 Samuel 18:7-9 ⁷ So the women sang as they danced, and said: "Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands." ⁸ Then Saul was very angry, and the saying displeased him; and he said, "They have ascribed to David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed only thousands. Now what more can he have but the kingdom?" ⁹ So Saul eyed David from that day forward.

Ie/ Winter Olympics reviewed the drama when Tanya Harding's camp was tied to injuring the knee of competitor Nancy Kerrigan. Why? Envy.

- We hate that Queen Bee at school, but also admire her.
- The person at work who takes more credit than you get when you did more work.
- The person at church who gets to serve where you want to serve before you do

4. Envy Focuses On Another's Performance

Acts 4:14-17 ¹⁴ And seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it. ¹⁵ But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves, ¹⁶ saying, "What shall we do to these men? For, indeed, that a notable miracle has been done through them is evident to all who dwell in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it. ¹⁷ But so that it spreads no further among the people, let us severely threaten them, that from now on they speak to no man in this name."

- The Sanhedrin, the religious rulers of the Jews, became envious of the miraculous performances of Peter & John.

Ie/ You envy the advancement of the new employee over you

Ie/ You share your SAT score with someone hoping their score is lower than yours

Ie/ You envy the person that beat you out for the sports team, student body officer or scholarship

Ie/ Pastors share about the size of their church attendance, budget and property

5. Envy Focuses On Another's Profession

Philippians 1:15-16 ¹⁵ Some indeed preach Christ even from envy and strife, and some also from goodwill: ¹⁶ The former preach Christ from selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my chains

6. Envy Focuses On Another's Privilege

Luke 15:25-30 ²⁵ "Now his older son was in the field. And as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶ So he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. ²⁷ And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and because he has received him safe and sound, your father has killed the fatted calf.' ²⁸ "But he was angry and would not go in. Therefore his father came out and pleaded with him. ²⁹ So he answered and said to his father, 'Lo, these many years I have been serving you; I never transgressed your commandment at any time; and yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might make merry with my friends. ³⁰ But as soon as this son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood with harlots, you killed the fatted calf for him.'

Genesis 37:3-4,11 ³ Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age. Also he made him a tunic of many colors. ⁴ But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not speak peaceably to him...¹¹ And his brothers envied him.

- Do you struggle with envy over a more favored sibling?
- How are you going to handle that?
- Joseph's brothers put him in a pit, sold him to slave traders and reported him dead to their father

- How do you want to take out your sibling?
- What's the technicolor dream coat to you?
- Inheritance?
- Attention?
- Having a greater voice among the other siblings?
- Better looking?

7. **Envy Focuses On Another's Praise**

Genesis 4:4-5 ⁴ Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the LORD respected Abel and his offering, ⁵ but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.

Esther 5:12-13 ¹² Moreover Haman said, "Besides, Queen Esther invited no one but me to come in with the king to the banquet that she prepared; and tomorrow I am again invited by her, along with the king. ¹³ Yet all this avails me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate

The Folly Of Discontent - by Jeremy Burroughs (Puritan preacher in the 1600's):

1. *It takes away the present comfort of what you have, because you have not something that you would have.*
 - *What a foolish thing is this, that because I have not got what I want, I will not enjoy the comfort of what I have!*
2. *By all your discontent you cannot help yourselves, you cannot help yourselves, you cannot get anything by it.*
 - *Who by taking care can add one cubit to his stature, or make one hair that is white to be black?*
3. *Discontent and murmuring eats out the good and sweetness of a mercy before its comes.*
 - *Discontent is like a worm that eats the meat out of the nut, and then when the meat is eaten out of it, you have the shell.*
4. *Discontent makes our affliction a great deal worse than otherwise it would be.*

C. The Fall Out From Envy

1. Envy Brings Destruction

Proverbs 14:30 A sound heart is life to the body, But **envy** is rottenness to the bones

Genesis 4:8 Now Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.

Job 5:2 For wrath kills a foolish man, and envy slays a simple one.

- Nathaniel Vincent: "How much of hell is there in the temper of an envious man! The happiness of another is his misery, the good of another is his affliction. He looks upon the virtue of another with an evil eye, and is as sorry at the praise of another as if that praise were taken away from himself. Envy makes him a hater of his neighbor, and his own tormentor." (*A Discourse Concerning Love*, 1684 reprint, Soli Deo Gloria, 1998, p. 82)
- Cain was jealous of Abel (Gen 4:1-16) – led to murder
- Esau was jealous of Jacob (Gen 27) – led to family division
- Joseph's brothers were jealous of Joseph's favored position with their father (Gen 37) – led to slavery
- Saul was jealous of David (1 Sam 18:5-16) – led to self-destruction
 - David was highly esteemed (1 Sam 18:30) and praised because he killed tens of thousands to Saul's thousands (1 Sam 18:7)
 - Envy should have been stopped with repentance
 - But his envy led to rage and attempted murder
 - Strauch: "His envy led to discontentment, paranoid thinking, personal misery, and murderous scheming." (p. 49)
- The Sadducees and high priests were jealous towards the Apostles (Acts 5:17-18) – led to forsaking Christ and the truth
- Jews of Antioch of Pisidia were jealous of Paul & Barnabas' crowds (Acts 13:44-45)

2. Envy Brings Division

1 Corinthians 3:3-4 For you are still carnal. For where there are **envy**, strife, and divisions among you are you not carnal and behaving like mere men. For when one says, "I am of Paul," and another, "I am of Apollos," are you not carnal?

Ie/ 2 competing pastors split churches

3. Envy Brings Depravity

James 3:16 For where **envy** and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there.

ie/ David Jeremiah recounts an old legend about the devil crossing the Libyan desert and comes across a group of his demons. These demons were frustrated in their attempts to tempt a holy man to sin. They tried every weapon of seduction possible – doubt, fears, futility, etc. After Satan listened, he told them to step aside and watch the master at work. He whispered 2 sentences in the ear of this man: “Have you heard the news? Your brother was just promoted to bishop of Alexandria.” Immediately, the holy man’s mouth sank and frowned – the devil one.

4. **Envy Brings Denunciation**

Galatians 5:19-21 Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, *jealousies*, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, *envy*, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like... those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

IV. The Feat Over Envy

A. Choice: Take Responsibility For Your Choice To Envy (Envy Is A Choice)

Proverbs 3:31 Do not envy the oppressor, and choose none of his ways

1 Peter 2:1 Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking

B. Comparison: Toss Away Your Tendency To Compare Yourself With Others

Galatians 5:26 Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, *envying* one another.

Ie/ A friend of mine who has gotten to know a famous and hugely successful preacher told me that he does not envy the life of that successful preacher. He is so driven and under so much pressure, that it takes a toll on his family and is under great pressure to put out for the publishers, the radio and the church. This successful preacher can handle it because that is the fulfillment to God’s call. But it isn’t an enviable life for the rest of us who might love the acclaim but would be crushed by the pressure.

C. Carnality: Type Your Envy As A Sinful Work Of The Flesh

1 Corinthians 3:3-4 ³ For you are still carnal. For where there are *envy*, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men? ⁴ For when one says, “I am of Paul,” and another, “I am of Apollos,” are you not carnal?

D. Charge: Target Your Zeal Towards The Lord

Proverbs 23:17 Do not let your heart *envy* sinners, But be zealous for the fear of the LORD all the day

E. Charity: Transform Your Heart With Love Towards Others

1 Corinthians 13:4 Love suffers long and is kind; love does not *envy*, love does not parade itself, is not puffed up.

Ie/ Several years back, a teenage girl confided in me that she was envious of another girl in the same fellowship group. She resolved to pray for the spiritual success of that other girl. That was a positive way to love the one you are envious of.

ie/ missionary George Muller, founder of Ashley Down Orphanage in Bristol, England, was co-pastoring with Henry Craik at the church in Bristol. The people were more drawn to Craik's teaching than his own. Muller confessed his envy:

"When in the year 1832, I saw how some preferred my beloved friend's ministry to my own, I determined, in the strength of God, to rejoice in this, instead of envying him. I said, with John the Baptist, "A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven (John 3:27). This resisting the devil hindered separation of heart." (W. Elfe Tayler, *Passages from the Diary and Letters of Henry Craik of Bristol*, xiii)

- Muller and Craik were friends for 36 years until Craik's death
- Ie/ It can be so easy to be jealous of people in ministry?

- Ie/ Are we jealous of those among our staff?
- Ie/ Are you threatened by an employee's success?

- Ie/ Was Elijah jealous when Elisha asked for double the blessing?

- Love focuses more on another person's blessing and is glad for it
- Pray for the other person to be blessed more than you
- Do something to be a blessing to the object of your envy
- Know that there is no shortage on God's blessings

F. Contentment: Thank God For The Privileges And Opportunities You Do Have

Luke 15:31-32 ³¹ "And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours. ³² It was right that we should make merry and be glad, for your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found.'

Philippians 1:15-18 ¹⁵ Some indeed preach Christ even from *envy* and strife, and some also from goodwill: ¹⁶ The former preach Christ from selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my chains; ¹⁷ but the latter out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel. ¹⁸ What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached; and in this I rejoice, yes, and will rejoice.

ie/ F.B. Meyer shares the story of his struggle with jealousy being in the same London town as Charles Spurgeon who drew great crowds across the town. Then in 1904, G. Campbell Morgan, an American, took a church in London which drew great attention – as Morgan was a world-wide known Bible expositor.

Meyer: "It was easy to pray for the success of G. Campbell Morgan when he was in America. But when he came to England and took a church near to mine, it was something different. The old Adam in me was inclined to jealousy, but I got my heel upon his head, and whether I felt right toward my friend, I determined to act right."

Meyer prayed daily about reviving his pulpit as he worried about losing members to these 2 hot preachers. God brought him to a point of contentment where he was able to write: "See how the Lord helped me out of my difficulty. He (Spurgeon) and Mr. Morgan were so popular, and drew such crowds, that our church caught the overflow, and we had all we could accommodate."

Philippians 4:11 Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content

G. **Completeness: Find Your Completeness In Christ**

Philippians 4:12-13 ¹² I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. ¹³ I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

Conclusion:

- Cyprian of Carthage: "Concerned about this risk, the Lord—not wanting anyone to fall into the snare of death through jealousy—gave a careful answer when His disciples asked Him who among them would be the greatest. Jesus replied: 'He who is least among you all—he is the greatest' (Lk. 9:48). With this reply, Jesus removed all grounds for jealousy. He plucked out and tore away every cause and occasion for gnawing envy.

"A disciple of Christ must be neither jealous nor envious. With us there can be no contest for exaltation. It's from humility that we grow to the highest attainments. In this way, Christ taught us how to be pleasing to God." ("On Jealousy and Envy")

- Puritan Richard Baxter: "Direct. XVI. When your desires are over eager, bethink you of the mercies which you have received already and do possess. Hath God done so much for you, and are you still calling for more, even of that which is unnecessary, when you should be giving thanks for what you have? This unthankful greediness is an odious sin. Think what you have already for soul and body, estate and friends; and will not all this quiet you, (even this with Christ and heaven,) unless you have the other lust or fancy satisfied, and unless God humor you in your sick desires?" ("Directions Against Sinful Desires and Discontent")
- "Envy Went To Church" by Elva McAllaster
(quoted in David Jeremiah's *Slaying The Giants In Your Life*, p. 194)

Envy went to church this morning.
Being legion, he sat in every other pew.
Envy fingered wool and silk fabrics,
Hung price tags on suits and neckties.

Envy paced through the parking lot
Scrutinizing chrome and paint
Envy marched through to the chancel with the choir
During the processional...

Envy prodded plain-jane wives,
And bright wives married to milquetoast dullards,
And kind men married to knife-tongued shrews.
Envy thumped at widows and widowers,
Jabbed and kicked college girls without escorts,
Lighted invisible fires inside khaki jackets.

Envy conferred also this morning
With all of his brothers.
He liked his Sunday scores today
But not enough;

Some of his intended clients
Had sipped an antidote marked Grace
And wore a holy flower named Love.

1 Corinthians 13:4 Love is patient and kind; **love does not** envy or **boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way**; it is not irritable or resentful;

II. Sacrificial Love Boasts Of Christ, Not Self

- "boast" = *perpereuetai* = ostentatious, bragging
- Bragging is the reverse of envy. Envy wants what another has. Bragging is intended to make someone else want what you have.
- "It is used to describe the pompous windbag and may allude to the rhetorically sophisticated speech (1:17; 2:1) that so enamors the Corinthians and fosters boasting." (David E. Garland, *Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament: 1 Corinthians*, p. 618)
- "His behavior is marked by egotism, subservience toward superiors, and condescension toward subordinates. A braggart exhibits pride in himself and his accomplishments. But such bragging is devoid of love to God and to one's fellow man, and is a blatant sin." (Kistemaker & Hendriksen, *Exposition of the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, p. 459)
- John MacArthur: "The Corinthian believers were spiritual show-offs, constantly vying for public attention. They clamored for the most prestigious offices and the most glamorous gifts. They all wanted to talk at once, especially when speaking ecstatically. Most of their tongues—

speaking was counterfeit, but their bragging about it was genuine. They cared nothing for harmony, order, fellowship, edification, or anything else worthwhile. They cared only for flaunting themselves." (*1 Corinthians*)

- The Pharisees were attention stealers – they wanted everyone to see their outward form of religion. Jesus challenged them with the heart.

Proverbs 27:2 "Let another praise you, and not your own mouth; a stranger, and not your own lips."

- When in conversation, do we speak so much about ourselves, that we forget to ask how the other person is doing?
- What do we love to boast about?

1 Corinthians 1:31 "He who glories, let him glory in the Lord"

- "glory" = weight, worth weight in gold

2 Corinthians 12:9 But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

- Paul preferred to boast about his thorn in the flesh so God's glory can be magnified

III. Sacrificial Love Demonstrates Humility, Not Pride

- "arrogant" or "puffed up" = *physioutai* = inflated self-importance, ostentation, egotism
- JB Phillips Translation: "*nor does it cherish inflated ideas of its own importance*"
- 6 of the 7x this verb is used in the NT occurs in 1 Corinthians (4:6,18,19; 5:2; 8:1)

1 Corinthians 4:6 ⁶ Dear brothers and sisters, I have used Apollos and myself to illustrate what I've been saying. If you pay attention to what I have quoted from the Scriptures, you won't be **proud** of one of your leaders at the expense of another.

1 Corinthians 4:18–19 ¹⁸ Some of you have become **arrogant**, thinking I will not visit you again. ¹⁹ But I will come—and soon—if the Lord lets me, and then I'll find out whether these **arrogant** people just give pretentious speeches or whether they really have God's power.

1 Corinthians 5:2 ² You are so **proud** of yourselves, but you should be mourning in sorrow and shame. And you should remove this man from your fellowship.

1 Corinthians 8:1 This knowledge **puffs up**, but love builds up.

- Love builds up
- Pride blows up
- Lewis Smedes: "Arrogance is an anxious grasp for power when we fear that we are weak." (*Love Within Limits*, p. 28)

- “How much behavior among believers and even ministers is actually ‘attention seeking’ designed to impress others with one’s own supposed importance?” (A.C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 1049)
- Jesus washed the disciples feet. He didn’t need a title.
- When graduating from Bible school – thought I had all the answers to change the church. After 28 years, I now realize I don’t know anything.
- Amy Carmichael: “Those who think too much of themselves don’t think enough.”

3 John 1:9 I have written something to the church, but **Diotrephes**, who likes to put himself first, does not acknowledge our authority

- He refused to humble himself to Paul’s authority
- He created an atmosphere of intimidation
- His loveless leadership was just a clanging cymbal

A. The Cause Of Pride

- Alvin Plantinga describes “pride” as “blend of narcissism and conceit that we detest in others and sometimes tenderly protect in ourselves” (Plantinga, *Not the Way It’s Supposed to Be*).
- Plantinga again: “What sin makes God seem more irrelevant? God wants to fill us with his Holy Spirit, but when we are proud we are already full of ourselves. There’s no room for God.”
- Satan’s pride told God to move over

Ezekiel 28:17a Your heart was proud because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor.

Isaiah 14:14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.’

Ezekiel 28:2 “Son of man, say to the prince of Tyre, Thus says the Lord God: ‘Because your heart is proud, and you have said, ‘I am a god, I sit in the seat of the gods, in the heart of the seas,’ yet you are but a man, and no god, though you make your heart like the heart of a god—

- James Emery White: “Pride is the seedbed of rebellion against God, because it chooses to cast God from His throne and place another in His place – namely *ourselves*. Pride is, by its very nature, competitive. And if not competitive, then most certainly exclusive.” (*Long Night’s Journey Into Day: The Path Away From Sin*, p. 138)
- C. S. Lewis described pride as the complete anti-God state of mind. (*Mere Christianity*, p. 94)
- Augustine described pride as the political enemy of the City of God.

- The “Self-Esteem” movement seeks to find worth in self rather than in God (intrinsic worth = created in image of God; extrinsic worth = love of Christ who went to cross for us)
- Man’s evolutionary theory makes man a product of chance and ends up in oblivion – there’s no purpose or value to life if this theory is true
- But if man is created in the image of God and ends up with God forever in heaven – there is purpose and value in life – it begins and ends with God.

1. **Pride Comes When You Think Self-Worth Is Measured By Intelligence**

1 Corinthians 8:1 ¹Now concerning things offered to idols: We know that we all have knowledge. **Knowledge puffs up**, but love edifies.

- People don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.

2. **Pride Comes When You Think Privilege Makes You Better Than Others**

1 Timothy 3:6 ⁶not a **novice**, lest being puffed up with **pride** he fall into the same condemnation as the devil.

3. **Pride Comes When You Think Having Power Makes You Better Than Others**

Leviticus 26:19 ¹⁹I will break the **pride of your power**; I will make your heavens like iron and your earth like bronze.

Ezekiel 30:6 ⁶Thus says the Lord: “Those who uphold Egypt shall fall, And the **pride of her power** shall come down. From Migdol to Syene Those within her shall fall by the sword,” Says the Lord God.

- Power corrupts, absolute power corrupts absolutely.

4. **Pride Comes When You Think Having Possessions Makes You Better Than Others**

Luke 18:24-25 ²⁴And when Jesus saw that he became very sorrowful, He said, “How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! ²⁵For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.”

5. **Pride Comes When You Think You’re Religiously Superior To Others**

Luke 18:11-12 ¹¹The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. ¹²I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.’

6. **Pride Comes When You Love The Things Of The World**

1 John 2:15-17 ¹⁵Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶For all that is in the world—the lust of

the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. ¹⁷And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

- The “pride of life” (*he alazoneia tou biou*) can only be found elsewhere in James 4:16 (“boast in your arrogance”). The NASB translates this phrase as “the boastful pride of life”. This sin is the inflation of our ego, pride, and boastfulness. The person afflicted with the pride of life finds self-esteem in degrees, jobs, positions, titles, cars, houses, and name brand clothes.

1 Timothy 6:6-11 ⁶Now godliness with contentment is great gain. ⁷For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. ⁸And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content. ⁹But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. ¹⁰For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. ¹¹But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness.

- In Matthew 4, Jesus was tempted with lust of flesh (bread), lust of eyes (kingdoms of world), and the pride of life (cast self down with angels catching).
- In Genesis 3:6, the devil appealed to Eve through:
 - lust of flesh - good food
 - lust of eyes - pleasant to eyes
 - pride of life - make one like God

Q: How has pride entered our marriage? Our ministry? Towards our parents?

- Problem of Entitlement!
- Kids think they deserve the iPad or iPod but can't say “iPaid”

B. The Victory Over Pride

James 4:6 ⁶But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: “God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.”

1. Recognize Pride As A Sin

Proverbs 21:4 ⁴A haughty look, a **proud** heart, And the plowing of the wicked are sin.

Proverbs 6:16-17 ¹⁶These six things the Lord hates, Yes, seven are an abomination to Him: ¹⁷A **proud** look, A lying tongue, Hands that shed innocent blood,

Proverbs 16:5 ⁵Everyone **proud** in heart is an abomination to the Lord; Though they join forces, none will go unpunished.

Proverbs 8:12-13 ¹²I, wisdom, dwell with prudence, And find out knowledge and discretion. ¹³The fear of the Lord is to hate evil; **Pride** and **arrogance** and the evil way And the perverse mouth I hate.

2. Repent Of Pride As A Sin

1 John 1:8-9 ⁸If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

3. Realize Your Position Relative To God (Ps 8:3-5)

- James White: "Humility has nothing to do with denying our strengths or trying to pass them off as something they're not. It's not about a pretty woman pretending to be ugly, or a smart person believing he's a fool. The foundation of humility is *truth*. The authentically humble person sees himself as he is – nothing more and nothing less. God gave your strengths to you, so it would be wrong to try to deny them." (*Long Day's Journey Into Day*, p. 143)

Psalm 8:3-5 ³When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, The moon and the stars, which You have ordained, ⁴What is man that You are mindful of him, And the son of man that You visit him? ⁵For You have made him a little lower than the angels, And You have crowned him with glory and honor.

- "The true way to be humble is not to stoop until you are smaller than yourself, but to stand at your real height against some higher nature that will show you what the real smallness of your greatness is." (Phillip Brooks)
- "Humility is to make a right estimate of one's self. It is no humility for a man to think less of himself than he ought." (Charles Spurgeon)
- "Humility is perfect quietness of heart. It is to expect nothing, to wonder at nothing that is done to me, to feel nothing done against me. It is to be at rest when nobody praises me, and when I am blamed or despised. It is to have a blessed home in the Lord, where I can go in and shut the door, and kneel to my Father in secret, and am at peace as in a deep sea of calmness, when all around and above is trouble. The humble person is not one who thinks meanly of himself, he simply does not think of himself at all." (Andrew Murray)

4. Relate To The Needs Of Others Before Your Own (Mt 20:28; Phil 2:3-4)

Matthew 20:28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

Philippians 2:3-4 ³Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. ⁴Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

5. Remorse Over Our Sinfulness And Become Utterly Dependent On God's Mercy (Mt 5:3; Lk 18:9-14)

Matthew 5:3 Blessed are the poor in spirit, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

a. Spiritual Poverty (cf. Luke 18:9-14)

- "Poor" = to shrink, cower or cringe - like the beggars during the NT era
- 2 words for poor - one is *penichros* used of the widow who Jesus saw give two small coins to the temple offering - she was poor but not a beggar
- the word used in 5:3 is *ptochos* which means completely dependant on others for sustenance
- beggars had no means of self-support - completely dependent on society
- ie/ Luke 16:19-22 - rich man and beggar named Lazarus - the word for *beggar* is the identical word as *poor* in Mt 5:3
- but this poverty that Jesus speaks of is not material or financial poverty - "poor in spirit" describes spiritual poverty
- to be poor in spirit is to realize that we are spiritual helpless and poor and without complete dependence on God we can receive nothing
- in Jesus' day, the Jewish religious leaders were spiritually proud

Luke 18:9-14⁹Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: ¹⁰Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. ¹²I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.' ¹³And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!' ¹⁴I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

- **Luke 18:9-14** illustrates the spiritual pride of the Pharisee

- pride - "I" 5x in 2 vs

- compare to the tax collector - considered scum to the Jews because they attached their own outrageous surcharge they keep when collecting taxes for Rome (whom the Jews hated being under) - twice despised

- pharisee not need God because he achieved righteousness on his own

fasted twice a week, and observed 365 prohibition and 250 commandments
- but that was not enough to get him into the kingdom of God

v. 13 is the spiritual poverty Jesus is looking for

- shame - stood afar off, barely raise eyes to heaven

- plead for mercy

b. True Humility (Ps 51:17; Ps 34:18)

Psalm 51:17 "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart - these, O God, You will not despise."

Psalm 34:18 "The Lord is near to those who have a broken heart, and saves such as have a contrite spirit."

- not refer to one who is bereaved because of a break-up or a lay-off primarily, but a heart that sees no end in sight and cries to God for deliverance

Q: Do you have true spiritual humility?

- Do you constantly reflect on your past accomplishments at church or other ministries?
- Do you ever compare yourselves with others in the church and then look down at them?
- Do you take pride in the amount you give for offering or in the length of time you spend reading the Bible and praying?
- Do you hold up your converts like spiritual trophies?

Isaiah 57:15 "For thus says the high and exalted One who lives forever, whose name is Holy, 'I dwell on a high and holy place, and also with the contrite and lowly of spirit in order to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite.'"

Luke 14:11 For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

James 4:10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.

1 Peter 5:6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time,

- Samuel Rutherford said, "Bow low, man, bow low, the door into the kingdom is low."

C. The Steps To Humility

1. Have an accurate understanding of who you are before God.

Psalm 8:3-5 ³When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, The moon and the stars, which You have ordained, ⁴What is man that You are mindful of him, And the son of man that You visit him? ⁵For You have made him a little lower than the angels, And You have crowned him with glory and honor.

Genesis 1:27 ²⁷So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

2. Imitate the humility of Christ, the King of Kings

Matthew 20:28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

3. Become a servant to others

Mark 9:34-35 ³⁴But they kept silent, for on the road they had disputed among themselves who would be the greatest. ³⁵And He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, “If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all.”