

# Love Does Not Envy

## 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a

### Introduction

- 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; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends.
- PRAY
- Please be seated
- I want to say how good it is to be back and see so many faces we hold dear.
  - This is furlough for Shelly and I, when training is out for the summer
  - So it's shorter than say, the Cline's, but more frequent as well
  - Instead of every couple years it should be every summer

### Message

- Pastor Dan said last week that these truths we're going through are all related. That's why I read verses 4-8a even though we're only looking at one topic
- This week we're looking at envy
  - So Dan gets patience and kindness and I get envy
  - I'm envious, (see what I did there...)
- Now actually, this word the Greek is: ζήλω (jealous, or zealous)
- Envy has a two-fold dimension:
  - **to have intense negative feelings over another's achievements or success, and things**
  - **to be positively and *intensely* interested in something, *strive, desire, exert oneself earnestly***
- The NT definition is broader than the OT.
- In the OT envy is sorrow at what others have and we don't. Jealousy is to fear losing what we possess.
  - The NT they are two sides of the same coin – coveting
  - That's how I'm approaching the text this morning

- The negative is: wanting the position or things of others
- The positive is:
  - God being jealous (or zealous) for His honor and glory, thus...
  - Us being jealous (or zealous) that God is honored
- One is bad, the other is not only good, but necessary
- We'll start this morning with Scripture's negative sense
- But before we do, let's be reminded again:
  - Why is it important to remember these they're all connected?
    - Because impatience, unkindness, and envy are signs that I'm unloving...
    - Love is...
      - (inclusive of the list)
      - It either is or isn't these things
      - like Gal. 5:22-23 **IS** (or :19-22 – isn't)
    - This has real ramifications in my marriage, parenting, and church relationships, then secular relationships.
    - Those (secular) are the ramifications when I share the gospel
  - It's important to understand what was going on in Corinth that Paul would feel the need to address this
    - The **envy** which is carried over from a status-seeking, non-Christian Corinthian culture into the Christian church is not "of the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor 3), and is deemed to be incompatible with love here
    - And culture has changed little in 2000 years
  - Why is love, and setting aside self so important?
  - (Galatians 5:6) "*For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love.*"
    - 1 Cor. 3 is all about motive of fruit
    - Aspiring to be an elder good – to be noticed (envy), power – bad
    - The gospel hinges on love
      - God's love toward sinners
      - Then, Sinners love toward others
    - Your sanctification, let's say, maturity, is measured by it
      - We want God to get the glory. Well, we should

- (Matthew 5:16) ‘ *“In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”* ’
- No envy there
- Either we are a satisfied, patient, kind, happy people
- OR, we are self-seeking always wanting more for ourselves kind of people
- Again, envy, or jealousy are different sides of the same covetous, idolatrous coin.
  - It is a lack of satisfaction in God.
  - It’s sin whose roots go all the way back to the garden. When they wanted more than God to be happy.
  - Envy is when I’m believing that some **thing**, can make me happier than God.
  - Our culture drives this, nothing new...
    - A bigger house
      - my kids need as much space to play as other kids
      - You see it’s not wrong to want space for my kids
      - It’s wrong when I want it because we need it to be happy, or because I saw someone else with it
        - Remember Sonship – God cares deeply for your motives
        - How envious a people are we?
      - Tiny home – joke is there too
    - A better family
      - It might be easier but not better
      - Because it’s not what God wants **FOR** you
    - A better job
      - Flipping burgers and providing for your family is noble before God
    - Spouse?
      - Again, I’m not saying easy, God’s honor
      - My wife will tell you marriage to me is no picnic
    - Envy subtly tells me I need something someone else has I perceive as better or necessary for my joy
      - Jesus was meant for this place
      - Everything else we try to place there is counterfeit

- How many times have you been satisfied until you heard the new “XL, Super-jumbo” model came out?
      - For the Super Bowl last year
        - Only get two channels
        - Skype the girls
        - Missed the turnaround series
        - If only I had reliable cable like other people
        - God was saying, “I want to do something for you.”
    - Envy not only denies God as the supreme source of soul pleasing satisfaction, but denies the riches we truly and already possess
      - Does that resonate with you?
      - We’re gonna come back to that
- The positive
  - Jesus
    - Never envious
      - But I’m not perfect! No, but His Spirit resides in you
    - (Philippians 2:6) “*who, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped*”
    - robbery? Grasping? No
    - He emptied Himself instead because He knew what He already had
  - Good jealousy
    - The Israelite and Midianite
      - Set stage before slide appears
    - (Numbers 25:11) ‘*“Phinehas son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, the priest, has turned My anger away from the Israelites. Since he was as zealous as I am for My honor among them...”*’ [NIV84]
    - He was jealous for God’s honor
  - It is a good thing to hate evil and to hate sin because it belittles God
    - But that means, that I have to check who’s honor I’m really upset over
    - Because my heart is fickle, I can use envy or, honor jealousy as a cover for sin
      - Am I jealous for God’s honor, or am I prone to legalism and you’re not doing it my way?
      - Am I telling God I deserved something He missed?

- Jesus always knew His Father’s plan was the best plan – not the easiest plan
- Believe me, in Gethsemane, that was earnest asking, not envy
  - We can do that too. God, this looks really, really hard, is there another way?
  - No, OK

## **How to Get a Grip**

- How would I know if I struggle with envy?
  - 1<sup>st</sup>, if you’re breathing
  - Am I happy in God?
  - Do my circumstances rob me of joy?
  - Is there a discontent that I keep trying to fill with things?
- Do you focus on, and enjoy what you have?
  - And I’m not talking about stuff
  - (2 Corinthians 8:9) “*For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you by His poverty might become rich.*”
    - Do you believe you have immeasurable riches in Christ **now**?
    - Right now?
  - (Ephesians 1:7-8) “*In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace, which He lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight*”
    - Lavished riches of His grace
    - Wisdom and insight – not a mistake
  - (Luke 12:32) ‘ “*Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom...*” ’
    - We have a kingdom!!??
    - Yeah, and it can’t be shaken
  - Are these a reality for you?
    - Do these resonate with your soul?
    - Are you fighting for these kinds of truth?
- Missions moment
  - Matt and Amy can’t survive without fighting for truth
  - The enemy is real, he is viscous, and he’s relentless
  - That’s why they need you to pray for them

- It's not like they don't have some abilities, but everything around them is warring against them
  - So they need to fight for themselves
  - And you need to fight for them
  - So if you have a prayer card on your fridge please make it more than a decoration
- Shelly and I have lots of people praying for us. It is one of our greatest comforts.
  - a group of people who meet Monday mornings and have my back.
  - And my Elders have my back
  - And our friends have our back
- What in the world has that to do with envy?
  - Well my heart is always wanting bigger and better
    - I have to really want that for the nations
    - For the glory and honor of God
  - I'm not above that
  - Heck, I want you to think well of my sermon
- How do we win?
  - Fight for truth
    - Your "feelings" will betray you but Scripture will not.
    - God speaks through His Word.
  - So...maybe then, the position I'm in, and struggling through, is for my betterment and enjoyment of God, not to improve my circumstances
    - Again, isn't God getting glory in my life the best thing for me?
    - If you ask for bread, you won't get a stone
  - God wants you to understand He is better
    - Don't live and strive as if nothing better awaits you
    - You have an eternity of unimaginable, unending, inexhaustible joy awaiting you
  - Brothers and sisters, pray and walk in truth, then in a little while, your joy will be uncontainable, because sin will not exist.
    - It's areal hope
  - So until then,

- (Romans 5:3b-5) “...we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's **love** has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.”
- We have Jesus, we should be the most envied people on the planet.

PRAY