

THE WORKS OF THE FLESH

"ENVYINGS"

Over 700 years before the earthly manifestation of Christ, God revealed through Isaiah the peaceable nature of Christ's kingdom in these words: "The envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and they that vex Judah shall be cut off: Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim" (Isaiah 11:13). An envious spirit has no place among God's people who enjoy peace through the reign of Christ. Envy, when silently harbored can eat away at an individual's inward goodness, and when publicly expressed, the resultant contention can destroy any functional group of people (Proverbs 14:30, I Cor. 3:3). When envy flourishes, one can be assured that it is not the edifying fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22, James 4:5). In this lesson, may we learn of the particular attitudes causing and surrounding envy, and be determined to weed this mental tare from our lives.

I. WHAT THE WORD "ENVYING" MEANS

- A. PHTNONOS - Occurs 9 times in the New Testament. Translated "envyings" or "envy", "jealousies" or "jealous spirit". According to Vine, the word denotes "the feeling of displeasure produced by witnessing or hearing of the advantage or prosperity of others."
- B. The word differs from another form of envy translated "jealousy" or "emulations" in the following way: "The essence of it is it does not describe the spirit which desires, nobly or ignobly, to have what someone else has; (ZELOS - "emulations" "jealousies" - J.f.). It describes the spirit which grudges the fact that the other person has these things at all. It does not so much want the things for itself; it merely want to take them from another person." (William Barclay, THE LETTERS TO THE GALATIANS AND EPHESIANS, p. 53).

II. HOW THE WORD "ENVY" IS USED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

- A. Its causes:
 - 1. Stems from a refusal to have a knowledge of the living God (Rom. 1:28-29).
 - 2. Foolish disputing over words (I Tim. 6:4, Gal. 5:26).
 - 3. Laziness that causes one to tear another down instead of bettering oneself. (Example of Cain - Gen. 4:4, 5, 7).
- B. Its effects:
 - 1. Leads to openly despising God's true servants (Phil. 1:15).
 - 2. Arouses malicious hatred (Titus 3:3).

- a) the chief priests and elders' attitude towards Christ (Matt. 27:18, Mk. 15:10).

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C. Its cure:

1. Grow Up! (I Pet. 2:1-2).
2. Develop love! (I Cor. 13:4, I Cor. 12:25, 26).

DISCUSSION:

1. What makes the attitude behind "envy" worse than that which underlies the sin of "jealousy"?
2. What are some causes of "envy"?
3. Is envying a sin that can easily be held secret?
4. Explain the type of hatred that is aroused by "envy":
5. How can one cure himself of "envy" ?