

We return today to this chapter of Scripture—with the intention of considering this morning the third attribute of love (love does not envy)—and then this evening the fourth, fifth, and sixth (love does not parade itself, is not puffed up, is not rude)...

Now—I want to remind you of something I said several weeks ago—Paul describes love by using 15 verbs—this is important to keep in mind—as most of our English translations—render several of these words as adjectives—but in fact—they are all verbs—thus Paul isn't telling us what love is—but what it does—MacArthur—"Love is not something you describe with adjectives. Love is something you describe with verbs because love is only described, it is not defined..."

Thus—it's important that we keep in mind—the context of this chapter—Paul is writing to the church at Corinth—a church encountering various problems—including impatience, unkindness, envy, and pride—in short—the church was lacking love—true love—love that suffers long, shows kindness, does not envy, and is not proud...

Lenski—"Paul does not describe love to us in the role of performing great, wonderful, and astounding deeds; he prefers to show us how the inner heart of love looks when it is placed among sinful men and weak and needy brethren. he does not picture love in ideal surroundings of friendship and affection where each individual embraces and kisses the other but in the hard surrounding of a bad world and a faulty church where distressing influences bring out the positive power and value of love..."

- I. The manifestations of envy
- II. The reasons love doesn't envy
- III. The helps or motives not to envy

I. The manifestations of envy

1. The first thing we need to know is—this Greek word rendered "envy"—can be either positive or negative...
2. That is—the word basically means—"to burn with zeal or desire"—to earnestly long for or after something..."
3. In fact—it's the same word we saw last week in 2Cor.11:2—"for I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy..."
4. The word "jealous" is the same rendered "envy"—we could render the phrase—"for I am envious over or for you..."
5. Yet—obviously—Paul uses it here in its negative sense—to burn with desire for something you do not have...
6. Thus native or essential to envy—are three related words—desire, resentment, and strife—notice [1] desire...
7. For example, 1Cor.12:31—"but earnestly desire the best gifts"—literally—but burn with zeal for the best gifts...
8. Here—Paul uses the word in its positive sense—for notice what the object of our desire is—spiritual gifts...
9. Yet—envy—longs for something that another has and we don't—it is in this sense identical with—coveting...
10. That is—we earnestly long for something we don't have—and yet—is possessed by someone around us we know...
11. Now—a person might be envious of another person for various reasons—their looks, abilities, or family ties...
12. It's possible to envy someone's children—spouse—financial or social status—abilities—character—or—possessions...

13. Ex.20:17—"you shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's..."
14. Barns—"Envy may be excited by anything in which another excels, or in which he is more favored than we are. It may be excited by superior wealth, beauty, learning, accomplishment, reputation, success. It may extend to any employment, or any rank in life. A man may be envied because he is happy while we are miserable; well, while we are sick; caressed, while we are neglected or overlooked; successful, while we meet with disappointment; handsome, while we are ill-formed; honored with office, while we are overlooked. He may be envied because he has a better farm than we have, or is a more skilful mechanic, or a more successful physician, lawyer, or clergyman..."
15. Now—before I leave this first word (desire)—let me clarify—the desire associated with envy—is very intense...
16. The word carries the idea—of being heated to the point of boiling over—to burn with an intense and strong zeal...
17. Thus—it is not envy—to mere admire something about some one—or even to desire to one day possess it...
18. But envy is an inward lusting—an inner desire that consumes—a burning for—something possessed by another...
19. Notice [2] resentment—that is—"envy" not only earnestly desires something—but hates those who have it...
20. Edwards—"Seeing how others prosper, and what honors they attain, the envious dislike, and even hate them, on account of their honor and prosperity. They entertain and cherish an evil spirit toward them, for no other reason but that they are prospered. They are embittered against them in spirit, only because they are eminent in name or fortune..."
21. Perhaps—we could put it like this—envy is the womb from which resentment, malice, and hatred—are born...
22. Thus—envy is not content with merely wanting what another has—but it resents the fact—that they have it...
23. Yet—it goes further—it even wishes that they didn't have it—and would rejoice—if and when—they lost it...
24. Titus 3:3—"for we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another..."
25. This text is a graphic depiction of fallen man by nature—notice envy is sandwiched between—malice and hatred...
26. In other words—they are inseparable—malice and envy go together—and they inevitably—result in hatred...
27. Notice [3] outward strife—this would be the result or manifestation of envy—the open expression of envy...
28. Strife—refers to—discord, conflict, and contention—this is the unavoidable and inevitable result of envy....
29. If someone resents the fact that another person has something they want—this will likely result in strife and discord...
30. 1Cor.3:3—"for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men..."
31. Notice—envy results in strife and divisions—there was conflict and contention—because there was envy....
32. For example—think of a family of young children—one child has something that the other children desire...
33. What happens—there is hatred and resentment—which gives way to strife, yelling, arguing, and even fighting...
34. Jas.4:1-2—"where do wars and fights *come* from among you? Do *they* not *come* from your *desires for* pleasure that war in your members? 2 You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war..."
35. Notice [a] desire—"do they not come from your desires...you lust...and covet"—that you are filled with envy...

36. Notice [b] murder—"you murder"—that is—they murdered each other inwardly—with resentment and hatred...
37. Notice [c] strife—"you fight and war"—this is the outward expression of envy—fighting, conflict, and strife...
38. Thus—envy is a deep and earnest desire—for something we don't have but others do—which leads to resentment...
39. This resentment and inward murder—will inevitably lead to outward strife and contention—and even worse...
40. Now—what I want to do at this point is very briefly—illustrate this with by the account of Joseph and his brothers...
41. Gen.37:4-5—"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. 5 Now Joseph had a dream, and he told *it* to his brothers; and they hated him even more.
42. Why they hated him is seen in Gen.37:11—"and his brothers envied him, but his father kept the saying *in mind*.
43. Gen.37:23-24—"so it came to pass, when Joseph had come to his brothers, that they stripped Joseph *of his tunic, the tunic of many colors that was on him. 24 Then they took him and cast him into a pit. And the pit was empty; there was no water in it...*"

II. The reasons love doesn't envy

1. Paul expressly says—"love does not envy"—that is—a person whose heart is full of love—with be void of envy...
2. Notice [1] a loving heart rejoices in the success of others—it rejoices in their advancement and prosperity...
3. Barns—"Love does not envy others the happiness which they enjoy; it delights in their welfare; and as their happiness is increased by their endowments, their rank, their reputation, their wealth, their health, their domestic comforts, their learning etc., those who are influenced by love *rejoice* in all this..."
4. 1Cor.12:26—"and if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it..."
5. This is what church members should do—rejoice with the prosperity of others—why—because we love them...
6. One member—gets promoted above another—they find a measure of recognition within the church above you...
7. They—get promoted to another job—a job which affords them a greater income and more honor than you have...
8. Brethren—how tragic is envy—that we would actually prefer our brethren fail—than succeed above and beyond us...
9. For example—think of ministerial envy—to resent another man—because his church prospers more than ours...
10. I have to make a confession—I have never felt more wicked and filthy—then when I've been tempted to envy...
11. When I read an update on a sister church—and the church is prospering—and inwardly—deep down—I'm jealous...
12. Phil.1:15-18—"some indeed preach Christ even from envy and strife, and some also from good will: 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..."
13. Here—Paul describes two opposing motives behind certain contemporary preachers—selfish ambition—and love...
14. In other words—some continued Paul's ministry—(while he was imprisoned)—because they envied Paul....
15. Yet—others assisted Paul in preaching the gospel because of love—they loved Paul and desired to assist him...

16. That is to say—others were finding success in continuing Paul's ministry—while Paul was forgotten in prison...
17. How did he respond—"and in this I rejoice, yes, and will rejoice"—that is—I rejoice that the gospel is preached...
18. Oh my friends—how can a man say this—how can he rejoice in the preaching of the gospel without envy...
19. Simply put—love—love to God and love to poor sinners—love for everyone else—above and beyond ourselves...
20. Notice [2] a loving heart has been crucified to this world—necessary to envy—is a fixation with this world...
21. An envious person—necessarily puts too much emphasis upon this world—it's possessions and acceptance...
22. 1Jn.2:15—"do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him..."
23. In other words—it's impossible to love God and others—if your heart is fixed upon this fleeting and temporal world...
24. Conversely—when the heart is crucified to this world—and the affections have been placed upon God and others...
25. Or—in keeping with 2Cor.13—we have love—then we no longer live in envy, greed, jealousy, and hatred...
26. Let me put it this way—a person characterized by envy—doesn't love God—because he's in love with himself...
27. Thus—in short—a person who has love—has been taught—that true happiness does not exist in things or fame...
28. He no longer is seeking his satisfaction or contentment in things—he has seen the end of all created things...
29. Barns—"Happiness is in the heart; and contentment, and the love of God, and the hope of heaven produce happiness which rank, and wealth, and fashion, and earthly honor cannot purchase..."
30. Thus—love envies not—it does not lust after what others have—and isn't resentful of those who possess more...
31. Oh dear people—this is what some of you need—you'll never be content—until your love raises higher than yourself...
32. Yet—listen to me—your love will never raise higher than yourself—until your heart is crucified to this world...
33. And there is only one way your heart can under this transformation—you have to come to Christ by faith alone...
34. Gal.6:14—"God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world..."
35. You have to come to Christ—as an envious—carnal—worldly—foolish—helpless—guilty—defiled sinner...

III. The helps or motives not to envy

1. Here—I want to briefly suggest—three motives to assist or help us—to mortify—all remains of envy within us...
2. Notice [1] envy is a peculiarly evil sin—that is—the Scriptures describe envy—as unusually heinous and evil...
3. This may surprise you—for at times I think—we can kind of—simply accept envy—as a little and benign sin...
4. Thus—I want to illustrate from two passages—how the Scriptures attach a peculiar evil to the sin of envy...
5. Js.3:14-16—"but if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. 15 This wisdom does not descend from above, but *is* earthly, sensual, demonic. 16 For where envy and self-seeking *exist*, confusion and every evil thing *are* there..."

6. Notice [a] envy and self-seeking—these go together—an envious person—is a selfish, greedy, and proud person...
7. Notice [b] envy is demonic—it's devilish—both in its origin and character—it renders a person like the devil...
8. Notice [c] envy breeds sin, v16—"for where envy and self-seeking exists, confusion and every evil thing are there..."
9. Mk.15:9-10—"but Pilate answered them, saying, Do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews. For he knew that the chief priests had handed Him over because of envy..."
10. The Scriptures expressly state two reasons why Christ was handed over—[a] God's justice, and [b] man's envy...
11. I think it interesting—that God the Holy Spirit—has thought it necessary—to place special focus on this sin...
12. The Jewish leaders envied Christ—they envied his fame and popularity—the fact that many followed Him instead of them...
13. This resulted in a deep seated resentment and hatred—and manifested itself in all forms of strife and conflict...
14. Oh—Christian here is a powerful help to mortify remaining envy—remember—it was this sin that killed our Savior...
15. Why is He handed over to the Romans—who beat Him, mocked Him, ridiculed Him—and eventually—crucified Him...
16. What could be so wicked—so heinous—and so demonic—envy—they handed Him over because of envy..."
17. Oh—dear brethren—what better place for us mortify this sin—but to sit at our Savior's feet in the Roman Praetorium...
18. Matt.27:27-31—"then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole garrison around Him. 28 And they stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him. 29 When they had twisted a crown of thorns, they put *it* on His head, and a reed in His right hand. And they bowed the knee before Him and mocked Him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! 30 Then they spat on Him, and took the reed and struck Him on the head. 31 And when they had mocked Him, they took the robe off Him, put His *own* clothes on Him, and led Him away to be crucified..."
19. Notice [2] envy denies God's sovereignty—by this I mean—it fails realize—that God is the great distributor...
20. At heart what is envy—but the dissatisfaction with our present condition and the condition of those around us...
21. It's basically telling God—you don't think He knows what He's doing—that He doesn't know how to govern His creation...
22. For who is it ultimately raised on person above another—God is the one who makes rich and makes poor....
23. Edwards—"A Christian spirit disposes us to feel content with our own condition, and with the estate which God has given us among men, and to a quietness and satisfaction of spirit with regard to the allotments and distributions of stations and possessions which God, in his wise and kind providence, has made to ourselves and others..."
24. Notice [3] envy questions God's sufficiency—that is—an envious person—is saying—Christ is not enough...
25. Heb.13:5—"let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, I will never leave you nor forsake you..."
26. Let me paraphrase—don't be envious or jealous of others—but be content with what you have—even if minimal..
27. Why—because YOU HAVE ME—I will never leave nor forsake you—unlike all the temporal things of this life...
28. Thus—every time we envy others—we are in essence saying—I am not content with merely having—Christ...