

As we prepare to open up our text in Ecclesiastes; I pray that you would first consider: How do I personally represent Christ in my life, in the sight of God:

If you identify yourself to be a Christian, what you are saying is; you ACTUALLY live your life by the faith of the Son of God who loved you and gave Himself for you.

Born-Again Christians (which is the only kind of Christian) are supernaturally saved FROM their sins by the gospel, which is the message that God uses to save sinners!

IF YOU ARE born-again by the Spirit of God, your life will be significantly different than BEFORE you were born-again! Your new life will consist of constantly turning away from your sins to Christ; you will live your new life in obedience to the Word of God! 2 Corinthians 5:17

John 14:21: Jesus said: He that has (or possesses) my commandments AND KEEPS THEM, he it is that loves me

John 14:23: If a man loves me, he will keep (obey) my words

The Apostle James wrote: Be ye doers of the Word and not hearers only; if any of you are hearers of the Word and NOT doers, you are deceiving yourself into believing that you are a Christian

Christian, as we open Ecclesiastes this morning, you should be wholeheartedly ready to listen, understand, and obey God's Word. You should be putting off the old man and putting on Christ!

If you're lost, Jesus Christ died on the bloody cross for sinners just like you! BELIEVE that He suffered and died in your place and for your sins! Turn from your sins and your life and believe in Christ! If you would be supernaturally saved from your sins, you MUST look unto Jesus; trust in His atoning sacrifice; the ONLY WAY that you may come to God and be reconciled to Him is to come to Christ in repentance and faith!

After beholding all of the oppressions that are done under the sun, Solomon turned to behold those that were envious and jealous toward those that were diligent, hardworking; and successful, skillful, and talented in their work.

These envious/jealous people in the world are those that, when they SEE diligence, hard work, and skill in others, instead of being happy for them, and learning from them, and being motivated and inspired by their success and diligence, they envy and hate them.

This sinful mindset that Solomon saw in his day, exists in the hearts and attitudes of many in the world today: Titus 3:3

Again, I considered all travail (or all of man's toil and labor), and every right (or successful/skillful) work, that FOR THIS a man is envied of his neighbor. This is vanity, and vexation of spirit (V4)

So, Solomon describes someone who is doing a right work

They work hard and apply themselves to their craft. They read and study in order that they might constantly be improving and bettering themselves; these are those that are diligent in their business.

THIS attitude/spirit should exist in you Christian! Every one of us OUGHT to be what Solomon described in our devotion to Christ; every one of us should be wholehearted in this RIGHT WORK! 2 Timothy 2:15

It's interesting to consider this, because we should EXPECT to be hated, persecuted, and made fun of for our faith in Christ; Jesus said, you will be hated of all men for my Name's sake.

But here Solomon writes, those who are wholehearted and devoted to their craft or their work will be envied by their neighbor; (perhaps by those who are of the same craft). Christian, you are to be the one who is diligently laboring to do right in your life; in the sight of God!

Colossians 3:23: And whatsoever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men

There are diligent, successful, hard workers in the world, (whatever their motivation might be), and there are those that follow after Christ with their whole hearts; they are diligent and hard workers for the Kingdom of Christ; they study and know their Bible, and by God's grace they live what they learn. And for this, they are envied and hated by some of their contemporaries.

Christian, you are NOT to be envious and jealous toward any!

What is ENVY?

It's discontentment or resentment toward another person because of what they possess, or because of their success or prosperity. It's very closely related to jealousy and covetousness. At the root of envy is selfishness!

It's easy to behold this sin in children; one child shows up with a new toy, but instead of the other children saying wow, that's a cool toy, I am happy for you; they begrudge the child who has the new toy and begin to say, I want one! And they will try to take it from the child who has it.

Charles Bridges said: Envy is wounded at the prosperity of another, like him who could not see the happiness of Paradise without destroying it. It is indeed the deadliest fruit of selfishness

The scriptures record instances of this wicked sin of envy/jealousy toward those that were doing right and prospering, (for our instruction/learning):

The Philistines toward Isaac: Genesis 26:12-16, 19-20

King Saul toward David: 1 Samuel 18:5-9

Ahab toward Naboth: 1 Kings 21:1-4

The chief priests toward the Lord Jesus: Mark 15:9-11

The Jews toward Paul: Acts 13:44-46

Psalms 112 embodies the life of the righteous, and the envious and jealous reaction of the wicked toward them. (Psalms 112 ENTIRE)

Proverbs 14:30, 27:4, 6:34, Mark 7:21-22, Romans 13:13-14, 1 Corinthians 13:4

This ought to move each one of us to take a good hard look to see if ENVY and JEALOUSY exists in our lives. How do you and I look upon one who is successful because of their hard work? Godly because they are wholly devoted to God in their hearts? We ought to praise God when we see goodness, godliness, and righteousness in another's life.

We ought to be happy and rejoice for those that have done right and been blessed of the Lord! We ought to admire God's work whenever we see it perfected in someone else!

How can we be full of envy and jealousy toward anyone else for what they possess when we have Christ?

I love the heart and words of Mephibosheth when David was returning to Jerusalem after fleeing from Absalom his son. His heart toward David is how our hearts ought to be toward Christ.

2 Samuel 19:24-30, Psalm 73:25-26, 119:57

If and when we detect envy and jealousy in our hearts toward anyone, we need to repent of it; CUT IT OFF and CAST IT OUT of our lives! Mortify and kill it before it ruins our souls!

For those who are not saved, you're not a believer in Christ, listen to me:

Do you look at the lives of those that love Christ and desire to have what they have? Understand that the blessedness, joy, and peace which they possess did not come from within themselves, but from Christ! What they have, you may have if you would turn from your sins to Christ!