

"Envy"

Mark 15:1-15 (1009)

By Darrell Benhardus

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INTRODUCTION

1. Video Clip: *The Window* [Show It]
2. Envy is the ugliest of the Seven Deadly Sins.
 - (1). Portrayed in the video clip
 1. Burt envied George's place by window
 - Resented him for having it better
 2. Burt not only wanted it but wanted it taken from George
 - (2). **Definition:** Envy is being bitter that others have it better
 1. How it differs from **coveting**
 - (1). Both want what someone else has
 - (2). Envy wants to see it taken from the other person
 - Resents their good fortune and wants them stripped of it
 2. How it differs from **jealousy**
 - (1). Threatened that someone they love will be taken away
 - Losing something they have
 - (2). Envy does not possess what their rival has but longs to see it taken from them.
 - Take joy in the demise of their rival
- (3). **Examples** of the ugliness of envy.
 1. September 11, 2001
 - (1). Dancing in celebration of our tragedy
 - (2). Resentment that we have it better
 - Joy in our demise
 2. Examples in the Bible
 - (1). Joseph and his brothers
 - Resentment that Joseph had it better
 - (2). David and Saul
 - The star resented the superstar
 3. Victor Hugo's story
 - (1) Envy and Avarice granted opportunity to receive whatever they wished.
 - One condition: the other receives a double portion
 - (2). Envy: "I wish to be blind in one eye!"
- (4). Envy is like gangrene in the soul.

* A couple of questions I want to look at regarding envy:

Question # 1 What causes us to envy others?

READ Mark 15:1-15 (1009)

1. What causes the chief priests to envy Jesus?

(1). They saw Jesus as a rival who **out-shown and **outdid** them**

1. Crowds listened because he taught with authority
 - Unlike their teachers of the law
2. Crowds were amazed at his miraculous works
 - They accused him of using the power of Satan
3. Knew the Scriptures and God better than they did
 - Mt. 22:29 "You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures of the power of God."
4. He was wiser than they were
 - (1). Tried to trap him in his words
 - (2). Crowds: "Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel."

(2). Jesus **threatened their skewed vision of **security****

1. They saw security as something that they could manufacture

- (1). Approval of the people
 - Outshining and outdoing others religiously
- (2). Their positions of authority
 - Control over the religious life of Israel

2. They felt secure as long as they **out-shown and **outdid** their rivals**

- Their standing was being diminished by Jesus
3. They envied the popularity and power of Jesus
 - Secure as long as they are superior to him

(3). The ugliness of their envy.

1. They not only wanted Jesus' popularity and power.
 - Wanted what he had
2. They also wanted him destroyed
 - (1). Slandered him with false accusations (3)
 - Mark 14:55-56
 - (2). They wanted him killed
 - Tortured to death (13).

2. It is a **skewed vision of security that causes us to envy others.**

(1). The **skewed cure for envy: being better than our rivals**

1. Feel diminished when others have it better
 - Security based upon **outshining** and **outdoing** our rivals

2. Envy is **comparative.**

- (1). It takes place with those we are in close proximity

1. We don't envy those far removed from us

- Examples: 1. Joe Mauer
- 2. President Obama

2. We envy those who we see as rivals

- (1). My temptation to envy
 - Other preachers
- (2). Those we are apt to envy:
 - 1. Family members
 - Joseph's brothers
 - 2. Those in our employment field
 - Saul and David
 - 3. Those in our church, neighborhood, school
 - * Feel diminished when they have it better

(2). The envious feel secure only when they outrank their rivals

- 1. Example of Snow White [Slide: Snow White]



- Not happy unless she was the fairest

- 2. Our security is conditioned upon excelling our rival

(2). Envy will not stop until one's rival is diminished

- 1. Symptoms of envy

- "Feeling offended at the talents, successes, or good fortune of others; selfish or unnecessary rivalry and competition; pleasure at other's difficulties or distress; ill will; reading false motives into other's behavior; belittling others; false accusations; backbiting (saying something bad, even if true, behind another's back); slander (saying something bad, even if true, in the open about someone); initiation, collection, or retelling of gossip; arousing, fostering, or organizing

antagonism against others; scorn of another's abilities or failures; teasing or bullying; ridicule of persons, institutions, or ideals; and prejudice against those we consider inferior, who consider us inferior, or who seem to threaten our security or position."

2. Envy is driven by a **skewed vision of security**:
 - My **worth** is **manufactured** by **outdoing** and **outshining** my rivals.

Question # 2 What is God's cure for envy?

"Love is patient, love is kind. It does **not envy**." 1 Corinthians 13:4

1. Envy is the **opposite** of love.
 - (1). Envy seeks the other's demise
 - One's security is based upon outdoing and outshining
 - (2). Love seeks the other's good
 - Doesn't become bitter when other's have it better
2. The cure for envy requires a **clear vision of security**.
 - (1). Security is not found in something externally manufactured
 - By **outdoing** and **outshining** my rivals.
 - (2). Security is found in something **internally given: God's love**
 1. God's love is a gift
 - (1). It is undeserved
 - (2). We don't compete for it
 2. Envy requires a spiritual solution
 - The most natural thing can only be transformed by the most unnatural thing
 3. Contrast between dating and marriage
 - (1). Premise of **dating**
 - Outdo one's rivals to win the love of another and secure the relationship
 - (2). Premise of **marriage**
 - One is working from an already secure relationship into a greater love
 - (3). God's love removes the need to outdo and outshine others
 1. His love is not based upon outdoing and outshining
 2. Nothing can separate us from his love
 - Not even others having it better

KEY TRUTH: Surrendering to the security of God's love will cure envy.

1. Envy is a chronic sin.
 - (1). It flares up when we have a skewed vision of our security.
 - Bitter when others have it better
 - (2). If we are loved by God, there is nothing better

1. Not begrudge the gifts God gives to others
2. It doesn't diminish the security of his love for me
 - If others have it better, it doesn't mean He loves them more.

2. We are beloved children of God through faith in Jesus Christ.

- (1). Best analogy of God's love is a mother's love. [Slide: Mother]



1. Thomas Haliburton writes: "A woman has two smiles that an angel might envy. The smile that accepts a lover before words are uttered and the smile that lights on the first born baby, and assures it of a mother's love."
2. God's love is infinitely greater than a mother's love
 - Isaiah 49:15-16 "Can a mother forget the baby at her breast and have no compassion on the child she has borne? Though she may forget, I will not forget you! See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands"

3. Steve Mathewson's story about Ted Kaczynski

(1). Pastored a church in Helena, MT [Slide: Unabomber]



1. Studied in the public library on the edge of town
 - Saw the same group of 4 or 5 mountain men
2. Four years after he left Helena discovered one of them was Ted Kaczynski,
 1. Grew up a gifted young man
 - Became a math professor
 2. Became disillusioned and moved to the mountains
 3. Sent mail bombs to people he did not like
 - Eventually caught & sent to prison

(2). He writes:

"A while ago, his mother, Wanda Kaczynski, was interviewed by a reporter with the Chicago Tribune. She made some statements that I thought were powerful. At the time that the article was written, she had been writing monthly letters to her son in prison. She shared with the reporter what she had written in her most recent letter. She wrote: 'I want you to know, Ted, that when a child is born, the parents give them the gift of unconditional love for a lifetime. This is true of you. No matter what happens, my love for you will be there for a lifetime. Love, Mother.'

"Even after he had refused to look at her when he entered the courtroom during his trial, even after he had given testimony in court that described her as a horrible person, she still loved him enough to write those monthly letters.

"We look at that as a rather amazing act of human love, but Romans 5 says God has done something even more incredible than that. While we were still sinners—while were

still in full-out rebellion against him—he sent his son to die for us. In 1 John 4:10, John writes, "This is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins."

(2). Surrendering to the security of this love will cure envy.

1. Security is not found in external sources

(Like having it better than others)

2. Security is surrendering to the inward reality of God's love.

BENEDICTION

1. May the amazing grace of the Lord, Jesus Christ, the extravagant love of God the intimate friendship of the Holy Spirit, be with all of you."