

LOVE DOES NOT ENVY

40 Days of Love

WEEK 3

We're in this series on 40 Days of Love. The most common destroyer of friendships is not anger, it's not impatience, it's not apathy, and it's not unkindness. It's envy. And in our series, as we go through this 40 Days of Love, this week we're going to look at the verse in the Bible that says, "Love does not envy." It is impossible to envy someone and love them at the same time. So, what is envy? It's resenting God's goodness to others and ignoring God's goodness to me. That's what envy is.

MEMORY VERSE FOR THE WEEK

...Love does not envy...

1 Corinthians 13:4b

[1] For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. [2] Now when he had agreed with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. [3] And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, [4] and said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you.' So they went. [5] Again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour, and did likewise. [6] And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing idle, and said to them, 'Why have you been standing here idle all day?' [7] They said to him, 'Because no one hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right you will receive.' [8] "So when evening had come, the owner of the vineyard said to his steward, 'Call the laborers and give them their wages, beginning with the last to the first.' [9] And when those came who were hired about the eleventh hour, they each received a denarius. [10] But when the first came, they supposed that they would receive more; and they likewise received each a denarius. [11] And when they had received it, they complained against the landowner, [12] saying, 'These last men have worked only one hour, and you made them equal to us who have borne the burden and the heat of the day.' [13] But he answered one of them and said, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? [14] Take what is yours and go your way. I wish to give to this last man the same as to you. [15] Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with my own things? Or is your eye evil because I am good?' [16] So the last will be first, and the first last. For many are called, but few chosen."

Matthew 20:1-16 (NKJV)

MONDAY

Fellowship

STOP COMPARING YOURSELF TO OTHERS.

Those hired last came up and were each given a dollar. When those who were hired first saw that, they assumed they would get far more.

Matthew 20:9-10a (Msg)

Read Acts 2:42-45

What did the believers do to combat envy?
What are some of the personal problems envy causes?

Read Ecclesiastes 4:10

Why do many people work so hard?
Have you ever been envious of someone else's
things, talents, etc.? How did this make you feel?

Fellowship - God cherishes relationship. His very nature is relational; He wants to share His gifts with us. For He promised, "my God will meet all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus." As children of God we get to share in the family fortune. Here on earth we are given "the riches...of His grace...kindness...patience...glory...wisdom...power...and money" not envy.

TUESDAY

Discipleship (Maturity)

START ENJOYING GOD'S GRACE TO OTHERS

The workers who had been hired first thought they would be given more than the others. But when they were given the same, they began complaining to the owner of the vineyard... He said, 'Are you envious because I am generous to them?'

Matthew 20:10-11, 15b (CEV/NIV)

Rejoice with those who rejoice!

Romans 12:15 (NIV)

Read 1 Corinthians 3:1-3 and James 4:1

According to these scriptures, what keeps Christians from maturing?

According to James, where do these hindrances come from?

When was the last time you believed Satan's lie and fell into the trap of envy?

Realize your vulnerability. God warns us never to get cocky and overconfident; that is the recipe for disaster. Jeremiah said, "The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure." That means we are good at fooling ourselves. Given the right circumstances, any of us are capable of any sin. We must never let down our guard and think we're beyond temptation. Accountability nurtures maturity. Consider one of our small groups to develop your spiritual maturity.

WEDNESDAY

Worship (Magnification)

BE GRATEFUL FOR WHAT YOU HAVE

Isn't everything you have and everything you are sheer gifts from God? So what's the point of all this comparing and competing? You already have all you need!

1 Corinthians 4:7b-8a (Msg)

It is better to be satisfied with what you have than to be always wanting something else.

Ecclesiastes 6:9 (GN)

Read 1 Corinthians 4:7-8

How does worship help you combat envy?

Have you ever admitted your envies to a friend?

What was their reaction?

Have you ever schemed to get your own way? How did envy drive you to manipulate others?

Worship (Magnification) - When Jesus said, "Love God with all your heart and soul" he meant that worship must be genuine and heartfelt. It is not just a matter of saying the right words; you must mean what you say. Heartless praise is not praise at all! It is worthless, an insult to God.

THURSDAY

Evangelism (Mission)

TRUST GOD WHEN LIFE SEEMS UNFAIR

These last workers put in only one easy hour, and yet you have made them equal to us - we who slaved all day under a scorching sun!

Matthew 20:12 (Msg)

The Owner: "Friends, I didn't cheat you. I paid you exactly what we agreed on... What business is it of yours if I want to pay them the same that I paid you? Don't I have the right to do what I want with my own money?"

Matthew 20:13-15a (CEV)

God has a mission for your life. He knows exactly what is needed to accomplish His purpose in your life, even when life seems unfair.

(God) comforts and strengthens us in our hardship and trials... So that when others are troubled, needing our sympathy and encouragement, we can pass on to them this same help and comfort God has given us.

2 Corinthians 1:4

According to this verse, how should tribulations effect your ability to help others?

Read Revelation 2:4

Envy is the fever. Doubting God is the infection.
What is the reason of your sickness?
According to Revelation 2:4, what is the cure?

Evangelism (Mission) - Your mission gives your life meaning. Williams James said, "The best use of life is to spend it for something that outlasts it." The truth is, only the kingdom of God is going to last. Everything else will eventually vanish. That is why we must live purpose-driven lives - lives committed to worship, fellowship, spiritual growth, ministry, and fulfilling our mission on earth. The results of these activities will last - forever!

FRIDAY

Service (Ministry)

KEEP FOCUSED ON GOD'S PLAN FOR YOU

The owner: "Take your money now and go!"

Matthew 20:14a (GW)

Let us run with patience the particular race that God has set before us.

Hebrews 12:1

You saw me before I was born and scheduled every day of my life before I began to breathe.

Psalms 139:15 (LB)

Jesus concluded: "And so it is, that many who are first now will be last then and those who are last now will be first then... If you want to be great, you must become the servant of all the others."

Matthew 20:16, 26 (NLT/CEV)

Read John 13:2–20

What in your life is God going to evaluate and reward in Heaven?

What has God promised, in verse 17, if you use your life for service to others?

And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.

Galatians 6:9-10 (NKJV)

Whenever people are jealous or selfish, they cause trouble.

James 3:16

How should you use your spiritual gifts?

What affect does your envy have on your service to Christ?

Service (Ministry) - While knowing your shape is important for serving God, having the heart of a servant is even more important. Remember, God shaped you for service, not for self-centeredness. Without a servant's heart, you will be tempted to misuse your shape for personal gain. You will also be tempted to use it as an excuse to exempt yourself from meeting some needs.

SATURDAY

Personal Application and Commitment

The truth is, although we all struggle with envy, it's hard to admit it. It's hard to admit that we struggle with this.

1. It is such an ugly emotion, such an ugly feeling toward others.
2. Envy, when you're envious of others, you really want them to fail. You want them to fall flat on their face. You don't tell anyone else, but it really makes your day when they have a bad day.
3. Because you feel better because they don't have something. When you think about that, that's pretty crazy, isn't it? It's hard to recognize envy because it's all around us. It's a part of our society. We're inundated with it.

Revelations 2:4 tells us to remember, repent and redo our first works, as when we were first in love with Jesus.

Spend 15 minutes alone with God today and ask Him to point out any envy in your heart.

Now ask God's forgiveness and to replace this void with greater commitment to love God.