

Love Does Not Envy

「 Introduction 」

Love is kind. Love is neither weakness nor uncontrolled anger. The Bible shows kindness as gentleness (1 Corinthians 13), silence (Numbers 12), self-control (Deuteronomy 34), refraining from revenge (1 Samuel 24), and the power to build others up (Galatians 6). A kind person is someone who resembles Jesus. I hope you get to learn and know Jesus's deep and wide embrace.

「 8 things love is not 」

1 Corinthians 13 describes 15 characteristics of love. Among them, 7 are stated positively and 8 negatively. In particular, the negative expressions clearly define the boundaries of love by saying, "This is not love."

Love

Does not envy.

Does not boast.

Is not arrogant.

Is not rude.

Does not insist on its own way.

Is not irritable.

Is not resentful.

Does not rejoice at wrongdoing.

「 A story of a merchant 」

There were two merchants who were rivals. The two competed fiercely. When one lowered his prices, the other lowered his even more. When one offered free gifts, the other offered better ones. It seemed as if their goal was not to make a profit, but to bring the other down.

One day, an angel appeared to one of the merchants and said, "What is your wish? I will grant it."

But there was a condition: "Your competitor will receive twice whatever you receive. If you wish for a car, you will get one, and your competitor will get two. If you wish to become a millionaire, you will become one—but your competitor will become twice as wealthy."

After hearing this, the man thought for a long time. Then he said firmly, "Angel, please take one of my eyes."

-- From Love by Lee Kook Jin

Sharing

Proverbs 14:30 "A tranquil heart gives life to the flesh, but envy makes the bones rot."

In the end, the one who suffers the most from envy is oneself. As the Book of Proverbs says, envy rots the bones.

1. If there have been small moments in your life when a sense of rivalry unexpectedly rose up—such as with dieting, exercise, children, shopping, grades, achievements, promotions, and so on—let's share about them.

2. When envy subtly arises, if you have tried any shifts in perspective or have your own ways of overcoming it, let's share those as well.

「 Envy in the Bible 」

1. Cain's envy

- a. Background: God only receives Abel's sacrifice but not Cain's
- b. Result: Cain kills Abel out of comparison and envy
- c. Remedy: "You must rule over sin" (Genesis 4:7)

2. Joseph's brothers' envy

- a. Background: envy caused by Jacob's favoritism and Joseph's dreams
- b. Result: Joseph is thrown into a pit and sold to slavery
- c. Remedy: Forgiveness and reconciliation (Judah's ransom)

3. King Saul's envy

- a. Background: "Saul has struck down thousands, and David ten thousands."
- b. Result: Saul abandons God and seeks a medium (spiritual and mental chaos)
- c. Remedy: Jonathan's friendship

4. Tobiah's envy

- a. Background: When Nehemiah led the reform, he became angry because he was no longer at the center
- b. Result: Opposed God's good work through mockery, threats, and schemes
- c. Remedy: To whom does the Temple belong? (Nehemiah 13:4-5)

5. The elder brother in the Prodigal Son

- a. Background: angry towards God for His mercy and grace for the younger brother who had returned home
- b. Result: Unable to participate in the father's feast
- c. Remedy: The proper understanding of the Gospel (the perspective of the righteous and of the sinner)

6. The Pharisees' envy

- a. Background: Increasing enmity towards Jesus as His authority and influence grew
- b. Result: "For he knew that it was out of envy that they had delivered him up" (Matthew 27:18)
- c. Remedy: Knowing who Jesus is

Sharing

1. Among Cain, Joseph's brothers, Saul, Tobiah, the older brother, and the Pharisees, if there is a person you feel resembles you at this moment, let's share who and why.

「 Application 」 'Gratitude' that overcomes 'envy'

Envy weighs down the heart and makes us sick as though it were rotting our bones. But gratitude lightens the heart and enriches life. Envy traps us in comparison and complaint, while gratitude turns our eyes toward God and others, giving us freedom and peace. If envy fuels anger and distrust, gratitude nurtures faith and hope and allows us to experience small miracles. In the end, a thankful heart quiets envy and leads our lives into true worship offered to God.

Sharing

1. Let us think of 3 specific things we are thankful for that God has given us in 2026 and share them with one another. If there is a family member or someone close to you whom God has entrusted to you—someone you especially want to hold in your heart and pray for—let's share about that person and pray together.
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