

## Snapshot of a Disciple

A look at love in action - 1st Corinthians 13 (verse 4c)

Hello brothers, sisters and friends,

Welcome back to our little study in 1st Corinthians 13 :) I don't know about you, but this study is proving to be one of the most valuable studies I have ever done. I really needed this one, and I'm glad you could join me for it :)

Okay, so last time we were talking about 1st Corinthians 13, verse 4 - first phrase: **“Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up;”** (1st Corinthians 13:4)

Last time, as you might remember, we covered the importance of the little 3 word phrase - **“Love... is kind”**.

Today, I'd like to pick up on the next phrase **“...love does not envy...”**.

Envy. That word likely evokes the picture of a lady (or man) seeking to get revenge on someone who's hurt them - and get them back really 'good'. In many cases, it seems to work hand-in-hand with a strong selfishness that leads to murder in the heart and/or murder in reality. And, that's I think that's a good starting picture to work with. But, just to double-check, let's first see how accurate it is by comparing it to God's Word. The word envy there, according to Strong's Concordance is the word for strong warmth and/or anger. And in the context of this verse, it literally means: **‘boiling against’** or to put it another way, it's a *strong jealous or coveting*.

\*\* (Free study tool - Interlinear Scripture analyzer - [www.scripture4all.org](http://www.scripture4all.org))

Envy and jealousy are strong words, but those concepts are not always negative. When this concept is describing something about God, it's always a pure and righteous jealousy. Do you remember that God says He is jealous for those who He has saved from sin? That is why He takes it very seriously that we grow in treasuring our relationship with Him and keep moving more and more away from the perverse and self-centered pride and pleasures of this world. Let's look briefly at a few short passages on that, and then we'll go back to the text.

**“Spiritual Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, ‘The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously’? But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: ‘God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.’”** (James 4:4-6) ~ That is a strong passage! And rightly so. You see - before each of us repent of our sins and surrender our lives to Him, we are completely selfish in every way and in self-destruction mode. Sin destroys. And that's what the Bible says about it too: **“Then, when [sinful] desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.”** (James 1:15) Another passage that states this principle

clearly: **“Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.”** (Galatians 6:7-9) The word there for ‘corruption’ is the same word that can and does lead to perishing and destruction. So, simply put - sin destroys. Everything. All the time.

Another way God talks about His jealousy for those who are His, is His call for us to separate from the world’s activities and lifestyles that offend Him. **“Therefore ‘Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you.’”** (2nd Corinthians 6:17)

And, God graciously pulls some of us out of the pattern of the world’s rebellious ways. And the world responds this way to those do follow God: **“In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you.”** (1st Peter 4:4) If He’s pulled you out of the rebellious ways that you once walked and made you a new creation (2nd Cor. 5:17) with a new heart - as He has me, then you and are adopted into His family. **“But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.”** (1st Peter 2:9) That is one of the most amazing principles in Scripture - God saving, redeeming, cleansing, and re-claiming people for His Name, family, ministry and Eternal Kingdom. And, for those of us who have been saved like that - He is jealous for us. He hates it when we turn our back on Him to watch something that disgusts Him to the core of His being. He hates it when we despise how much He lavishes His grace on us, and we continue to carelessly live in the sins that He died to save us from. If we are His, then He has a pure, righteous jealousy for us that continues to prompt, push and motivate us to become more pure, less like the world - yet it comes with a growth in a pure love for others who live like we once did. - That’s pure, perfect, beautiful jealousy. And that is only found in God - and sometimes found in those of us who follow Jesus - sometimes. :)

Now, back to the text - pure selfish, self-centered, self-promoting envy and jealousy. That is what the text above is describing, and that is what we see here in this 1st Corinthians description of love in action - that love is nothing like that. God’s love is pure loyalty to truth and holiness, therefore THAT love ought to and needs to motivate us to not selfishly fight for our own want or desires. **“Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your [selfish] desires for pleasure that war in your members? You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.”** (James 4:1-3)

Single people, may I say a word to you? You may have found someone that you think is the right one for you, but that does not mean that they are. If you are a growing

follower of Christ, you need to remember that God knows who is right for you and He sees many things that you and I don't. He knows the perfect timing - He knows the right person for you. Men - He has the right lady for you. Ladies - He has the right man for you. The question is: Are you willing to be patient for Him to teach you so you're ready for that person and let God teach them so they're ready for you? Or are you going to demand it on your time, in your way? If you demand your time, you will miss the one God has for you. Being impatient is never wise for any of us to do, btw :) - but that's pretty common knowledge. Patience is so counter-culture to our Mc-everything culture. Buy it now. Have it now. Enjoy it now. You 'deserve' it. You've 'earned' it.

Also, while I'm on the subject, and the sickening time of 'Valentine's Day' and all of the lust and immodesty promoted in everything - can we talk about that really quick? First note - love is not wrong, but sex outside of the Biblical marriage relationship, lust in our heart, and immodesty in our clothes - are always wrong. Not my words - it's God's Word. (If you want/need verses on that, just ask - [Steven.H3@gmail.com](mailto:Steven.H3@gmail.com))

Also, slightly different subject - There's a notion going around that God doesn't have a pre-decided will for our lives - most of it is gray area... That's not right. It's popular, and it's comfortable, but it's not right. It's also not Biblical. Have you seen this phrase? **"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."** (Romans 12:2) - Did you notice those 3 categories? 'Good' - 'Acceptable' - 'Perfect'. I'm assuming it goes something like that we can find a good option at first, but if we dismiss that, then we can find a lesser - acceptable option. But, if we say no to the first 2 categories of options, waiting on the Lord and growing in walking in His ways, then we - at some point, will get to see the best/perfect option. But, sadly, most don't wait that long. That's why we see so many divorces. They enter the marriage for the wrong reasons with the wrong motivations and the wrong heart-attitudes. And, then on top of that - they don't fight for one of the core principles that was founded in the Garden of Eden - marriage: one man + one woman. That's God's order - everything else is demonic temptation and will cause you pain - if you follow it. I suggest that we - you and me, keep growing in rejecting all of satan's 'fun' alternatives, and keep growing in obedience to God's Word, and growing in walking in God's ways, and growing to have God's motivations. Well, as the lustfest of 'Valentine's Day' and 'Spring break' move closer, I will plan to talk about this more.

I do need to note one more thing - I've lightly brushed over a couple huge things, so I know I missed something. So, please do note that just because I didn't mention it, doesn't mean that I don't believe that truth is in Scripture. If you see something big that I missed - please email me. :) Thank you :)

One thing I did see that I want to cover is that any reason and event for a husband and wife to show love for each other is just fine! Don't hold back. Though, in public places, I hope you'll be mindful of the single-people around you so that you don't accidentally cause them to stumble or accidentally cause them to imitate you with an

action/activity that is right in marriage but not in a non-marriage situation. But with that said, expressions of love between married couples are a must - both the husband and wife needs it! :)

So, with all of that said, let's get back to the text - **"...love does not envy..."** (1st Corinthians 13:4c). If you'll notice, I've covered some of the foundations, that if held tightly to, you will naturally not have to fight envy so much.

Husbands/wives: Make sure that you two are growing closer to each other in every way possible. Make the core emphasis of your marriage to be just what Jesus said: **"For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh"; so then they are no longer two, but one flesh.**" (Mark 10:7-8) Grow in becoming one - in heart, mind, soul, ambition - desire. Not losing either's personality or experiences, but working to filter them both through God's Word and looking how to move forward in your walk with Christ, and in ministry for Him - together in as many aspects as possible. :)

Single Guys/Ladies: Grow in purity and holiness. Grow in a love for truth and convicting yet challenging teaching. Grow in the necessary character traits of a husband/wife will need. Grow in learning to love reality and facts and hate fantasy and lies. Grow in learning how to love what God loves - hate what God hates, and how to love people in the same way He loves us. - Make a covenant with your eyes between you and God to keep yourself pure to and through marriage. (Job 31:1 - see also 'purity rings') Or, if you plan to stay single for the rest of your life, then intentionally spend more time in God's Word and learning how to handle people graciously, yet not losing track of the direction God is leading you.

**\*\* "I have made a covenant with my eyes; why then should I look [with lust] upon a young woman?"** (Job 31:1)

So, now with that all said - when we keep our relationship with God in perspective, we can quickly dismiss envy and jealousy. Envy and jealousy are reaction-responses. There is something that leads up to the falls or fears that bring out this response. If you find yourself envying or being jealous, I ask you to prayerfully consider how you've wandered off track from the Word. Typically, if/when we get our heart right and under self-control, God will work on the other party - if they have something at fault.

I should also note that if you find you are listening to a spiritual leader who is laughing about envy, jealousy, lust, sex, or sexual immorality - you need to really ask the question of if that person has fallen, and/or how that leader has fallen. These are serious subjects and not joking matters. Especially when you find a leader who is laughing about lust, you can assess that comment as not warning to flee from lust/immorality anymore, now that individual is joking about it and telling on themselves and their personal lives somehow. That leader needs to be corrected or replace, or you need to find an honorable Bible teacher. And, if you didn't already know it, we have many of this kind of spiritually fallen leaders in pulpits and deacon-

committees all across the country. And one main thing that causes many to fall is freemasonry or their private entertainment. I just note that to bring this subject to your mind to watch for. Remember lust/immorality are one 3 things in the Bible we are told to flee from.

- > Lust/immorality (1st Corinthians 6:18; Matthew 5:28; Job 31:1)
- > Idolatry (1st Corinthians 10:14; 1st John 5:21)
- > Witchcraft (Deut. 18:10-12; Acts 19:19) - *today it's found in Disney & Harry Potter*

On lust/immorality:

**“Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality [all forms] sins against his own body.”** (1st Corinthians 6:18)

**“But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”** (Matthew 5:28)

Well, thank you for joining me. I hope you'll join me again when we pick up our study in 1st Corinthians - a study of what love in action looks like and how we can apply those principles to our lives. ~ your growing brother/friend, a growing servant/life-slave of Jesus, SH :)