

# How Satan Destroys a Church - Part 8 (God's Graduate School)

by Don Courville

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*The root of envy is a poisonous root that destroys wherever it is present, but it can also be a doorway to the presence of God.*

**Duration:** 50:19

**Scripture:** Genesis 5:26, Genesis 26:14, Romans 13:13, 1 Corinthians 3:3, James 3:14-15, 1 Peter 2:1

**Topics:** "Spiritual Warfare"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the destructive fruits of envy and the importance of maintaining agreement in relationships. He emphasizes that envy and jealousy can quickly break a relationship and have devastating consequences. The speaker also highlights the role of suffering in the Christian journey, drawing from the book of 1 Peter. He encourages listeners to rejoice in their participation in Christ's sufferings and to allow these trials to shape them into becoming more like Christ.

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## Transcript

Well, we've been going through this series on how the enemy destroys our churches. It basically still destroys our lives, destroys our homes, destroys our nations. These principles just work.

And last week I was talking to one of the men in the church and something was mentioned and that that would be a good one to cover. And I'm going to cover it, but it's going to be in such a way that you won't really realize what it is until we get right down to the end. And then the floodlights maybe will come on because we're going to talk about a fruit and at the end we're going to just mention what that root is.

That root is a poisonous root and it just destroys wherever someone eats up that root. And to eat of the root you just partake of the fruit. And the fruit will be evidence of the root.

The title of this is God's Graduate School. God's Graduate School. And I have a book here I brought with me that I would encourage everyone to read, especially young people and my children.

I want you to read this book. It's a book. It's a look at jealousy, the secret to loving God.

We're going to cover this subject today. We're going to use the word envy. But this is a very good book put out by Mr. Gothard and I'd encourage you to read it.

It's interesting that in our family school this morning it was mentioned, one of the things that was mentioned was how he said it like this, I think, Roy, the thief and the robber is very zealous. And are we as zealous for good as Satan is for evil? Very good challenge. Well, the title of this is God's Graduate School.

And we've been looking at this subject going all the way back to the beginning. This is our eighth message and I think I'll stop on this. There are some deeper things that I can share and I may share them if I go off and minister in other places, share these things.

These are type of truths that could bring revival in a church if they're preached and the Spirit of God is able to take in. This subject this morning we're going to look at is envy. Remember, our basic thing is, the basis of a lifelong relationship is agreement.

Envy, jealousy, this type of thing will break a relationship very quickly. But there's one thing about this subject is that whenever envy is present, this jealousy, it has the most devastating consequences you can imagine. And I want to show you that this morning.

And the basis of a lifelong relationship is agreement. That we never let anything break our relationship with each other and with the Lord. And the Lord is continually, He's very jealous for us.

That's why I want you to read this book, The Jealousy of God. A New Look at Jealousy is the title of the book. A New Look at Jealousy, The Secret to Loving God.

Now there's, I'm going to say some things and then I'm going to tell you what we're going to do. I want to just sort of give you some introduction into this. And then we're going to look at what are the destructive fruits of envy and what are the positive fruits of envy to the one that it's directed against.

Which is the thing that might be shocking. How can anything positive come out of it? But this is the whole point of God being sovereign and letting things go. He's got a way of bringing out a different ending.

And then the last thing is, is there a root of this fruit? And we'll look at those things. Let's pray now. Now Father, this has not been a very easy subject.

But it's been one that's been given in request of someone else. And I just pray that as we close down this series this morning, that the Spirit of God would open up our heart to be so excited about God. About the person of Jesus Christ.

And how you're always with us. And you said you'd never leave us. And so we thank you for that comfort.

And we ask that the Holy Spirit would anoint this time now in Jesus' name. Amen. Proverbs 27, 4 says, Wrath is cruel and anger is outrageous, but who is able to stand before envy? I've thought about that dozens and dozens of times.

Who is able to stand before envy? Envy is to the one who is the target of it, in actuality, a doorway that forces them in to the presence of God. Someone that experiences the attack of an envious person, someone jealous for what they're doing for God, will actually be used by God in His sovereign person to force that person right into the presence of God. And I'm going to show you that this morning, because I thought on this thing.

The Bible talks about, it says, wrath is cruel. Wrath. You know what that... I'm not a Hebrew scholar, it's the word chema.

Chemicals. I thought, is that? And I didn't go to check it out. It's C-H-E-M-A-H.

That doesn't mean a lot, but it means heat, anger, rage, indignation, fury. And one of the words that's used six times is poison. Well, we know that you can get poisoned through chemicals.

Job 6, verse 4 said, For the arrows of the Almighty are within me. God had allowed these arrows to come within Him. And the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit, dries up the bones.

Isn't that what bitterness would be? Dries up the bones. Psalms 143. Poison is under their lips as David went through it.

James 3.8 The tongue can no man tame. It is an unruly evil full of deadly poison. And the reason that it comes is so many times because of this jealousy.

John the Baptist was tempted to be envious in John 3.26. We're going through the book of John. John the Baptist, all men are going to Jesus. What do you think about that, John? Oh, that's great.

He must increase and I must decrease. Wasn't nothing there that it could stick. Tyndale went through it.

Luther went through it. Whitfield went through it. Jonathan Edwards went through it.

Moody went through it. Finney went through it. Torrey went through it.

Spurgeon went through it. Hudson Taylor went through it. And you just go down the line.

All of these great men and women of God that have been used have experienced some kind of a test. A fiery trial, as the Bible might talk about it. And there's all kinds of ways the enemy can destroy us as I'm seeing.

This unforgiving spirit, bitterness, pride, love of the world, gossip, slander, wrong music, youth groups, worldliness, whatever area you can get in. But this one particular area we're going to talk about here has such an effect to destroy so totally that it's interesting to look at. You say, interesting? Yeah, I think it's interesting.

As I looked back at, and remember I'm sharing sometimes many stories of pastors and church situations and things. As I'm looking back, it is true that this destroys lives so terribly, but yet there is something that happens. There is a little bitty flower that comes up amongst all the ashes of ruin and destruction and damage, and some of it is so horrible we are even still yet tender in our thoughts about some of it that we've experienced.

A little flower comes up. Now, I remember as a little boy, it made an impression on me. I never got this picture out of my mind.

We had a pastor. I think he was the third one in our church. They always talked about the first one, the apostle missionary that came in and got this little work going.

And then mom and dad moved out in this neighborhood. And then the second one, I remember him greatly. He used to be a great man of God.

But then the next one, I remember this man. He's a little sawed-off, short preacher. A little bit chubby.

Ears stuck out. Fat cheeks. Came from North Carolina.

He had a problem that somebody didn't like. He had this terrible problem of weeping for souls. He'd stand up there in the pulpit and the tears would come down his cheeks as he wept for souls to be saved.

And somebody had an envious spirit. They did not like a preacher that wept. And took upon themselves to be a committee.

Maybe a man and woman. I don't know. But they took upon themselves that this man had to go.

And they destroyed that pastor. And his only crime was he had such a burden for souls that sometimes he would weep in the pulpit. And they destroyed him.

And it's interesting that that spirit remained in the church. And I think through the same people year after year. Now the next pastor came along.

He stayed a long time. But he had to contend with this. The next pastor after him, the same thing.

He was a young pastor. And I think if I remember correctly, I was there when they crucified him in a business meeting. This spirit of envy took a hold and destroyed that man and threw him out of the church, a young pastor.

The spirit of envy was devastating in this church. Jealousy. Jealous disposition.

Now someone said in Old Puritan, Henry Smith, envy is sin and it punisheth itself like gluttony. For it fretteth the heart, shorteneth the life, and eateth the flesh. Now one of those involved in this, because I was around it, I've noticed they became extremely consumed with arthritis.

Is it tied in? I don't know. I stayed out of it with that one. Sometimes I get into things.

Well, let's see what these destructive fruits of envy are. And then jump over to the positive fruits and then see if we can see what this root is. What do you do when someone throws a spear at you? They throw a jab at you.

They put out a word about you. They write a letter about you. They do something about you.

Like David, he had a spear thrower that didn't like him. What do you do? Well, let me start this off with an interesting introduction. Remember, the title of this message is God's Graduate School from an article by Gene Edwards in A Tale of Three Kings.

It's a very interesting book. Somebody sent me a few years ago. God has a university.

It's a small school. Few enroll. Even fewer graduate.

Very, very few indeed. God has this school because He does not have broken men and women. Instead, He has several other types of people.

He has people who claim to have God's authority and don't. People who claim to be broken and aren't. And people who do not have God's authority, but who are mad and unbroken.

And He has, regretfully, a great mixture of everything in between. All of these He has in abundance, but broken men and women, hardly at all. In God's sacred school of submission and brokenness, why are there so few students? Because all students in this school must suffer much pain.

And as you might guess, it is often the unbroken ruler whom God's sovereignty picks. And he's talking about Saul at this point. Whom God's sovereignty picks, who meets out the pain.

David was once a student in this school. And Saul was God's chosen way to crush David. And as the king grew in madness, David grew in understanding.

He knew that God had placed him in the king's palace under true authority. The authority of King Saul was true. Yes, God's chosen authority.

Chosen for David. Unbroken authority, yes. But divine in ordination, nonetheless.

Yes, that is possible. David drew in his breath, placed himself under his mad king, and moved further down the path of his earthly hell. David had a question.

What do you do when someone throws a spear at you? Especially if you are very talented at throwing spears yourself. And slinging stones. You are a warrior at heart.

But he throws a stone at you and he has the authority. Does it seem odd to you that David... And I added that little bit in there and I'll continue reading. Does it seem odd to you that David did not know the answer to this question? After all, everyone else in the world knows what to do when a spear is thrown at you.

Why, you pick up the spear and throw it right back. When someone throws a spear at you, David just wrench it out of the wall and throw it back. Everyone else does, you can be sure.

And in performing this small feat of returning thrown spears, you will prove many things. You are courageous. You stand for the right.

You boldly stand against the wrong. You are tough and can't be pushed around. You will not stand for injustice or unfair treatment.

You are the defender of the faith, keeper of the flame, detector of all heresy. You will not be wronged. All of these attributes then combine to prove that you are also a candidate for kingship.

Yes, perhaps you are the Lord's anointed. After the order of King Saul, there is also a possibility that some twenty years after your coronation, if he was to pick up that spear and throw it, you will be the most incredibly skilled spear thrower in all the realm. And also by then, quite mad.

Now, does God have a lesson to teach us? Let's see. I shared this before. A man that was greatly gifted of God.

His parents came from Russia. They were Mennonites up in the plains of Canada. He had the opportunity to go and be a great opera singer in Canada.

He was a great singer, still could be. I haven't seen him for years. But this man instead gave his heart to God and gave his life for the ministry and went through school and ended up being a tremendous influencer of hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of missionaries and pastors and leaders around this

world.

And in his position of where he was ministering, someone, because of his tremendous effect on people, his tremendous joy in the Lord developed a jealous spirit. And that one person ended up having this man crucified and thrown out. Thrown out.

And I know that this man had in his heart that someday he would probably be the president of this great institution, but instead he's thrown out as an outcast. Is there any value in that? Is there any profit in that? Well, only if we see the end of it do we get to see the value of experience in jealousy. Today he has a very deep ministry, a prayer ministry, because he's been buried.

Communicating, I would say, every year with tens of thousands probably of people in a network of prayer. Now, the destructive fruits. This man supposedly was destroyed.

His hopes of being president was supposedly destroyed, but God took him deeper. Let's look. Satan envied Eve.

Adam and Eve, I believe, because they now had the position of fellowship with God that he once had. Cain, we come on through, envied Abel. And Cain was very rough.

There seems to be a madness associated with this sin of envy. There just seems to be a spirit of madness. What about Isaac? You know, Isaac was a peaceful man.

He was a well digger. He dug those twelve wells, fifteen wells, or however many it was. And the Scripture says, and the Philistines envied him.

He was successful. He walked with God. And what about, there's a fable that was shared in these Arab countries.

You know, we pastored my first church out in Wyoming. And there was a man from New Mexico, I think is where he came from, and his ancestors came on from Mexico. And they loved to tell these stories.

He loved to tell me these stories. There was one over in the Libyan desert, a fable that went around of how Satan one day was walking through the desert. He's walking through the desert and he ran across some of the lower level beings of his order that were unsuccessful in persuading and discouraging and destroying a hermit that lived out in the desert for God and prayer and just seeking God and loving God and praying an intercessor who was really an enemy of them.

And so Satan asked them how they were coming along. They said they weren't doing very good. They tried to get him discouraged.

They tried to get him to doubt. They tried to do him all the tricks. And then he says, move aside.

And so the enemy slipped in to the old hermit in the desert. And he put in the thought. You see, he puts these thoughts into our minds.

And he said, have you heard that your brother has become Bishop of Alexandria? And a scowl, come on, the dart had hit the poison tunnel. It's just a fable, but this is how it works, this spirit of jealousy. Let's go on through.

Joseph and his brothers and the patriots moved with envy, sold Joseph. Come on down the line. By the way, we've heard about some of these great preachers that lived in our lands.

And one of them up in the Northfield Conference who would preach was F.B. Meyer. Great man of God. But then one day, another man of God came along by the name of G. Campbell Morgan.

And Meyer drew crowds. But all of a sudden, here's G. Campbell Morgan over there teaching too. And guess what? The crowd sort of drifted over.

And F.B. Meyer didn't have quite the crowds that he did before. And someone asked him, how are you doing with this? Have you had a problem, a struggle? And he says, I have had a struggle with this. How are you getting it? He said, I'm getting it by praying for this man daily.

Praying for God's blessing on him. That's the only way I can get it. I'm going to share something with you about this a little bit later on.

Moses with Miriam. Think about this. Miriam, the first lady in Israel, had all this privilege.

Led him out after the victory to lead him into the singing and praising of God. But then all of a sudden, this little dart, this poison hit her heart. And she decided to come against her brother.

And the Scripture says, and the Lord heard it. And her jealousy revealed a non-submissive spirit. You see, whenever jealousy gets into our heart, it's going to show that there's something there.

And we know the story. Of course, she wasn't alone. There's Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.

Also, they got this problem too. What happened? They're moving in to get God's man down. They think, well, I can do this too.

You're just not the only one, Moses. And what happens? All of those that, unless they get cured from it, it destroys them. She was smitten with leprosy.

And immediately, she recognized this was not something she should have done. Moses, look at you, sis. You shouldn't have done that.

No, the spirit of love reigned in his heart. And he said, oh God, heal my sister. Wow, this is a pretty poisonous thing.

Jealousy burns like a fire. David said in Psalm 75 and he's referring to God. But it burns like a fire from God also.

And if we are His children and we want to go have affairs with the world and other things, we will experience some stuff from God. How many preachers, how many preachers, they just could not stand that somebody in their denomination was succeeding. And so, they would be at a meeting and heard this many times.

Oh, so-and-so, God's really blessing their ministry. Boy, people are getting saved. The church is growing.

They got a building program. And the one over on the other side of town, yeah, yeah, that's great. Praise the Lord.

I'm really glad. But did you know this about oh, so-and-so? That spirit of envy is deadly. Just deadly.

Henry Varley. Have you heard of Henry Varley? Who's heard of Henry? We've never heard of Henry Varley. Well, let me share a little story about Henry Varley to say who's Henry Varley.

He's just a man of God. Just a man of God. A man of God that had a problem one day.

And in his life story, he mentions a neighbored pastor, specially gifted and qualified as an expositor. I'm going to read from a book of ministers' obstacles by Ralph G. Turnbull. In his story, he mentions a neighboring pastor, specially gifted and qualified as an expositor of the Scriptures.

His ministry was attracting some members of Varley's congregation. He missed them frequently. And Henry Varley did not like this.

And to his intense self-loathing, he found that the green-eyed monster of jealousy had its claws upon his soul. And he wrote this about himself. He said, I shall never forget, he said, the sense of guilt and sin that possessed me over that business.

I was miserable. I was practically saying to the Lord Jesus, unless the prosperity of Thy church and people comes in this neighborhood by me, success had better not come. How deadly is this thing of jealousy? Was I really showing, he went on to say, inability to rejoice in another worker's service? I felt that it was sin of a very hateful character.

I never asked the Lord to take away my life either before or since, but I did then, unless His grace gave me victory over this foul image of jealousy. He asked God to destroy him. The suggestion inevitably arises of the possibility of vacant pulpits if preachers jealous of other preachers' success were to pray to die and their prayers were answered.

Whoa. Anyway, we come on down and we've all heard all these things. What about Mordecai? And he had his Haman.

And when Haman saw that Mordecai had bowed not, nor did him reverence, then was Haman not too concerned about it. Well, one of them perversions, I guess. Nope, it says he was full of wrath.

The same word for poison. And of course, he got hung on his own deal. Wow.

How about David and Saul? He forgot the victory. Saul forgot the victory because of his jealousy. Being concerned for himself, this thing of jealousy, always goes back to concern for self.

We're supposed to be crucified with Christ. Wow. And of course, there was Daniel.

What about Rachel? Rachel envied her sister and she went, give me children or I'll die. But she envied her sister. Anyway, that was a whole mess that should have never happened in the beginning anyway.

And Joshua even got envious for Moses. Do you know that? And Moses cut him off. Uh-uh.

We're not going there. No. Envious thou for my sake? No.

Let's spread the power of God. The more the better. And what about Jesus? Pilate said this very interesting thought.

For he knew that for envy they had delivered him. He met all the credentials for being their Messiah. There was nothing left undone.

It was laid out as plain as daylight that Jesus Christ of Nazareth, born in Bethlehem by a virgin, was the Messiah. But he was successful. And what would you expect if God showed up on the scene? He's walking down the road and blind people can see and lame people can walk.

Deaf people can hear. Dead people get raised from the dead. They couldn't do it.

But he could. Instead of rejoicing, God has come! God has come! Hosanna! Praise the Lord! Oh, look at him. He's got the cross.

We don't get that many people in the synagogue. We've got to get rid of him. It's deadly.

And Paul with the Jews. Paul with the Jews. I've got four pages here.

Paul with the Jews. And the patriarchs moved with envy. So Joseph and Acts.

But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. And one day, hey, it's great! We're glad you're here, Paul! He's preaching the Word and they're all excited. The next day they get tremendous crowds and then they're filled with envy because they couldn't get those crowds.

Pseudo-spirituality. But the Jews which believed not moved with envy took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, in 17.5, and gathered a company and set all the city on an uproar and assaulted the house of Jason and sought to bring them out to the people. This thing is amongst God's people.

It is deadly. It is deadly. And look at our churches around the land.

Now, that's probably enough on that. I know of a revival movement that was stopped dead in its tracks because of envy. There was a man that God was using and his wife got envious because other men were around.

And that spirit of envy destroyed it, stopped it. And I even think I read a number of years ago, I don't know if I'm correct on this, that Evan Roberts said the revivalists that God used in the revival, the Welsh revival back in those days, that one day he came out on the porch and the crowds were gathering and they were admiring Evan and that he for a moment took the glory and didn't give God the glory and it stopped. He was done.

Did a little bit of preaching, but basically went into a deeper ministry of intercession. I was trying to look that up to see where I'd read that. And the disciples walking with Jesus, did they have any problem with that? No, one day they're walking down the road, the Lord's ahead of them, they're back behind, arguing about who's going to be the greatest.

Envy. I think I deserve to be there, Peter, not you. No, it's deadly.

Now, let's look at the second thing. That's enough of that. Can any good thing come out of this? The positive fruits of jealousy.

You said, you must be crazy. What kind of positive fruits can come out of jealousy? You look at all of these and even the list that we're not even going through. Hudson Taylor, who was greatly despised and rejected, to where he just had to go off and start his own mission.

You look at the mocking and all of the despising against Spurgeon. There was some positive benefits in the lives of those. Supposedly, many of these lives were destroyed.

Great damage was done. But that little flower coming up out of the ashes of the Spirit of God in their lives rose and God did great things through them. But He allowed them to go through there.

Arthur Wallace said, if we find a revival that is not spoken against, we'd better look again to ensure that it is a revival. I remember one pastor driving over, I don't know how many miles away, 45 miles away or something, because he heard about the revival we were having. He come there and he looked around.

He said, I don't believe in revivals. And he left. Went back to his deadness.

I mean, God has showed up and he came, I don't believe in it. Well, that's all right as long as you don't go to speaking against it. But here's the first thing of what I see a benefit.

It drives you to the presence of God. Now, look back over these lives. What about Joseph experiencing the envy that he did? It drew him right into the presence of God, buried down into a prison.

What do you do in a prison when you're all alone? You just fellowship with God. He'd come out on top and he'd just go down the line with Moses, David. It was all of that spirito and javento and stuff that drove him out into the wilderness to run as a fugitive for years.

But it drew, it was God's drawing power. And then what happens to the ones that had the spirit of jealousy? They all destroy themselves unless they get straightened out like Miriam. But most don't.

Most destroy themselves. The second thing, a positive benefit when you experience it is it shows you what's in your own heart. It shows you what's in your own heart.

Some made it through in shining colors. Like Joseph. But some had some setbacks along the way and then they'd come on through.

I'm thinking about Job. Job was something. But yet, I just wonder if his three friends wasn't a little envious of him.

Because when Job went down, the spiritual man comes along and says, let me pick you up. But they began to jab at the man that was down. I wondered if they had a spirit of jealousy.

And God used that though to show Job because he began to jab back. You know, he's laying on his back full of sores and all this. He begins to poke back.

You know, I maintain my integrity. I'm okay. But God used it to show him, Job, you're not really okay because deep down inside, there's something.

And so these men, God used them. God used them. But here's the third thing.

And this is an unusual thing. But if God lets us go through there, we're going to get the benefit of being blessed. Being blessed? Yes, being blessed.

I'm just going to take you to one passage. But there's many passages. And I'll just go over to this one because it's mentioned in Matthew also.

When Jesus said this, Blessed are ye when men shall hate you and when they shall separate you from their company and shall reproach you and cast out your name as evil for the son of man's sake. Rejoice ye in that day. Leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven.

For in a like manner did their fathers unto the prophets. Rejoice. And so there's the thing of being blessed.

Just, we're blessed. Moses, Mary and them are coming after you. Nathan there, I'm being blessed.

Now, we don't see it at the time. What about Paul? He's going around through Turkey there. Asia Minor.

He's going through those regions. And he's preaching the gospel. People are getting saved.

He gets the church established. He comes back a little bit later and they throw him out. And I'm being blessed.

Why would someone that's being persecuted, experiencing jealousy or whatever, say that they're being blessed? They would say I'm blessed because all of that stuff just keeps me closer to God. That's their problem. But if we let their problem become our problem, then we've got a problem.

And that happens sometimes. I've experienced that. Wrestle with it.

We struggle with that. It teaches you the fourth thing, to love as Christ. David came out with a very tender heart.

Now, he had a few moments when the old David was there, especially when he dealt with Nabal. But I see that those that go through this come out with tender hearts. Let me read to you 1 Corinthians 4.12. If I can get back over to this.

Listen to Paul. What was he before? Was he tender or hard? Before he met Christ, he was a hard guy. He better not get in his way on the way up the ladder.

He's going up the spiritual corporate ladder. Anybody got in his way, he'd shove them off the ladder. He was going to go to the top.

But when he met Jesus, he came back down to the bottom and he lived down there. And so he says in 1 Corinthians 4.11, Even into this present hour, we both hunger and thirst, and are naked and are buffeted and have no certain dwelling place. In labor, working with our own hands, being reviled, we bless.

Being persecuted, we suffer it. Being defamed, we entreat. We are made as the filth of the world and are the offspring of all things into this day.

Wow! It just taught him to be nothing but a pile of love. 1 Peter 4 and 1 Peter 4 and 14. Matter of fact, if you go through the book of Peter, if you just go through the whole book of Peter, you'll find suffering has an amazing lesson all through Peter.

1 Peter, just go through there and look there. I'll just pick out one. Searching what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow.

Those that experienced the bitter darts of jealousy seemed to come out with the glory of God on their lives in a powerful way. It's an amazing thing. 1 Peter 4, let me get back over there where I was going before I forget it.

1 Peter 4 and 14. Let's start off with 12. Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial.

Remember, it is a fire, it burns, which is to try you as though some strange thing happened unto you, but rejoice inasmuch as you are partakers of Christ's sufferings. You see what happens is we want to be like Christ. Don't you want to be like Christ? We all want to be like Christ.

And so when we get to be like Christ, we are going to have Christ living in our life. And all of a sudden, one day God is going to let us be tested. And we're going to get this fiery dart against us, some kind of fiery dart.

And all of a sudden, it's going to hit us. And we're going to die to self and let Christ live. Or it's going to hit and it's going to touch something in there and we're, oh, that hurt.

Why'd you do that? Pull that dart out and throw it back. God lets these things come, but they're not really designed to hit us. They're designed to hit Christ.

And as long as there's anything of our self-life left there, it's going to hit. And so God will let these things come into our lives until there's nothing left of us. We've been destroyed.

And it's just Jesus. And so we rejoice because it didn't hit me. I'm all dead.

And so when we hurt, we get bitter, we get angry, we get revenge, we get... Oh, God says, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial, which is to try you as though some strange thing happened unto you, but rejoice inasmuch as you are partakers of Christ's sufferings. He said, it's a privilege that I'm letting you get hit by the enemy. It's an honor to have these things come.

It's an honor for you to be able to bear the reproach of Christ. So don't get upset. I'm blessing you.

So when we get blessed, then we just rejoice inasmuch as you are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory shall be revealed, you may be glad, also exceeding glory. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye. For the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you.

Isn't that an honor? Oh, how much shame has come out of my own heart when I was reproached or reviled or something. And guess what come out? Self-junked out. And God says, it looks pretty ugly, doesn't it? Oh, God, it's awful.

Well, let's clean up the mess and realize that I'm letting Saul throw that javelin. Yet, if any man suffers a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God on this behalf. Well, we're going to be blessed.

You know, it says in 1 Corinthians 13, 4, that charity envieth not. The love of the Spirit of God in our life will never, ever have the fruit of envy. I want to close up with this.

Is there a root? Is there a root to this fruit? Job said, for the wrath killeth the foolish man and envy slayeth the silly one. Proverbs 3, 31, envy thou not the oppressor and choose none of his ways. Proverbs 14, 30, a sound heart is the life of the flesh, but envy the rottenness of the bones.

Proverbs 23, 17, let not thine heart envy sinners and be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long. Ecclesiastes 9, 6, also their love and their hatred and their envy is now perished. Neither have any of them, have they anymore a portion forever in anything that is done under the sun.

It just goes through. It just goes through. Genesis 26, 14, for he hath possessions of flocks and possessions of herds and great store of servants and the Philistines envy him.

I already read you that one. All through the Scripture, Romans 13, 13, let us walk honestly as in the day, not writing in drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. 1 Corinthians 3, 3, for ye are caught yet carnal, for as there is among you envying and strife and divisions, are ye not carnal and walk as men? Galatians 5, 26, let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.

James 3, 14, 15, 16, right in there you need to know those because if you have bitter envy and strife in your hearts, he says glory not and lie not against the truth because he says where envy and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. It's deadly. It's demonic.

The thoughts come in and poison us and it contaminates. 1 Peter 2, 1, where is laying aside all malice and all guile and hypocrisies and envies and all evil speakings. It just goes on down through there.

Is there a root? You know who one of my heroes is in the Bible? If you ever suspicioned I was crazy, you'll know I am now for sure. I'll remove all doubt. One of the guys that I really admire secretly, and I'll let my secret out, is one of the least covetous men in all the Bible.

He went from the very bottom of society, the lowest you could ever get in the world, to the very highest and closest that he could get to God at that time. Do you know who I'm talking about? He smelled. He had sores.

He was a beggar. There was a certain rich man which was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, my hero, which was laid at his gate full of sores and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table.

Moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores and it came to pass that the beggar died and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom, the very lowest to the very highest he could get. Why? Why? The rich man also died and was buried and in hell he left up his eyes. Why would Lazarus go so high from so low? It's because of this.

All he coveted was some crumbs. Oh, I wish I could be like the rich man. I wish I could sit at that table with all that food.

I wish I could have this palace and get to ride around in a Rolls Royce chariot. All he desired was his basic needs of life, a few crumbs. There was no covetous in his heart.

Lazarus, a hero, a type. All he wanted was crumbs. All he desired.

Hebrews 13.5 is the root. Listen, let your conversation be without covetousness. You see, envy is just a fruit.

Covetousness is the root. Let your lifestyle, your way of living, your manner of life, the way we live, let your conversation be without covetousness. I believe I was programmed for covetousness when I was raised

up.

I don't know, how about you? And be content with such things you have, for He has said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. If we have Jesus Christ, why in the world should we covet anything? Anytime we covet, just after anything else, we're just saying, God, You're not meeting my need. I don't believe You can make it.

And so we go beg, borrow, buy, steal, or whatever we can to get what we want. And He says, you have not because you ask not. And if I don't give it to you, God is saying, just be content.

I've got a reason. How many times did I pray going through school that God would help me through tests because I wasn't too smart? But how many times was I content just to be simple? Well, the root is covetousness. It's in the heart of everyone jealous, this covetousness.

So how does Satan destroy our lives, our churches, and whatever? He gets us to be discontent. And all these illustrations go all the way back through there. There was somebody that was not content.

And they took their discontent out on somebody else. But it really went back against God. It really goes back to God.

And so the lesson is, be content. Be content. Be content.

Content. Let's pray. Oh Lord, I don't know about everybody else, but you sure have been taking me to the cross.

Because I see I spend a lot of time not being content. Thank you for your mercy. Thank you for your grace.

And it'd be far better, Father, that we be the one that experiences the wrath to have the javelins thrown at us to experience the jealousy and the damage and the destruction. It'd be far better that we be the ones to experience it than we be the ones to give it. And I pray that the Spirit of God would do something in our hearts, in our homes, in our churches, that you would just show us that you are sovereign.

And if you allow us all to throw a javelin at us, it is not our business to pick it up and throw it back. For as soon as we touch that javelin, we have been poisoned. Thank you for your mercy to us.

Lord, thank you that you do not treat us like we treat others. But may we treat others as you treat us. Thank you for this little time in the Word.

And thank you for your blessing for us. And thank you for Jesus Christ that died on the cross to save us from our sins. And Lord, we see that those that made it, those that made it through the fiery trials were those that had their focus on God.

They kept their focus there. And a few stumbled along the way. And I've stumbled along the way.

But you've taught us that victory is not in getting hit, but victory is in getting back up. And so may we live as victors. And if there's someone here that you have spoke to, there's someone listening, that has not yet surrendered their life to Christ, they have chosen to have themselves be their own God.

And I pray that you'd open up their eyes to see that you are a jealous God. And you will have us to worship you with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our mind, with all our strength. And that it starts with the

surrender of our heart and our life to Jesus Christ.

And we live in victory as we stay surrendered. And we stay content. And we stay filled with your Spirit.

Thank you for teaching us in Jesus' name. Amen.

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