

## ENVY

I assume the two little stories I have here are true.

Story one:

(1) A young man strolled into a discount gun store with a baseball bat, smashed a glass display case and tried to steal a firearm. Yes, he tried to rob a gun shop with a baseball bat. What happened next? The manager pulled out a gun of his own, pointed it at the would-be thief and kept him in the crosshairs until the police arrived. The young man shouldn't be too hard on himself. I mean...guns in a gun store? Really? Nobody could have anticipated that.

Story two:.

(2) Three guys decided, late one night, to rob a gas station. Taking in baseball bats and knives, they entered and demanded money from the station clerk. But they weren't aware of a couple of rather important things: (a) The clerk was an ex-Israeli Army officer. (b) The clerk was an ex-Israeli unarmed-combat instructor. Needless to say they ended up in the hospital—for a long time.

These were slightly humorous stories about the stupid things people will do when they want something that belongs to someone else.

What is not funny are the stories we read of people killing someone to get their Nike sneakers or get their sports jacket or their car. The people that commit these types of murders are envious of nice things other people have, and they take them. Envy... is there no end to what people will do to get what they want??

In Exodus 20:17 we have a commandment of God. It is the 10th Commandment and it tells us not to covet. It gets to the heart of the matter of sin. It looks at our motivations, showing how God wants us to think. It is actually spiritual.

Exodus 20:17:

“You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's.”

Coveting often also includes our neighbor's cars, electronic gadgets, money, prestige, etc.

Jesus Christ made it clear throughout His teachings that God's law involves more than just our actions. Really obeying God's Commandments involves our thoughts and attitudes and approaches. Our mind!

Coveting and all sin begins in our hearts.

(Matthew 15:18-20). "But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. These are the things which defile a man"

(Colossians 3:5-6). The apostle Paul wrote: "Therefore put to death your members which are on earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience"

James 3:16

16 For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.

One of the principal causes of evil and sin is this dangerous feeling called envy.

James 4:1-2: Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? 2 You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet[a] you do not have because you do not ask.

What's your response when someone else has what you want? What's your response when your fellow worker gets recognized for her hard work by getting a raise or a bonus, and no one says anything good about your work?

Is it rejoicing or is it resentment?

How do you feel when another Christian achieves a higher level of outward success than you do, perhaps a nicer home, great vacations, an early retirement, or better health?

Is it Rejoicing or resentment?

Or what is your heart's response to your friends when they tell you some great news that has happened to them, and it hasn't happened to you? Is it Rejoicing or resentment?

Is it "Good News for them!" or is it "Why didn't that happen to me?"

One of the deadliest sins is that of envy. Envy is the resentment that another person is enjoying something that you should have..... but you don't have.

The overweight woman envies the thin lady, (not realizing that she might have an eating disorder); Or some other problem.

One of the barriers to being concerned for other people is that we envy them.. We can define envy this way.

1) Envy has an element of desire in it. Somebody has experienced an advantage or benefit in life, and you wanted that to happen to you.

2) The other element of envy— and the one that makes envy bad — is that the desire is tinged with resentment that it's going well for the other person and not for you. That's what makes it envy.

So, in a sentence, envy is a mingling of a desire for something with the resentment that another is enjoying it and you are not. Things aren't going so well for you, but things are going well for them; and it just gnaws away at you sometimes. Why does it go so well for that person when it should go well for me?

Our envy results from two main causes:

1. We are not content..... and 2. we fail to love others as we should

On the one hand, we envy because we are not content with how God has made us (our looks); or we are dissatisfied with the hand He has dealt us (our job, our house, our health; our life situation, the problems we have); or we envy those who are in positions above us, wishing we could be the boss or the CEO; wishing we could order others around, instead of being ordered about.

On the other hand, we envy because we fail to love others.

If we observe this scripture we will be fine.

Philippians 2:3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.