

LOVE DOES NOT ENVY

1 Corinthians 13:4c (niv) "Love does not envy..."

1. Envy causes conflict

Conflicts arise when needs, values or ideas are seen to be different and there appears to be no way to reach a common ground.

When we become envious of people it can steer us in the direction of blaming God. This causes conflict in our relationship with God.

James 4:1 (niv) "What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you?"

2. Envy causes resentment

Envy involves us becoming discontent and resentful of other people's qualities and possessions, things that we perceive as an advantage in somebody else's life.

James 3:16 (niv) "For where you find envy...there you find disorder and every evil practice."

When we are consumed by envy and resentment, something within us rejoices at the suffering of others.

Until we find a way to deal with the envy and resentment within our hearts, no relationship that we have will ever be safe. We will never be able to follow the basic Christian principle - to love one another.

3. Envy causes unhappiness

Proverbs 14:30 (niv) "A heart at peace gives life to the body, but envy rots the bones!"

Watering the seed of envy in your heart means you are choosing to be unhappy. Living a purposely unhappy life can physically take a toll on your body.

Unhappiness causes us to remain in a mental battle where we are both the enemy and the victim.

Envy traps us in a type of prison that stops us living life to our greatest potential.

4. Resist comparing

2 Corinthians 10:12 (niv) "We do not dare classify or compare ourselves ... (It) is not wise."

We cannot minister effectively to people that need to hear about God and experience his love if we are living in a miserable state controlled by

envy as a result of constantly comparing ourselves to others.

If we are not secure and confident in our own worth and value as unique individuals, then we run the risk of competing with people who we believe are more successful and doing well in certain areas of their lives.

Galatians 6:4 (tlb) "Let everyone be sure to do his very best, for then he will have the personal satisfaction of work done well, and won't need to compare himself with someone else."

When we come to the full understanding that we are all valued and worthy under God, and that he has given us unique qualities and situations, the desire to compare ourselves with others gradually decreases.

Mark 10:31 (esv) "But many who are first will be last, and the last first."

We must remember that true promotion for the believer comes from God and not from man.

Discover who you are in God and focus on the unique and special qualities that he has given you. Don't fall into the trap of comparing yourself

to others and don't allow envy to creep into your heart.

5. Be content

To be content means to be in a state of happiness and satisfaction. It's an inner sense of peace which ideally stems from the root of trusting in God and knowing that he is in control and has a plan for us.

Philippians 4:11 (niv) "I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances."

Ecclesiastes 6:9 (gnb) "It is better to be satisfied with what you have than to be always wanting something else."

When we are so focused on the things we do not have, we are blinded and distracted from seeing the great value we already hold.

6. Respond lovingly

Genesis 45:15 (nlt) "Then Joseph kissed each of his brothers and wept over them, and after that they began talking freely with him."

When we hold onto envy and allow it to poison us, we cannot experience true loving and open relationships with the people around us. When

we choose to let go of envy, to resist comparing, be content and respond lovingly, we are able to experience positive relationships; relationships in which we can talk freely with one another and enjoy genuine fellowship together.

Romans 12:15a (niv) "Rejoice with those who rejoice."

When we love each other we should rejoice in each other's achievements and advancements, not grow envious of them. We need to recognise who we are in God and be content with the unique people he has created us to be.