Respectable Sins

Session Twelve

Envy, Jealousy, and Related Sins

***Hook***

1. How aware are you becoming of your “respectable” sins, including judgmentalism and sins of the tongue?
2. What are you willing to do in order to remain focused on these types of sins now that this study is drawing to a close? What benefits will you receive if you do this – spiritually, relationally, vocationally?
3. Share one “take-away” that has affected you the most during the previous sessions, and why it is so important.
4. Which key scripture or important principle from this study might you share with other people?

***Book***

1. What is envy?
2. What is jealousy?
3. Is there a legitimate expression of envy?
4. Is there a legitimate expression of jealousy?
5. What points did Paul make about envy and jealousy in the following passages?
   1. Romans1:28-29
   2. 1 Corinthians 13:4
   3. Galatians 5:19-21
6. For what reasons are we tempted to or become envious and jealous of others?
7. Read these verses and make note of the kinds of things that tempt people to become envious and jealous: (Do this in groups-Four groups, one for each passage)

* Acts 5:12-17; 13:44-45
* 1 Samuel 18:6-9
* Genesis 4:4-8; 37:4-11, 18-20

1. How do we deal with the temptation to envy or become jealous?
   1. Rom 11:33-36
   2. Eph 5:17-21
   3. Php 2:3-4
2. Envy and jealous lend itself to a spirit of competitiveness. What do we mean when we say, spirit of competitiveness?
3. Based upon these definitions, is the spirit of competitiveness a sin?
4. How then do we deal with the issue of being competitive; a sinful spirit of competitiveness? That begins with understanding the difference between doing our best and being driven by envy and jealousy. What is the difference?

*Have the class read the first three references and then discuss as a group what they find about doing our best from those passages.*

Doing our Best:

* 2Ti 2:15
* Col 3:23-24
* 1Co 9:24-27

*Have the class read the following passages and then discuss what they reveal about being driven by envy and jealousy.*

Being Driven by Envy or Jealousy

* Ecc 4:4
* Son 8:6
* Jas 3:16

1. Envy, jealousy, and competitiveness can all be grouped into one word: Rivalry. What is rivalry and what is the problem with it?
2. Another sin that fits into this category of rivalry is the sin of always seeking to control everything and everyone. Why does the desire to have control fit into our discussion of respectable sins?

***BONUS ACTION POINTS***

Facing up to Envy and Jealousy

When we are tempted to be envious or jealous, we can:

1. Remind ourselves of God’s sovereignty. He gives us our talents, abilities, spiritual gifts, and opportunities (see 1 Samuel 2:7). To be envious or jealous of someone either eliminates God from the picture or accuses Him of being unfair.
2. Remember that all believers are “one body in Christ” and that each member of that body “belongs to all the others” (Romans 12:5 NIV). So, as Paul put it, “Outdo one another in showing honor” (Romans 12:10). Instead of being envious or jealous, let’ honor and applaud people because we are all members of the same body in Christ. Let’s submit to each other (See Ephesians 5:21).
3. Know that God has a place and assignment for each of us that He wants us to fill, and admittedly some of us garner more human recognition than others. If we spend emotional energy on envy or jealousy, we lose sight of what God might do uniquely in our lives. All assignments are important in God’s plan.

***Look***

What kind of self-control, envy, and jealousy temptations do you face? What are some signals that we lack self-control, that our sinful desires are either starting to control us or have been controlling us?

“Sinful jealousy occurs,” writes the author, “when we are afraid someone is going to become equal to or even superior to us.” Can you think of examples of this kind of jealousy? Why do you think it is displeasing to God?

If God is sovereign over the abilities and blessing He’s given us, how should this truth influence our tendencies toward envy and sinful jealousy?

BONUS STUDY

Good jealousy?

Did you realize that not all jealousy is sinful? Being intolerant of rivalry can be godly. For example, if you are married and someone tries to win your spouse away from you, you feel legitimate jealousy. God, who declares Himself to be a jealous God, will not tolerate the worship of anyone or anything other than Him. Explore what the Bible says about God’s jealousy:

Exodus 20:5

Psalm 78:58

Zechariah 1:14

1 Corinthians 10:21-22

***Took***

Write out your response to this question: Is envy or sinful jealousy worth the energy? Explain your response.

If God were to underline any parts of this session with you in mind, what might He mark? Why?

After rereading the definitions of self-control, envy, and jealousy, contemplate areas where they may have made inroads into your life. How do you plan to make progress over these “respectable sins?”

Think about on your personal study and group discussion of Respectable Sins: Confronting the Sins we Tolerate. Identify three key discoveries or principles that stood out to you regarding God’s view of the “respectable” sins, our tendencies to commit and overlook these sins, or God’s provision for overcoming these sins. What comes to mind?

Think back on any life-change commitments you prayed about during the past several weeks. What were they, and how are you doing in living out those commitments?

Think back on a personal victory you may have experienced over one of the “respectable” sins in recent weeks. Use this space to recount the story. Conclude by commenting in how it felt (and feels) to win over sin in that particular situation. (Use the next page if needed).