

# Coveting the Consequences of Corruption

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake)

## Introduction:

- A. Matt. 27:15-23 - What emotion sent Jesus to His death? Envy!
  - 1. The Jewish leaders brought Jesus before Pilate on trumped up charges that Pilate knew could not be verified. He understood the real reason Jesus was brought before him.
  - 2. The Jewish leaders envied Jesus, and particularly, they envied the success He was having influencing the people with the gospel. They envied Jesus because they wanted the power and glory to go to them and not to God - Mark 15:10
- B. Envy is an open sore on the soul of the world.
  - 1. "The motive behind criticism often determines its validity. Those who care criticize where necessary. Those who envy criticize the moment they think that they have found a weak spot." (Crissjami)
  - 2. "Hatred is active ill will, and envy passive dislike; yet, there is but one step from envy to hate." (Johann Wolfgang von Goethe)
  - 3. "God's truth judges created things out of love, and Satan's truth judges them out of envy and hatred." (Dietrich Bonhoeffer)
  - 4. "Envy is the religion of the mediocre. It comforts them, it soothes their worries, and finally it rots their souls, allowing them to justify their meanness and their greed until they believe these to be virtues. Such people are convinced that the doors of heaven will be opened only to poor wretches like themselves who go through life without leaving any trace but their threadbare attempts to belittle others and to exclude - and destroy if possible - those who, by the simple fact of their existence, show up their own poorness of spirit, mind, and guts. Blessed be the one at whom the fools bark, because his soul will never belong to them." (Carlos Ruiz Zafón)
- C. What is envy?
  - 1. "A feeling of discontent and resentment aroused by and in conjunction with desire for the possessions or qualities of another" (American Heritage Dictionary)
  - 2. Envy, just like lust, is a feeling that is a sin without ever speaking or acting upon it.
  - 3. Rom. 1:29 - It is a characteristic of pagan Gentiles
  - 4. Gal. 5:21 - It is a work of the flesh
  - 5. Titus 3:3 - It is the condition of sinners before the Gospel
  - 6. 1Cor. 3:21-23 - Christians have no reason to envy anyone of anything, because as children of God, all things are theirs by inheritance anyway
- D. The Bible instructs us that some persons should never be envied.
  - 1. The violent
  - 2. The arrogant
  - 3. The unrighteous
- E. Do not envy, do not covet the lifestyles of these persons

## **I. THE VIOLENT**

- A. Prov. 3:31-32 - (NKJV - “oppressor”; ASV - “man of violence”)
  - 1. Mercenaries, bullies, those who love hurting and killing others, and leader who controls others by fear and violence
- B. Why is it necessary to warn God’s children of this? “Why would Christians envy the violent?”
  - 1. We entertain ourselves with them, cheer them on, make heroes of them, and experience a cathartic rush from watching it
  - 2. Our world glorifies the violent because violence implies power and courage, the capacity to rebel and defy the restrictions of authority
  - 3. At the same time, it gives lip service to criticizing violence
  - 4. Prov. 11:16, 4:17 - Violence has its wealth and rewards in this world
- C. God does not tolerate it; nor is He entertained by the violence of others
  - 1. Gen. 6:11; Psalm 11:5; Jer. 22:3; Luke 3:14
- D. God’s children don’t envy the violent - Prov. 9:6, 29:6; Psalm 140:11; Ecc. 5:8

## **II. THE ARROGANT**

- A. Psalm 73:3 (NKJV - “boastful”; ASV - “arrogant”)
  - 1. One who believes himself better than others and sets himself apart from them as a result of his mistaken belief.
- B. Why warn God’s children not to envy the arrogant? Don’t Christians already understand that pride is a sin?
  - 1. The arrogant are often very confident of themselves, and we admire and even envy self-confidence. They command the attention and respect of their peers.
  - 2. Often, they are wealthy and don’t feel obligations to others.
- C. God has no tolerance for arrogance - Prov. 21:24, 8:13; Psalm 5:5, 94:4
- D. God’s children do not envy the arrogant; they know themselves, and they also know the end result of arrogance
  - 1. Prov. 16:18; Psalm 75:4-7, 94:23; Isa. 13:11; Rom. 1:30, 32

## **III. THE UNRIGHTEOUS**

- A. Psalm 37:1-2; Prov. 23:17, 24:1-2
  - 1. These are those who, disengaging from all propriety, act in whatever manner they please, with anyone they please, for whatever reasons they please all to the gratifying of their own desires and impulses.
- B. Why warn God’s children against envying the unrighteous? Don’t Christians already know that they are in the world, but not of the world?
  - 1. Unrighteousness is pleasurable to a degree, and sinners seem to have so much fun - Heb. 11:25
  - 2. They get rich, party, and have a good time. It is tempting to those who look on. The Adversary knows how to wrap sin in pretty paper and bows
- C. God cannot have a relationship with the unrighteous.
  - 1. Prov. 1:10-15; Psalm 1:5; James 4:8
- D. God’s children do not envy the unrighteous. They understand their fate.
  - 1. Psalm 73:17-18; Isa. 1:28; Rev. 21:8

Conclusion:

- A. We often find ourselves tempted to envy the lives of the violent, arrogant, and unrighteous in this life. Resist that temptation or share their destiny in the life that is to come.
- B. For those who overcome that temptation: the violent, arrogant, and unrighteous will envy your eternal destiny, but they will do so from Perdition.