

The Body of Christ, Spiritual Gifts, and Spiritual Maturity, Part 9
“Love Does Not Envy”
1 Corinthians 13:4

The Apostle’s Teaching on the Characteristics of Love – Intro

1. Everything in these verses is behavioral
2. Paul is interested to apply these things especially in relationships in the body of Christ
3. Paul begins his portrait of love as it shows itself amidst the sins and offenses of a fallen world
4. “Love” – Gk. AGAPE

Where there is envy, there is no love; where there is love, there is no envy!

1. Envy Obstructs Love!

“Love does not envy”

(1) Definition: Envy Gk: ZELOS from Zeo “to seethe or boil”

- A painful or resentful awareness of an advantage enjoyed by another, joined with a desire to possess the same advantage
- cf. NASV: “love is not jealous”
(Closely related): **Hostility toward a rival or one believed to enjoy an advantage.**

(2) The immediate reference: 12:15-16 *“If the foot should say, ‘Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body,’ is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear should say, ‘Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body,’ is it therefore not of the body?”*

Those tempted to view their place in the body as insignificant.

- What is operating here?

- 1- A failure to identify or to properly value my own gift
- 2- A discontent with my own gift or a dissatisfaction with the exercise of my gift
- 3- A viewing of my brother with envy

- What are the consequences?

- 1- I remain relatively uninvolved in the life of the body
- 2- I have a diminished zeal in my own service

-3- I may in fact be bitter toward my brother or sister (cf. “seething”)

- I may seek to criticize or to tear down my brother
- I may seek to unduly exalt my own gifts, my own place of service

-4- I am unable to benefit personally from my brother’s gifts

(Having become critical of him and his gifts)

-5- I am unable to endear others to my brother and to his ministry or service

2. Love Overcomes Envy!

The Corresponding Positive Operation of Love:

- (1) I am free of envy – and am loving my brother – when I am content with how God has made and gifted me.**
- (2) I am free of envy – and am loving my brother – when I can rejoice in his giftedness.**
 - His gift is from God! (As is mine) What do we have that we have not received?
 - His gift is a perfect gift! (As is mine) Wonderfully corresponding to his native gifts.
 - His gift is of wonderful benefit to the whole body of Christ! (As is mine)
- (3) I am free of envy – and am loving my brother – when I can personally benefit from his gift.**
- (4) I am free of envy – and am loving my brother – when I can endear others to him.**

Further Application