

The Stealth of Sin

Alliance Weekly

An oyster fisherman, on opening the shell of an oyster, discovered within, a fish, three and a half inches long, alive and weakly struggling. The oyster, however, was not to be found.



The fisherman was quite convinced that the fish had entered the open shell, and had been trapped by its closing. Once inside, it proceeded to devour the oyster, but being unable to open the shell, would have died in it.

Certain forms of sin enter one's life through the door of careless will. Once inside, their eviction is difficult, and they speedily make themselves master of the premises, eventually destroying the whole life.

The Cheerful Heart

Author Unknown

Whether the world be bright or dark

*Depends on how we take it.
Much of the misery we know
Is just because we make it.
If on the windows of the soul
We let self's cobwebs gather,
We may be sure all through our lives
We'll see cloudy weather.*

A cheerful heart and willing hands

*To do kind deeds for others
Will make the people whom we meet*

*All seem like friends and brothers.
Just try it, you who think the world*

*By joy and hope forsaken,
And I am sure that you will find
That you have been mistaken.*

Are You Sure of Heaven?

Nowhere in the Bible, God's Word, are we told that we can get to heaven by our good deeds, kindness, religious beliefs, or who we are. Matter-of-fact, all are condemned to a terrible, eternal hell unless they do exactly what God says they should do to get to heaven. It is His heaven; so it does not matter what we think should get us there, but what His way is to get there. His way is:

To know that you are a sinner!

"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one."

Romans 3:10


"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;"

Romans 3:23

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ARE YOU SURE?

The Bible View



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Envy

Bill Brinkworth

Envy is defined in Webster's 1828 dictionary as: "to feel uneasiness, mortification, or discontent at the sight of superior excellence, reputation, or happiness enjoyed by another; to fret or grieve one's self at the real or supposed superiority of another and to hate him on that account." It is wanting to be like someone else.

It is similar to covetousness, which is wanting the things that others have. Both envy and covetousness have something else in common. They are both sins in God's eyes; and like any sin, they are harmful to the trespasser and to others.

This sin has taken its toll on many. Envy cost Saul his future. God had intended for the king to be the leader of the people of Israel for a much longer period, but because of his sin of envy, his role as ruler of the children of Israel was shortened. The sin slowly sneaked in and controlled King Saul's life.

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The Eagle

Adapted from an article by
D. L. Moody

There is a fable of an eagle that was jealous of another eagle that could out fly him. He saw a sportsman one day and said to him, "I wish you would bring down that eagle."



The archer replied he would, if only he had some feathers to make some arrows. The eagle pulled out one of his own and gave it to the hunter. The arrow was made and shot, but it did not reach the other eagle. It was flying too high. The envious eagle kept supplying more and more feathers so the hunter could make more arrows. He lost so many feathers that he could not fly, and then the archer turned on him and killed him.

My friend, if you are jealous, the only one you hurt is yourself!

ENVY SHOOTS AT OTHERS AND WOUNDS ITSELF.

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Envy

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At first Saul admired David. He was the young boy that rid Saul's kingdom of the daunting giant, Goliath. After David's sling slew Goliath, Saul let the young man live in his palace with him. David ate with the king and his court. On occasion, he even played his harp for the ruler. In a short time, the young boy became a warrior in the king's army and soon led it. Many enemies were killed because of the young leader's courage and leadership. All was well until one day, during a triumphal parade after a victory, Saul overheard a simple song sung by some parade-watching women. They sang, "... Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands."

The words of that little song ate at his heart. "Why they think David is a better warrior than me," he may have thought. From that day on the sin of envy ruined the king. The control that sin had on him ultimately cost him his role as king and destroyed his testimony; as many saw him unleash his anger against David and even his own son. Envy claimed one more victim.

Joseph's brothers also lived with the guilt of doing harm against Joseph, when envy entrapped them. They were envi-

ous that their little brother got a gift from their father that they did not get. Perhaps the words too many siblings feel entered their minds when their father gave Joseph a coat of many colors, "Dad likes him more than I." Soon they had thrown Joseph into a pit. It was not long after that they sold their younger brother into slavery. Again envy ruled and reigned in decision-making.

Not only does the sin of envy hurt the doer, it harms others. David was innocently hurt by Saul's commission of the sin, as was Joseph. Paul in New Testament times was envied by the Jewish leaders (Acts 13:45); and because he was more popular than they, was the subject of their scorn and hatred. It was also envy that caused the religious to do away with Jesus (Matthew 27:18). Envy to be someone else or to have their power and popularity has snared too many.

Although it is very easy to let this sin creep into our thought processes, it can be avoided by remembering one thing. This deterrent thought is that we are what God created. We are created by God for his purpose. Each of us can do what no other can do.

We are the tools in God's toolbox. If we were to look into the tool chest of a craftsman, we

would see that no two of his tools were alike. They are all different because each of them is for a different task. A hammer is not better than the screwdriver, nor is the plane better than the pliers. Each can do something that the other cannot do. Together, they get many tasks completed.

Each of us has a purpose in God's plans. None of us is better than another. None of us can do it all. Each of us needs each other to complete what God wants accomplished. We should not be envious of the "hammers" or "pliers" we see doing something in this world. We should be content with what we are. We should not want to be someone else, but we should want to be the best "screwdriver" or whatever tool God has created us to be for His glory. As the saying goes, "I am happy with who I am, because God don't make no junk." Do not be envious of who you are not, but be joyous for who you are.

Are You Sure of Heaven?

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To know, because of our sin, our destination is not heaven — unless we do what He commands.

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Romans 6:23

"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned al-

ready, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." John 3:18

To know that there is nothing that you could possibly do to earn your way to heaven. The only payment for eternal life has already been paid for you by Jesus' death on the cross. Trusting that His payment covers all your sin is what will give you eternal life in Heaven.

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Romans 10:9

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." John 14:6

You can be saved from hell today. To do so, in prayer, admit you are a sinner, not worthy of heaven, and that you are trusting in Jesus' payment for all your sins.

If you have prayed such a prayer, and would like to share it with me, I can be reached at brinkworth@hughes.net for any questions or encouragement.

*"If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."
1 John 1:10*

"The man who keeps busy helping the man below him won't have time to envy the man above him — and there may not be anybody above him anyway!" — Henrietta Mears