

July 9th, 2023
Pretty, Ugly People: Week 1

We're basing our teaching from an encounter that Jesus had with the religious leaders of His day.

Although this debate starts with the teachings from the Outside, Jesus very quickly makes it a matter of the Heart.

Mark 7:14-21 (NIV)

Jesus called the crowd to him and said, "Listen to me, everyone, and understand this. Nothing outside a person can defile them by going into them. Rather, it is what comes out of a person that defiles them. After he had left the crowd and entered the house, his disciples asked him about this parable. "Are you so dull?" he asked. Don't you see that nothing that enters a person from the outside can defile them? For it doesn't go into their heart but into their stomach, and then out of the body." He went on: "What comes out of a person is what defiles them. For it is from within, out of a person's heart..."

Mark 7:1-8 (NIV)

The Pharisees and some of the teachers of the law who had come from Jerusalem gathered around Jesus and saw some of his disciples eating food with hands that were defiled, that is, unwashed. (The Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they give their hands a ceremonial washing, holding to the tradition of the elders. When they come from the marketplace they do not eat unless they wash. And they observe many other traditions, such as the washing of cups, pitchers and kettles.) So the Pharisees and teachers of the law asked Jesus, "Why don't your disciples live according to the tradition of the elders instead of eating their food with defiled hands?" He replied, "Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written: These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are merely human rules. You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to human traditions."

This month I want to challenge your Heart with the struggles that most have when it comes to...

- Anger
- Envy
- Insecurities
- Guilt
- Fear, and
- Greed

Question: How many know what a Hypocrite is?

In ancient Greece, usually three actors played all of the speaking roles in a play. By changing MASKS and wigs, they could transform into a new character in seconds.

Hypocrite: a person who claims or pretends to have certain beliefs about what is right, but who behaves in a way that disagrees with those beliefs.

Let's be honest, the OUTSIDE matters to most of us.

We spend a lot of Time, Money, and Energy keeping the Outside looking good, my question in this series will be: how much are we spending on the Inside?

The Greek word for ENVY is a very interesting word. It is a word which means to boil within.

1 Corinthians 3:3 (NKJV)

For you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal behaving like mere men?

What was happening in the church at Corinth was they were dividing up into little cliques and they became envious of one another.

Jealousy and Envy can seem interchangeable, but there is a subtle difference between the two words!

Envy stands at the bottom of the pile, breathing ill will at everyone who is above it. Jealousy is afraid that what it owns will be taken away by someone else.

I. Jealousy travels in Profit.

Jealousy travels in a pretty defined rotation. For instance, you will find jealousy often in the circle of proprietary things.

What I mean is, when people have possessions, when they have wealth, when they have a lot of stuff, oftentimes jealousy is found in those circles.

Genesis 26:13-14 (NKJV)

The man began to prosper, and continued prospering until he became very prosperous. For he had possessions of flocks and possessions of herds and a great number of servants. So the Philistines ENVIED him.

Here's the crazy thing, Jealousy often travels in the circles of those who have gained much, and accrued much, but always have their eye on another who has a little bit more!

II. Jealousy travels in POWER.

Early in the Bible we read about Miriam, Aaron, and Korah, who all ENVIED the leadership of Moses.

If you read the books of Kings and Chronicles, you will see story after story of very powerful kings who gain their power, many of them, by traitorous acts, usurping the

power of another, only to have that very same thing happen to them once they reach the pinnacle of power.

A.) We talked for two weeks about King Saul and King-elect David.

David came to the battlefield and volunteered to go and fight against the giant, and when he went and in the power of Almighty God, he slew Goliath and removed his head from his body. He came back and as he was coming back from the war, the maidens of Israel began to sing, "Saul has slain his thousands, but David his ten thousands," and the green sickness began to grow in the heart of Saul. So much so that you read in the Old Testament that Saul spent the rest of his life tracking down David in his attempt to kill him out of the anger and jealousy in his own heart!

Ever heard this in Church? ... We can be Pretty, Ugly People.

III. Jealousy runs in People groups.

This is probably where we see it the most, and certainly, where we see it most in the Bible.

Jealousy comes into our families and destroys our own family fellowship. There are more illustrations about family jealousy than in any other circle.

In the New Testament, there's the story of the prodigal son. Often we lose the prodigal son's story because we're so wrapped up in the boy who ran away from home, we forget about the boy who didn't run away from home.

What about Joseph's brothers that were going to kill him, but at the last minute sold him into slavery and told the father he had been killed by a wild animal!

When Jealousy enters the front door, let me remind you, Love goes out the back door.

I'm not jealous of a Professional Wrestler, or a Painter, or a Plumber, or even a Bank President. Do you know WHY? Because I tend to be Jealous of people that run in Circles where I LIVE.

What's the REAL danger of Jealousy?

1.) Jealousy kills People.

2.) Jealousy will kill YOU.

That's the tragedy of it. Far more than the objects of our jealous hate, is the pain that we wreak upon ourselves, it always seems to circle back on us.

Action Step: How do we defeat the Giant of Jealousy & Envy?

We must renounce jealousy as Sin.

Jealousy is not just a personality disorder. It is not something you inherited in your temperament. Jealousy is SIN.

In *1 Corinthians 13:4*, we read that Love does not Envy.

When you rekindle God's love in your heart, God's love will be so overwhelming that Envy won't be able to exist in the environment.

3.) Jealousy will have you DO the unthinkable.