

## Knowing God J.I. Packer

### The Jealous God - Chapter 17

When God brought Israel out of Egypt, the second commandment He gave Israel was, "I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God" Ex. 20:5; Ex. 34:14.

All throughout the Pentateuch the picture is drawn of God over and over. Later, Paul pointed to this attribute of God in 1 Cor. 10, about provoking the Lord to jealousy.

Jealousy with humans is a vice, but with God it can be virtue.

1. **Biblical statements about God's jealousy are human comparisons.** Such things like God's arm, hand and finger, seeing, hearing is all language drawn from our own experience. All pictures are explaining that God is personal. God's jealousy is not a compound of frustration, envy and spitefulness. *His jealousy is accurately praiseworthy zeal to preserve something supremely precious.*
2. **There are two sorts of jealousy among humans, and only one of them is a vice.** One is I want what you have and I'm mad you have it and I don't. The other is a zeal to protect a love relationship or to avenge it when broken, a fruit of marital affection. The Old Testament even had a "jealousy offering" when adultery had taken place. This offering sets at peace the jealous mind of an angry spouse. Numbers 5. It was a natural, normal and right action by a believer as proof that he values marriage as he should. God as an aspect of His covenant love for his own people with a demand for love and loyalty.

God demands from those whom he has loved and redeemed utter and absolute loyalty and vindicate unfaithfulness. He requires love and chastity from us. As the purer the husband, the more grievously He has been offended. None of this is from aimless love, but a sovereign purpose. God seeks what we should seek, namely His glory, in and through men. His jealousy is ultimately for His name sake.

### The Christian Response

1. **The jealousy of God requires us to be zealous for God.** His concern for us is great; ours for Him must be great too. Devotion and zeal toward God is a sign of our love for Him. Zeal is that burning desire to please God. Our great sole love is Him to advance His glory and please God by faith is a earnest, hearty and uncompromising whole hearted fervent spirit. Jesus exhibited a zeal for the house of God.
2. **The jealousy of God threatens churches which are not zealous for God.** The church at Laodicea was found guilty of its greatest offense to God noted. Their supreme offense was their lukewarmness or self-satisfied apathy. Rev. 3 tells us, "be zealous therefore, and repent".