



JEALOUSY


- **Scripture isn't shy when it comes to the dangers of extreme emotions. It warns about anger and a bad temper (Proverbs 15:1, 22:24–25, Galatians 5:20, Colossians 3:8, Matthew 5:22) and encourages the reader to seek tranquility not passion (Proverbs 14:30, 1 Timothy 2:2). This would include repenting of and avoiding temper tantrums, pouting, unbridled rage, mockery, hurtful sarcasm, blind patriotism or fanaticism, or immoral eroticism.**
- **More dangerous than all of them, however, is the one we might worry about the least – jealousy. “Wrath is fierce and anger is a flood, but who can stand before jealousy?” (Proverbs 27:4)**
- **Song of Solomon 8:6, Proverbs 6:34.**
- **Tantamount to idolatry (Colossians 3:5).**

TYRANNICAL

- A lot of times we either dismiss our jealousy as mere insecurity or try to justify it by pointing out that God admits to His own jealousy.
- It is true that God gets jealous, so much so that He once introduced Himself using the title “Jealous” (Exodus 34:14). He does not hide the fact that He is jealous over Israel and their unremitting spiritual adultery (Deuteronomy 4:24, 32:21, Zechariah 8:2, Hosea 3:1, 4:13–14, James 4:5). So we say, “If God can be jealous, so can I!”
- The difference is that God is jealous as a product of His perfect, self-sufficient love. He has no insecurity. He isn’t jealous because He believes He is inadequate (Ac. 17:25, 1 Jn. 4:7–17). We cannot make the same claim! In fact, one could say that almost all human jealousy stems from a source of insecurity in our lives.

“BUT ISN’T GOD JEALOUS?”

A WOMAN LOVED

A silhouette of a man and a woman standing on a hill, holding hands. The sun is setting behind them, creating a bright glow. The background shows a range of mountains under a clear sky.

Hosea was commanded to do the unthinkable — marry a woman of harlotry, build a family with her, and watch her betray him (Hosea 1). He was innocent (and truly loved Gomer, per Hosea 3:1–3). His experience gives us a sense of the devotion, jealousy, and perfect, holy love God has for His people (Hosea 11:7–9, 14:9).

WHAT DIVINE JEALOUSY TEACHES ME

- It's not inherently sinful to be jealous. It is God's emotional response to betrayal.
- Like Hosea, my painful experiences can teach me a lot about God. Of course, His emotions are always morally pure and incomprehensibly more intense, but communicable nevertheless (Deut. 32:21).
- Jealousy can be revealing. When all the distractions and details of life are burned away by jealousy, we become acutely aware of just how much we desire something (or how much of a problem we have; see Romans 7:7-13).

The background of the image is a soft-focus photograph of a lush green field, possibly a meadow or a farm, with tall grasses and some small white flowers. The sky above is overcast with grey, heavy clouds. The overall tone is somewhat somber and contemplative.

WITH THAT BEING SAID, WHY IS

JEALOUSY

NOT TO BE TRIFLED WITH OR DISMISSED?

- **IT ROBBS US OF THE SATISFACTION FOUND IN OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS —** Ecclesiastes 4:4, Galatians 6:4–5. If rivalry, jealousy, and covetousness are the only motivators, what happens when they prove to be empty? Also consider Ecclesiastes 5:18, 9:9, and Philippians 1:15.
- **IT IS AT THE HEART OF OUR MOST PROFOUND AND ABIDING UNREST —** James 3:14–16, 4:1–5. Jealousy was present in some of the most tragic moments (Eve, Cain, Abraham/Sarah/Hagar, Jacob’s wives, Joseph and his brothers, Saul/David).
- **IT GIVES US A FALSE IMPRESSION OF THE PEOPLE AND THINGS WE COVET —** Proverbs 24:1, 3:31, Psalm 37:1–3, Psalm 73:1–9, 15–20, 25. It is only too late that we discover how much we loathe ourselves and others when we’ve been driven by evil desire (Titus 3:3, 2 Sam. 13:14–15).
- **IT ROBBS US OF OUR MINISTRY —** We all have a place in God’s kingdom, a ministry that we must fulfill. Envy causes us to neglect our special gift while obsessing over somebody else (1 Corinthians 12:14ff).

TRY TO BE AS JEALOUS FOR GOD AS HE IS FOR YOU (ROMANS 5:8, 8:31–32)

There are many practical tips that attack the symptoms of negative jealousy, but the heart of the problem is our desire. If we want things and people more than God, we will always struggle with envy, greed, competition, and jealousy. The psalmist prayed for his eyes and heart to be opened to God (Psalm 119:36, 18) – that’s no trite or insignificant thing! God does not want merely intellectual assent to His will, but wholehearted devotion. Be jealous on God’s behalf when you see yourself putting life’s idols ahead of Him – career, porn, money, romance – and ask, “How would I feel in His position?”