

1 Corinthians

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Date: 22 June 1977

Preacher: Collier, Gilbert (1900-1984)

- [0 : 0 0] As the Lord may help, I would draw your thoughts this evening to a word found in the first epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, the tenth chapter and part of the twenty-second verse.
- First epistle to the Corinthians, the tenth chapter, the first part of the twenty-second verse. Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy?
- Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? It must seem to some a strange thing to attribute to the divine person of the infinite God, and equally so to the blessed person of the Son of God.
- Jealousy, which is a spirit which we deplore and recognize to be the outcome of our fallen nature and our defilement.
- How then can the word of God bring this word and make it applicable to him who ever dwelleth in light, to whom no man can approach and whom no man has seen, who is inflexible in his justice and wisdom, holiness and goodness, and unchangeable.
- [2 : 1 0] And yet we find here in this very word and truth that is of vast importance.
- To the children of God, to the children of God, a most precious truth indeed. When one recognizes, as the word of God reveals to us, that God, even our God, is capable of jealousy.
- There are three kinds of jealousy. There is, first of all, divine jealousy, which we shall attempt to unravel a little this evening.
- There is spiritual jealousy, which is a precious part of the makeup, so to speak, of the children of God, a very needful quality and grace to be found in them.
- And then there is worldly jealousy, or human jealousy, which, as I have just said, is a product of our nature, and brings in its train a woeful world of sorrow and of grief.
- [3 : 4 9] That which we need to pray to be delivered from. There is very little else that works such havoc among the children of men than jealousy, human jealousy.
- You find it in the scriptures, where one envy to another, and the word of God tells us that we should not covet.
- And covetousness is akin to jealousy. It is an outshoot from that terrible branch, which is in many aspects of our lives woeful, and brings many a sorrow and pain.
- But I do not want to deal unduly with that aspect of this subject tonight, but rather with those former two aspects of it, the divine aspect of jealousy, and the spiritual aspect of it.
- Now, what is jealousy? Jealousy. Let us try and analyze the quality and the nature of it. Jealousy is a compound, and it is made up of two great, wonderful compounds.
- [5 : 2 7] It is made up of love and hate. And where you have love, you will have hate.
- If you have real love, that is, looking at it from the divine angle now, it is a very wonderful thing that God is capable of jealousy, because it means God is capable of loving.

And it also means this, God is capable of hating what affects his honor and his glory, and troubles his people, that has any effect or tendency of separating himself from his own people.

Any element or influence that deprives his people of the enjoyment, the full enjoyment, of all his blessings, provisions, and his mercies, God is jealous, because there is in God's character both love and hatred.

There are those, you know, who would represent God as only a God of love, eliminating all the possibilities, of hatred from his divine character.

[7 : 02] And consequently, they render it impossible for God to be jealous what the Scripture declares he is and what God declares himself to be.

Men would rob him of this attribute by making him totally and only a God of love. because the purpose of this is that they might blot out from their minds the facts that God will, that God hates sin and punishes sin and is angry with the wicked every day.

God is the God we adore, the God we would worship. And we would be abundantly thankful for this.

I'm sure you have at times felt it a wonderful truth to feel that God, that blessed, eternal God, is jealous.

He is jealous. And being jealous will have for his people what he has purposed for them and will not permit anything or any power whatsoever in heaven or in earth to come between himself and those whom he loves.

[8 : 33] He hates their enemies. He hates every condition that deprives them of full communion with himself and the full enjoyment of all his blessings.

He loves their souls and therefore he must hate what injures them and what troubles them. you may see a reflection of this in human affairs and loves.

If a person has a very great love for another, that person does indeed hate anything that is likely to come between or to have any effect upon the relationship.

and how often and very quickly jealousy is stirred up and they would not have it otherwise.

There is nothing that is so appalling than a cold, indifferent relationship. The wife would be indeed instantly troubled if her husband was totally careless and indifferent, whatever may be her attitude or her interest.

[10 : 00] But she sees and delights in the sight of it when a jealous spirit may arise which shows to her that there is love and that love is such that it hates anything that could possibly come between.

Now that is the love of God, the hate, the jealousy of God. And as we were reading tonight, God declares himself to be a jealous God over his people.

It is only over the people whom he hath chosen and loved and called and in whose hearts his Holy Spirit dwells with life and power that God is jealous.

I am jealous over Zion, he says, the first chapter of Zechariah. We read there how an angel of the Lord came and communed with the prophet and this is what he said to him.

He said, go and say to my people that I am jealous with a great jealousy over Zion and the cause of that jealousy we find was this, that his people were at ease in Zion.

[11 : 37] They were at ease. There was not that stirring, there was not that earnest anxiety to follow after the Lord and to seek him and to embrace his name and his truth.

They were at ease. A state of ease in nature may be well desirable, but a state of ease in spiritual places and spiritual things is something detrimental to our life and health and offensive in the eyes of our God.

I am jealous over Zion with a great jealousy because my people are at ease. And then again in Deuteronomy he says, I am a jealous God and I have been provoked to jealousy by my people because they have served other gods.

They have turned away from me. They have forgotten the rock who has saved them, the Lord God who has delivered them.

They have been unmindful of him. You see, these things, they do come home to us, do they not? I am sure if there is any here tonight who have a spiritual case, they will have a word of impact upon your spirit.

[13 : 11] You will recognize not only the blessedness of this truth, but you will also realize the solemnity of it and how it is applicable to your case and to mine.

There is such a solemn tendency to be at ease, we like easy things, we like an easy path, we like to settle down and think now everything is compact and suitable and convenient, we need not now be troubled or exercised unduly, we can go along softly all the days of our life, but that very condition brings about woeful restraint on the spirit, it brings about restrictions in the soul's activities and interests, it has an effect of benumbing the spirit, rather than enlivening the heart, it has the effects of deadening the activities within, and curbing the spirit that would run after the Lord and embrace him with all earnestness and with all zeal, yes, to be at ease in

Zion is to be in a very solemn and dangerous place, the Lord delivers from it, the Lord has many ways of delivering his people from this condition, he's a jealous God, do we provoke the Lord to jealousy?

There are ways when we seldom perhaps think that we may provoke the Lord to jealousy, when it seems so right, and so proper, and so suitable, nothing can be said against it, and yet really what deep down within our own hearts the motive is this, to ease ourselves from burdens, to choose an easier way and an easier path where there is not difficulties and troubles, and to make our choice in contradiction to the choice of God.

And then we wonder why the Lord has seemingly withdrawn his presence, why there's coldness, why the winter seasons come on so early, and the cold, blighting winds of trouble and sorrow comes and affects our spirit, why we seem to have no fruit, and little effects, and no precious interviews and communions with the Lord, and even his precious word has not the sweet taste that once it had in our hearts, and the throne of grace seems to be a place totally beyond our reach.

[16 : 39] we wonder why. The answer may well lie here in this our text tonight, do we provoke the Lord to jealousy?

He is a jealous God, and that's our mercy, your mercy, and mine. God, because you can see in yourself, my dear friend, I'm sure of this, you can see in yourself an abundant cause for God to leave you and forsake you.

You know full well deep down in your poor bosom their lives a great deal of enmity against God and against his way and against his truth, and you come to yourself and you say, however, God, can God look upon a worm, such a vile creature as I am, and find anything pleasing in his sight in me?

How can he do it? How can he continue with me and extend his favors any further with me?

for surely I have forfeited all right to his mercy. Surely I have fritted away his goodness by my waywardness and wickedness and wandering from him.

[18 : 10] But God is a jealous God and that's your mercy. He hates those sins but he loves. And his love is an eternal love.

It's an out measuring all things. It outweighs everything. It will itself subdue and absorb the hatred.

He's a jealous God and he loves you. He loves you. Poor sinner who knoweth something of the provocation in your poor bosom as you feel conscious of having provoked the Lord and feel that you are worthy to be turned away and slighted cold shouldered by the majesty of heaven but he's a jealous God.

But that does not mean there's any license or liberty for his people to provoke him to jealousy. Far be it from them and rather may it be our exercise day by day to ask this question, the question of our text.

It's a very searching question, isn't it? Do ye provoke do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? You see the occasion of this question was the setting forth the principles of the Lord's table.

[19 : 59] That was Paul's purpose in this part of his epistle was to lay down certain principles in regard to the table of the Lord, how solemn a place it was, how privileged it was for those who were rightly brought to it, and how there should be no communion whatsoever with any who had not the love of Christ, who were not the Lord's true people.

he says, how can he puts it very strongly, how can he have fellowship with devils? I say, he says, the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils and not to God.

The Gentiles wouldn't claim to be sacrificing to devils, but the word of God says they are sacrificing to devils.

every sacrifice that is not a true sacrifice in accordance with God's word and with the perfume of Christ's own precious sacrifice is virtually a sacrifice to a devil, and it is abomination in the eyes of God.

Now, Paul says, ye cannot, ye who come to this sacred ordinance of the communion of the Lord's supper, ye cannot make any affinity with those who sacrifice whoever they may claim to be sacrificing to, to that which is not God, and therefore to that which is of the devil.

[21 : 51] So he's bringing it very close, you see, he's laying down some very pointed principles, important principles. he's showing us how sweet and wonderful it is to have communion with the Lord Jesus, and how sacred that privilege is and should be, regarded so.

And he says this is one thing that we need to, those who do partake of it, and those who would indeed in a spiritual sense have enjoyed the communion with the Lord Jesus must ask themselves this question again and again, do we provoke the Lord to jealousy?

Is there anything that is offensive in his most holy sight? Is our heart right? And you'll say, oh my poor heart seems to be full of woefulness.

What will you need then? You'll want the Lord to put it right for you. And this is one of the great wonders and mercies of his jealousy is this that he hastens to rectify what is wrong.

His jealousy is so precious, it's so full and wonderful that it will cause the God by his grace to hasten to put right the ills of his dear people and to restore them again and to clothe them with his righteousness and favor them with a smile of his countenance and put a sweet portion of his love into their hearts.

[23 : 49] jealousy. Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Well then there's the other side of it.

There's the spiritual jealousy, the jealousy of the people of God and this is a very important aspect, you know. It's right for us to be jealous in this sense and in this sense only.

To be jealous over the honors of our God. To be jealous with the right jealousy for his glory and that in everything he should have the preeminence.

He is not, it's not worthy that the Lord should be relegated to any other place opposition in the hearts and affections of his people but the highest.

And if he is we should be instantly jealous of our affections, our hearts lest they should in any way depart or become divided from the Lord.

[25 : 13] One says I am jealous of my heart. Well you know that's a good thing my friends. While you are being jealous of your heart you won't be jealous of anyone else.

you'll be well occupied if you find that's the course that the Lord brings you to trace out. You'll be well occupied because there's so much that you need to attend to, so much you need to confess humbly before the Lord, there's so much that you need the Lord graciously to remove from your bosom and from your life that you will have so much occupation to be jealous over your own heart and over your own spirit that there will be no opportunity of indulging in that vain jealousy over creatures, men and things.

Yes, it's a great thing to know something of spiritual jealousy. Now the church in the Song of Solomon she had this spirit and this is what she said to the Lord, her beloved.

She said this, set me as a seagull on my heart and she goes a little further she wants the love you see it's a prayer, it's a desire for the real love the intensity of that love she wants a seal her own seal upon the heart of her mother she couldn't get nearer than that could she love love when two human people fall in love it is indeed a heart affair it's not merely convenience that brings them together not in the right real sense it's not all these various things that do play a part with people in these days in which we live and that's why marriage is such a terrible thing in many instances but where there's real love it's a matter of the heart and then when it's the matter of the heart all the other defects are overlooked love overlooks all defects real love but when you feel that there's love in the heart and love for that person there's a union that only death can sever now she says set me as a seal on thy heart and she wants something more she wants to see it and to have the evidence of it she says set me as a seal on thy arm that arm that is stretched out to embrace let me see some sign there of love spiritual love divine love love for my poor soul oh my dear friend has the

Lord Jesus ever stretched out a hand a wounded hand with the hand that was wounded in the house of his friends has he ever stretched it out to you spiritually and by those very wounds you've seen the love that he has to your soul love so immense so great so free you may well say what are other loves to thine thine's a note there's a drop but thine's an ocean ever flowing ever free oh how wonderful when we see a little sign of the love of christ when we feel there is undoubted love for us not only in providential things working out for our good but for the sense of his love conveyed to our hearts now my dear friends if you've ever felt that you are jealous lest in any way you might lose what you have or prove totally unworthy of it she said again she said jealousy is cruel as a grave she knew something of it she knew how it was like a great exercise a great upsurging power in her soul that would ever constantly drive her nearer to her love beloved one her lord so my friends it is a good thing to know something of spiritual jealousy

[30 : 48] I wish we knew more of it and I wish there might be seen more evidence of it in the churches because that would make a very big difference we shouldn't be so keen on all these traditions we should be preeminently very concerned with the glory and honor of Christ and his gospel and the well-being of his people the people in the days of Haggai where the lord comes and speaks to them and he says to them you're dwelling in sealed houses comfortable places they built them with great skill and patience god did not condemn them for living in such places but this is what he said what is my house like and all that was of god's house at that time was the foundation nothing more nothing more they put their own comfort before the lord's honor and before the lord's worship and he brings home it he brings this home to them by the word of the prophets and it breaks them down into pieces and they see it and they stir themselves up and in three weeks the whole people in the time of

Haggai rose up recognized their failings and their sins they rose up and sought to remedy what had been neglected and undone my dear friends we should have a very great see a very great difference in many respects if there was more jealousy among the people of god church needs it individuals need more of it but let us always remember this the word the question that lies before us here in this part of god's word do we provoke the lord to jealousy i'm sure of one thing those that are really spiritual people will not run away tonight and say well that's not me that's everyone else but not me now you'll bring it home and find it like an arrow sometimes in your own bosom you'll feel as if you were the only one in the chapel that was guilty of these offenses against god and you'll what will be the outcome of it if it's a spiritual experience this will be the outcome it'll drive you to the lord with confession in your heart and pleading his mercy and his blood you will seek for remission of your guilt and you will desire some token of his mercy to restore you and to renew the relationship that you have so sweetly enjoyed in the past and been so highly privileged to receive fellowship with the lord is something indescribable it's only to be known felt to be known what it really is those who can really describe it have never really known it it's the most sacred experience that a believer can have and enter into this side of heaven fellowship with the lord jesus and can you tolerate i'm sure you won't be able to finally tolerate those things that your conscience tells you must eventually sever that relationship in the enjoyment of it mark you we shall never if we are the people of god we shall never lose our god we shall never be separated from him but there will be some cold times distances will be felt and measured if we fall into these ways of provoking the lord to jealousy do we provoke the lord to jealousy i don't want to bring a legal aspect into the gospel because that is something that needs to be avoided at all costs that would

provoke the lord to jealousy if anything can do and you know there's a great deal of legality which is passed off as gospel today paul says in writing to the colossians he says he warns the people about that spirit which is all wrapped up in doing or refraining from doing tasting not doing not all are to perish with the using he says there's nothing really in it but oh I do want to lay emphasis upon this spirit that spirit oh I want to find it in my own bosom that spirit that cleaves to Christ that spirit that rejects all the world and its spirit that heart and mind that follows a hard and earnestly after the Lord that loves his ways that delights in what is pleasing in his sight those are the things that I want to find more fully revealed and measured out to me and may the Lord show us you and me my friends what is offensive in his sight to feel the jealousy of God is something that is in a twofold way a very wonderful thing first of all it shows us that God loves us if he's jealous and shows his jealousy to us and then also it shows that there is something in us that needs to be confessed and removed and rectified and we should have our eyes very keen and our sight clear unobstructed to find out what that is do we provoke the Lord to jealousy it's a word that I've had laid on my mind today

I know not why I could not avoid it I had to take it may God bless it may he bless it to me and bless it to you and give us cause to seek more earnestly to follow hard up to the Lord keeping close to him and seeking to know nothing among men save Jesus Christ the King of Kings and Lord of Lords Amen in His name■ in My fault■ it incredible whom when he heard aboutafter and he of come the 2012 February inieu pharm and from■ go invited of