

INTRODUCE

Well, if you have your Bibles, and I hope you do,

- please grab them and turn to 1 Samuel chapter 18.
- You can open a phone or a tablet to 1 Samuel 18,
- or you can use one of the hard-backed black bibles
 - under every single chair.
 - You'll find 1 Samuel 18 on page **241**.

INTRODUCTION: RECAP

Well, hey y'all, I've been out of the pulpit for the last couple weeks, so let me quickly recap where we've been.

In chapter 17 Justin preached on

- the most famous story in the entire Bible:
- David and Goliath.

And then last week Joel preached on King Saul's son, Jonathan,

- and his response to David's victory.

And now today we turn to how King Saul reacts...

and boy if they aren't polar opposites.

EXPLAIN: JONATHAN'S RESPONSE

Now remember Jonathan's response.

- Jonathan was the crowned prince.
- Jonathan was the heir to his father's throne.
 - But he saw the Spirit of God resting on David.
 - He saw, in David, a tremendous courage and faith.
 - And he realized that God's favor was now on David...
 - to be the next king.

How he knew this, we aren't told, but he most certainly did know,

- because in his act of giving David his royal robe
 - and armor
 - and sword
 - and bow
 - and belt...
- in that act he was essentially yielding the throne to David.

EXPLAIN: ENVY

But in our text today,

- we'll see that King Saul senses the very same thing...
 - about God's plan for David's eventual kingship...
- yet his response is very different.

And what we're going to study as an outworking of this text,

is the sin of **SLIDE ENVY**

Envy.

Now, the Bible has a lot to say about envy.

And actually, it is closely linked and related to some synonymous sins:

- envy, yes...
 - but greed...
 - and jealousy...
 - and coveting...

They're all kinda first cousins.

- Greed is, *"I want more."*
- Jealousy is, *"I want to keep what I have."*
- Coveting is, *"I want that thing that's not mine."*

But envy is a deeper attitude.

- It's what's underneath those other things.
- This is why envy is known as one of the Seven Deadly Sins.

APPLICATION

Now, before you think, *"Well, that's not something I struggle with..."*

let's just think about this for a minute.

- You ever watched HGTV?
 - Then you've experienced envy!
 - That's like an envy bomb going off in your mind.
- You ever go to a friend's house...and see their place?
 - And you were totally cool with your house.
 - You liked your kitchen
 - and your bathroom
 - and your 10-foot ceilings.

- But then you saw their 12-foot ceilings,
- and you get home and think,
 - “I live in a cave!
 - I can’t eat in here with these countertops!”
- Or you ever see a neighbor roll up in a new car?
 - And it’s not even that you want THAT car...
 - but you’re like,
 - “I work harder than him.”
 - “I’d look better than her in that whip.”

Or you ever get a call from that friend who you’re just a little jealous of...

- like, they’re the family
 - with the perfect kids,
 - and the perfect Christmas card,
 - and they’ve all got really good hair,
- and they’ve got one of those “my child is an honor student”
 - bumper stickers on their new car...

And they call and they say,

- “Oh, Timmy got suspended from school.”
 - And you’re like, Yessssss.
 - “Oh no...we’ll pray for you!”
 - That’s what you say,
 - but in your heart you’re like,
 - yes, I always hated Timmy...
 - and their smug bumper sticker!

TRANSITION

That kind of stuff rattles around in all of us.

- So, we're going to study Saul's envious response to David,
 - and where it leads him.

And my hope is that it will inform us, and convict us, and maybe even protect us from the same destruction. 1 Samuel 18 verse 6:

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1 SAMUEL 18:6-9

[6] As they were coming home, when David returned from striking down the Philistine, the women came out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with tambourines, with songs of joy, and with musical instruments. [7] And the women sang to one another as they celebrated,

"Saul has struck down his thousands,
and David his ten thousands."

[8] And Saul was very angry, and this saying displeased him. He said, "They have ascribed to David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed thousands, and what more can he have but the kingdom?" [9] And Saul eyed David from that day on.

EXPLAIN: GOD'S WILL

So, let's start by breaking down some things.

- First, in verse 8 we find the evidence that Saul is seeing...
- the very same thing that Jonathan saw.
 - He said, "what more can he have but the kingdom?"

We see at this moment that Saul remembers something!

Samuel had said this to him back in chapter 15:

SLIDE 1 SAMUEL 15:28

[28] And Samuel said to him, "The LORD has torn the kingdom of Israel from you this day and has given it to a neighbor of yours, who is better than you."

POINT 1

What Saul is seeing is that, in fact, that **neighbor** is David.

- GOD'S WILL is for David to become the king.
 - That's the very same thing Jonathan saw.
- But whereas Jonathan loves David,
 - and honors him,
 - and symbolically yields his claim on the throne...
- Saul does not.
- Saul does the exact opposite.

And so, Saul begins by getting **SLIDE ANGRY**

- He starts with anger at David's success.
- This is a first step in envy, y'all.

EXPLAIN: HATING GOD'S WILL

And Saul's anger isn't only directed at:

- David...or the singers of this David's 10,000s song...
- His anger is actually towards God.

And I don't think it's too big of a statement to say this:

- **Envy is hating God's will.**
- Envy is not wanting God's will.

Saul sees that it's God's will for David to have the kingdom...

- and he hates that.
- He gets angry.
- He doesn't want God's will.

Envy is an accusation against God's will.

- You are indicting God.
- You're saying,
 - *"God, I see your will here...*
 - *but I reject it...*
 - *I hate it...*
 - *I'm angry at it!"*

APPLICATION

Church, envy is seeing God's will...and wanting something else.

- It's wanting what you don't have.
- It's feeling like what you do have is not enough.
- It's feeling that you deserve more.
 - Indeed, that you are owed more by God.

And envy can start with discontent with what God has given you, and turn quickly into resentment toward others who have what you want.

- Not only do you wish that you had what they have,
- you begin to hate them for having it.

EXPLAIN: WHAT ABOUT ME?

And so, how should we define envy?

Well, we get a pretty good definition of envy if we look to verse 8:

- “They have ascribed to David ten thousands,
- AND TO ME they have ascribed thousands.”

Envy says: **SLIDE WHAT ABOUT ME?**

So, in Romans 12:15 Paul commands us

- to rejoice with those who rejoice,
- and weep with those who weep.

That means that if you are a loving person, you will empathize...

- you will rejoice when someone rejoices...
- and you will weep when someone weeps.

But envy destroys love.

- Envy weeps...when they rejoice.
- And rejoices...when they weep.

Envy is something in your heart...

- that when you see other people having success...
 - rejoicing...
- it's just a dagger in your heart.

ILLUSTRATION

Envy takes everybody else's situations and makes them about you.

WHAT ABOUT ME?

- You want to be married?
 - In envy, you can't see them be happy at the altar.
 - Why?
 - Because you want to be married.
 - So, you can't rejoice with those who rejoice.
- You want to get that promotion?
 - In envy, when other people,
 - even a friend,
 - gets a promotion.
 - You can't rejoice with them.
 - Why?
 - *"I deserve it as much as they do.*
 - *Why am I here and that person is there?"*

WHAT ABOUT ME? You see?

- Love rejoices when they rejoice.
- But envy weeps when they rejoice.

TRANSITION

Now, I'm not saying you shouldn't want things...

- It's ok to want to be married...
- It's ok to want to get a promotion...
- It's even ok to want to remodel your kitchen!

But envy is when our wants start to trump God's will in our lives.

And never underestimate the power of envy.

- Most of us don't realize the deadly poison envy is.
 - We think of envy as a kind of petty jealousy
 - that just comes from wanting a little more.

But the Bible treats it as far more serious.

Proverbs says this:

SLIDE PROVERBS 14:30

[30] A tranquil heart gives life to the flesh,
but envy makes the bones rot.

So, envy might begin with ANGER...

- this feeling that is the opposite of love...

But envy leads somewhere...

- it will make your very bones rot.
- Envy grows into to something.

Verse 10:

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1 SAMUEL 18:10-11

[10] The next day a harmful spirit from God rushed upon Saul, and he raved within his house while David was playing the lyre, as he did day by day. Saul had his spear in his hand. [11] And Saul hurled the spear, for he thought, "I will pin David to the wall." But David evaded him twice.

POINT 2

So, the very next day,

- following Saul's ANGRY envy,
- a harmful spirit rushes upon Saul.

Now, remember, this was why David had been brought into Saul's court in the first place.

- He had come to the palace
 - to play the lyre
 - and soothe Saul
 - and help him find relief
 - from this harmful spirit...
- which he successfully did.

But now the remedy isn't working anymore...

And so, Saul now moves from just being ANGRY...
to becoming **SLIDE AGGRESSIVE**

He becomes AGGRESSIVE.

- He hurled his spear at David to try to kill him.
 - And not just once!
- But twice!

Now, you might just say to yourself...

- *Why didn't David just leave Saul's service then?*
- *I'm thinking if the elders try to literally kill me...*
 - *like pin me to the wall with a sharp stick...*
- *I'd hand in my notice.*
 - *I'm out.*

But David doesn't. Why?

Well, Saul's condition with this evil spirit was known by David.

Maybe he thought,

- *"This is just one of those moods the king gets in.*
- *He's just having one of those bad days.*
 - *This is actually why I'm here, to help soothe him.*
- *Maybe I need to play better.*
- *Maybe he needs sweeter music."*

But note what we as the reader get, that David didn't know...

- Saul actually has murderous intent towards David.
 - His envy isn't staying bottled up in ANGER...
 - it's leaking out...
 - it's AGGRESSIVE.

Consider these words from James:

SLIDE JAMES 3:14–16

[14] But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. [15] This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. [16] For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice.

In other words:

- **envy is a root sin that gives rise to many other sins.**
- And Saul has now become **SLIDE AGGRESSIVE**

APPLICATION

Now, I'm guessing you probably don't have legit murderous thoughts about the people you envy.

- You probably won't attempt homicide with a spear.
 - Gosh, I hope not.

But let's consider a more robust definition of aggression.

We sometimes call it being PASSIVE AGGRESSIVE...

ILLUSTRATION

Your co-worker gets a great promotion at work...you say,

- *"Yeah, but I hear they're really struggling in their marriage."*
 - Envy has given rise to another sin...gossip.
 - That's AGGRESSIVE.

Your friend gets engaged...you say,

- *"Well, it sure seems like she's settling."*
 - The sin of bitterness is gaining ground on your heart,
 - and it is now leaking out.

They don't need my compassion...

- just look at how big their house is.

They don't deserve my friendship...

- just look at all the cool photos they post...
- they must have hundreds of friends.

And instead of just feeling ANGRY inside...

envy has a way of working its way AGGRESSIVELY out of you.

TRANSITION

And then, finally, there is a third move due to envy in this text.

Let's look at verses 12-16:

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1 SAMUEL 18:12-16

[12] Saul was afraid of David because the LORD was with him but had departed from Saul. [13] So Saul removed him from his presence and made him a commander of a thousand. And he went out and came in before the people. [14] And David had success in all his undertakings, for the LORD was with him. [15] And when Saul saw that he had great success, he stood in fearful awe of him. [16] But all Israel and Judah loved David, for he went out and came in before them.

POINT 3

Now here's where things get insidious.

- Saul's envy started with this internal ANGER...
 - just simmering and brooding.
 - A resistance to and rejection of God's will.
 - WHAT ABOUT ME?
- Then it starts to bubble over into AGGRESSION,
 - it's starting to leak out...
- But now he becomes **SLIDE AFRAID**

Now, there are categories of fear.

There is good fear and then there's bad fear.

ILLUSTRATION: GOOD FEAR

So, there are good things to fear.

Like the scriptures say that **the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.**

So, knowing the good things to fear is a part of being wise.

- I've tried to teach my daughter this.
- Every parent in the room gets this!

Your kids think they know how to parent themselves better than you do!

- *"Why can't I play in the street?"*
- *Why do I have to wear my helmet?*
- *Why should I look both ways?"*

Right? And if you're a good parent...

- you walk them over to the street,
- and you show them that flattened squirrel in the gutter,
- and you're like,
 - *"Look at that!"*
 - *You want to be next?*
 - *Then stay out of the street!"*

That's good fear.

EXPLAIN: BAD FEAR

But there is bad fear as well, and that's what Saul is having here.

- He's not fearing the Lord and being wise.
- No! He's afraid of David...BECAUSE he's rejecting God.

This is the fear of man OVER the fear of God!

And church,

- fear will cause you to do some things...
- things you might not have thought you'd be capable of doing.
 - Fear will cause you to cover things up.
 - Fear will make you go underground.
 - Fear makes you...
 - deceitful...
 - duplicitous...
 - devious.

EXPLAIN: SAUL'S FEAR

In Saul's fear he now moves in underhanded ways

- to reduce David's influence
- and even to kill him.

Now remember, the most important thing to Saul...

- is his kingdom.
- It's his kingship.
- It's the very thing that he would oppose God's will on!

But you see in the passage...

- that he tries to bring David down secretly...
- because David was now well loved.

He's the most popular young man in Israel!

- And Saul knew that if he directly took David out,
- he'd lose the very thing he wanted the most,
- because the people would have rejected him.

So, he moves deceitfully.

- He gives David a promotion.
 - Bro doesn't have to play music anymore...
 - He's put in charge of a military force.

The problem...David keeps winning.

He comes back from the battles unscathed.

And the complete opposite thing to what Saul wanted happened.

- David continued to become more popular.
 - The Lord was with David.
- And Saul became more and more isolated.

And notice verse 15: Saul stood in fearful awe of him.

- He continues being AFRAID.
- His fear is growing...
 - and it's causing him to do some things...
 - he might not have otherwise done.

APPLICATION

And church, I bring this all up...

- because this fear and then dubious workings of Saul
- are all a direct result of his envy!

Remember that James 3:16 verse from earlier: For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice.

Hear me:

- if you let envy rot your bones...
- you will be capable of every vile practice.

Man, some of my most regrettable sins

- can be traced back to ANGER towards God's will...
 - *God, what about me?!?*
- And that anger began to leak out in AGGRESSION...
- but then comes the fear...being AFRAID of people finding out.

And church,

- I've hidden things...
- I've lied about things...
- I've said things behind backs...
- I've hurt people.
 - All to cover things up!
- This is the vicious cycle of envy.

It's far more than some petty jealousy.

- Envy is a deadly poison.
- Please don't underestimate the power of envy.

CONCLUSION **BLANK SLIDE WITH PADS**

Now, how do we stop this?

- How do we take envy out at the root...
- so it cannot grow from ANGER to AGGRESSION to FEAR...
- that can lead to unthinkable sins?

Well, the answer may not be what you think.

You see, envy has a core.

At its core, envy is a misunderstanding of the Gospel.

If you look at your life and you say,

- *“I deserve better than what I’ve got...”*
 - *I’ve worked very hard...*
 - *I’ve tried very hard...*
- *God is unfair.*
- *My parents are unfair.*
- *My school is unfair.*
- *My job is unfair.*
- *The world is unfair!*
 - *I should be higher!*
 - *I deserve to better!”*

That perspective only comes if you don’t fully understand the Gospel.

- And I don’t mean cognitively.
- I don’t mean you don’t cognitively understand the Gospel.
 - I mean you don’t understand it in your heart.
 - In your guts.
 - Deep down in your inner being.
- Maybe we’d call this an experiential understanding.

THE GOSPEL

So, what do I mean by not fully understanding the Gospel?

- Jesus Christ comes to earth...
- he lives a perfect life...
- he dies a terrible death...
- and what does he say?

Well, in John 17, in the High Priestly Prayer, Jesus says:

- *“Father, I want them to have all the things they DON’T deserve.*
- *I want them to have what I deserve.”*

In other words,

- The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the total opposite of envy.
 - Jesus says, *“I did it all!*
 - *I achieved it all!*
 - *I paid for it all!*
 - *And now I want THEM to have what I deserve!*

- *I want THEM to have your love...*

- *they don’t deserve it.*

- *I want THEM to be adopted into the family...*

- *they don’t deserve it.*

- *I want THEM to share in my inheritance...*

- *they don’t deserve it.*

- *I want to rejoice as they rejoice...*

- *and I know they don’t deserve it.”*

The Bible calls this GRACE. It’s GRACE.

SLIDE Jesus LOVES seeing people get what they don’t deserve.

- If you understand that...
 - AND as we come to understand that...
 - more and more and more in our hearts...

- THEN, when envy springs up in our hearts...
 - when we see people getting what WE want...
 - what WE think WE deserve...
 - or even what WE think they DON'T deserve...

WE will remember that WE don't deserve what WE are getting from Jesus.

Jesus LOVES seeing people get what they don't deserve.

- Understanding GRACE in your heart,
- is how we uproot ENVY.

And you know why this is hard? Because we don't LIKE grace...

Seriously...I'll show you.

ILLUSTRATION: KID AT CHRISTMAS

So, my daughter is really into Legos right now.

- Like, every gift for every special occasion.
 - Legos.
 - Always Legos.
- And that's some serious scratch for little plastic blocks.
 - They're flippin expensive!

But imagine my daughter on Christmas opening her presents.

- And imagine her ripping open a set of Legos.
 - I got her the gift,
 - and I'm pumped to see her open the gift.
 - And she's pumped to receive the gift.
- In fact, I might actually be more excited to watch her be excited.

But imagine that after she rips that package open,

- sees the Legos,
- gets super excited...
 - and then she sets the box down.
 - And she says...
 - *“You know what.*
 - *I’m gonna go clean up my room first.*
 - *I really haven’t earned this.”*
 - And then she runs upstairs.

Now, that would never happen!

- But I’d be like,
 - *“No no no no...that’s a gift.*
 - *It’s Christmas.*
 - *Let’s build, girl.”*
- But she’s like...
 - *“Hey, let me go wash your truck,*
 - *just so you know that I played a part in this.*
 - *I really haven’t been pulling my weight around here.*
 - *I’ll be right back and then we can play with the Legos.”*

And I’d have to think about that, cause the truck’s pretty dirty from skiing...

- NO! I’d be like,
 - *“Girl, I want to watch you open those things up now!*
 - *I want to watch you play now!*
 - *Actually, I want to play with you!*
 - *Let’s do this.*

- *Let's delight in the gift,*
 - *and in each other.*
- *Let's get after those Legos!"*

Now, my daughter would never do that. Right? Why?

- Kids understand gifts.
 - Undeserved.
 - Grace.
- They just want to play.

Now, adults don't get it as much.

That's why when someone gives you a killer gift you automatically say,

- *"Oh, you shouldn't have,"*
- *"I can't accept this."*

ENDING

But church, this is what is so incredible about the Christian Gospel.

It's all GRACE.

You've got a good dad...who loves to give you good gifts!

And he wants to get down on the carpet and play, too!

- You didn't earn it!
- You don't deserve it!
- You just get to play!

Do you believe that?

That's what Christianity is about!

And when you understand THAT...you can uproot ENVY.

Do you have envy in your heart today?

- Think about Jesus.

Jesus loves to give people what they don't deserve.

Even you.

Let's pray.

RESPONSES:

Well, every week at Fathom we respond in 4 ways:

- COMMUNION – THE LORD’S SUPPER
- GIVING TITHES & OFFERINGS – fathomchurch.org/give
- PRAYER - fathomchurch.org/prayer
- SINGING

So, I’m going to read the Words of Institution from the Apostle Paul, we’ll take communion, and then we’ll sing:

1 CORINTHIANS 11:23–26 – WORDS OF INSTITUTION

[23] For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, [24] and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” **TAKE**

[25] In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” **TAKE**

[26] For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Love you church, let’s stand and sing together.

RESOURCES CONSULTED:

- Davis, Dale Ralph. Focus on the Bible. 1 Samuel: Looking on the Heart.
- Davis, Dale Ralph. *Under the Shadow of the Almighty.*
- Greear, J.D. *Envy.*
- Keller, Timothy. *Spiritual Self Destruction.*
- Martin, Joby. *Envy.*
- Tsumura, David Toshio. The New International Commentary on the Old Testament. The First Book of Samuel.