

Love Does Not Envy

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[0 : 00] Daniel Day Lewis won a second Academy Award for Best Actor for his portrayal of Daniel Plainview in the movie There Will Be Blood.

! Daniel Plainview in the movie is an oil man in the early 1900s in California. And so why the title There Will Be Blood? Why was blood inevitable?

Well, at the very heart of that movie, I just want to cast the scene before you so you can picture it. He's sitting beside a fire in the dark next to a man who's pretending to be his brother.

And just for a moment, Daniel Plainview lets down his shield and lets down his guard because he thinks he has someone here he can confide in and will understand him.

And this is what he says in this dark night. He says, I have a competition in me. I want no one else to succeed.

[1 : 07] I hate most people. There are times when I look at people and I see nothing worth liking. And so there will be blood when that's how you live, when you have that competition in you that wants no one else to succeed.

Envy made the devil a murderer from the very beginning. Envy made Cain a murderer soon after that.

So what was that very first sin? Well, if we go back into the depths of time, we don't know exactly the timing of all of this.

But we do know that the first sin wasn't found in a man. It was found in an angel. And it wasn't found on earth. It was found in heaven. And it was even not even an ordinary angel if there be such a thing.

He was one of the courtroom attendants, one of the highest, the highest of all the angels. He had few equals. If he had any, he probably had no superiors, but one.

[2 : 20] And the only one higher was God himself. And so what was that first sin? It was a two-sided sin.

It was pride on one side and envy on the other. Pride says, I deserve the highest place. And envy says, I don't like that he has that highest place.

So the morning star looked at God and envied his glory. He envied his throne. He envied his majesty. He wasn't satisfied with the place that God gave him.

And that envy spread. It spread down into the ranks of the angels. And so before a rebellious action was ever taken, there was a rebellion that was raging in the devil's heart, a rebellion of envy.

And that envy spread like a virus down to some of the lower ranks of angels. Jude says that these angels did not keep their proper place. They did not keep their position of authority, but abandoned their own home.

[3 : 28] So they had power. They had authority. God gave them that. They had places and palaces where they belonged. And Jude says they left them. They abandoned their post.

They abandoned their God-given positions because they weren't satisfied with them. Their hearts were devoured in envy.

And so the whole satanic rebellion is built on that two-sided sin of pride and envy. And that's where we want to begin this afternoon. We're looking at 1 Corinthians chapter 13.

We're going through what describes love. And love is patient. And love is kind. And it says next, it does not envy. It does not envy.

And so we want to begin with just this idea. The evil, our envy, is satanic. And love is satanic. And love is godly. Envy is satanic.

[4 : 29] It's satanic. It's from the evil one. But love is from God. Envy says, I'm not happy with what I have. I know and I want what you have.

And I'm not happy for you. I don't like that God has given you something that I don't have. And I'm miserable because you have what I want. And Paul says here, love does not envy.

That spirit, those thoughts, that attitude, those desires. Love doesn't do that. Envy makes your blessing my misery.

So I see your blessing. And I look at it. And it makes me miserable. But love makes your blessing my joy. I see God blessing you. And that makes me happy.

They're two completely opposite ways of looking at other people. Looking at what is going on. Love and envy are these two competing agendas in the whole world.

[5 : 32] These two spirits at work, so to speak. So love began with God. It filled love, filled the earth with good things. Love blessed the angels.

Love blessed men. Love in God's heart took great joy in creating a creation where he could look at it and say, it was all very good.

He made it that way. So it all fit together. And it was all a blessing to all the members of it. So love created. Love rejoiced to save.

It was love that brought Jesus down. It was a desire to see blessing in other people's lives that brought Jesus to the earth. And it was love that carried him to the cross and saved us.

God wanted and God wants to do us good. So he plans our blessing. He rejoices to bless. He rejoices to see his creation flourishing, prospering, thriving.

[6 : 36] That's love. Love delights in the well-being of his servants. Now that's one agenda, one story. God's agenda. God is love.

Now that's the whole motivation of his heart. That's why John in his epistle can say God is love.

That's the powerhouse, the engine, so to speak, of God's heart.

It's love. But there is this other story, this other agenda that is also present now. Satan's agenda. If God is love, then we can, in a certain way, say Satan is envy.

That's what motivates him. That's the engine of his poor, stunted, miserable heart. This boiling, diseased, angry craving for what someone else has.

And you see his agenda at work. Four people are on the earth. A mom and a dad and two brothers. And envy shows up.

[7 : 49] Cain and Abel take their offerings before the Lord. And God accepts Abel's offering and doesn't accept Cain's offering. And Cain is filled with envy. He wants what Abel has.

He wants God's acceptance. He wants that. But he doesn't get it. And so he kills. And he covets. And he quarrels.

So why are there fights and quarrels among you? You want something, but you don't get it. You kill and you covet. There will be blood. Wherever you see envy.

There will be some kind of blood. Leah and Rachel envied each other. And then their sons envied Joseph. You remember the blood in Joseph's story.

The beautiful coat covered in blood. And broke their father's heart. Korah and his friends envied and raged against Moses and Aaron.

[8 : 50] Why? Not because they didn't have a place of blessing. Not because God hadn't smiled upon them in a special way. But they wanted what Moses and Aaron had. They wanted what the priest had.

And they didn't get it. So they say, aren't we all called? Who do you think you are? And they rebel. And now Jesus is on the scene.

And the Pharisees oppose him. Why? Why such opposition? What is the spirit that is driving so much of what we see in the Gospels? It's not because of his miracles.

It's not because Jesus wasn't speaking the truth. And they felt like we need to oppose him.

Obviously they thought that. Why did the chief priest hand him over to Pontius Pilate?

To Pilate, it was obvious. Mark 15.10 Knowing it was out of envy. That the chief priest had handed him over to him.

[9 : 53] There will be blood. That's what the Pharisees are saying. That's what's driving. Blood, thirsty, envy killed Jesus.

They wanted what he had. They didn't like that he had it. They didn't like that he was getting more disciples. They didn't like that the people were following him rather than them. And so they killed him.

And so do you see what I'm saying? It's not just... The spirit. This desire. This sin is at work in the whole world.

It breathes in everything that the world does. Because it's from the evil one. Paul already put his finger on it. In 1 Corinthians 3, he says to these Corinthians who are fighting and quarreling about who they belong to.

And he just says this. You are still worldly. Why are they so still worldly? For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly?

[11:01] Are you not acting like mere men? That's what the world does. That's what drives the world. That's what motivates the world. That spirit of envy. And so what's behind all this anger and fighting?

What's behind the anger and fighting at work, and at school, at home, and in politics, in the city, in the country, wherever you go? it's that same double-sided sin of pride and envy.

And now, in the face of all of that, Paul says something amazing. He says, love does not envy. Love is otherworldly.

Love is not of this world. It's from God. Love looks at the place God has given to other people, their blessing, the good that God has given to them, and love rejoices in their blessing, even if it's not a blessing that I have.

It takes as much delight that they are enjoying it than as if I were enjoying it. Love is so different. So different.

[12:19] So wonderful. Envy rots the bones. Love gives life to the body. Envy destroys. Love builds. Evil is satanic.

Love is from God. Now, this is where we need to get personal. We've been talking about it sort of from a large, big perspective, and I just wanted you to see that the sin of envy is not a rare thing. It's very much at the very, it's at the heart blood of what is going on in the world. And so we need to get personal and we need to bring this down to us. And this is what I had to do.

And I think this is what we all need to do. We need to search our own hearts. Search your own hearts for envy. Love rejoices in someone else's spiritual gifts.

Are you envious of someone else's spiritual gifts? Do you wish you had their place? Did you, do you wish you were as good at such and such as they are?

[13:27] Love rejoices in their place in the church. Whatever that place might be, their position. Are you envious of that? Love rejoices in God's goodness to my brother or sister.

Are you envious of what they have? You don't like that they have it and you don't. Their house, their car, their clothes.

Love rejoices in God's blessings on their marriage. Are you envious of their marriage? The love that they have that you don't seem to have.

I want what they have. Their husband or their wife. They have someone. I don't have anyone. Maybe it's their children. Their children are all saved.

Their children are all a pride to the family name. And they're doing great out there in the world. They all have good jobs and I can take, they can take pride in them and me not so much.

[14:27] Maybe it's their work. What they do. They're somebody. I'm not anybody. They have a title.

I don't even have a title. Their personality. Their social skills. Their intelligence. Their honor. Their beauty. Their hair. Their weight. Their face. Their body. Their opportunities. Their vacations. Their health.

Their accomplishments. Their talents. Their reputation. Their family. Their family background. Their friends. Search your own heart.

Is there envy at work? Where is that envy at work? Can you put your finger on it? And if you can put your finger on it, you know what you are touching? You're touching a decaying, rotten place in your heart.

[15:36] A dead, decaying spot. Proverbs again says, envy rots the bones. It eats you up from the inside. Now you've seen a brown spot on an apple.

And if you let it go, it just spreads. Until the whole apple is soft and decaying and gross. And that's what envy does.

Left to itself, it spreads all over. And we're not talking about apples here. We're talking about your own heart. And it turns it into a gooey, gross mess.

And so put your finger on it. And 1 Corinthians says, you need to identify it for what it is. You have a love problem. You have a love problem.

I have a love problem. If you love them, you wouldn't be envying them. Because love does not envy. The problem is not a blessing problem.

[16:36] The problem is not that you don't have what you need. I don't have a lack of blessing problem. You don't have a lack of blessing problem. God has blessed me with more than enough.

And so I have to say, I have a love problem. I have a love problem. I'm too in love with me and not enough in love with them. It's my love problem. God delights in the welfare of his servants.

So I have to ask, what's my problem? What is my problem then? If God is delighting in them and delights to do them good, then where's my heart at that I don't want to see that happen?

So I've got a love problem. So now what? How do you make love to grow in your heart? Really, this is one of the important things about this whole chapter.

This is describing how love works. It's describing how great love is. But how do I get love to grow in my heart? How do I put envy to death?

[17:38] If I can put my finger on it, I don't want to be satisfied and just say, oh, that's the way it is. I want to do something about it. So how do I make love grow in my heart? If envy is a love problem, not a blessing problem, then how do I get Jesus' love into my heart?

Well, I'll tell you. You need to bring Jesus' love into the picture. You need to start thinking about Jesus and how he loves.

And we're going to start with how he loves me. So start with how he loves you. How has he loved you? You know, I need to think of how he's loved me.

If I was living in his love for me, then I wouldn't be having my eyes cast out there and so dissatisfied with what I don't have and what other people have. If I was remembering what I deserve and how he's treated me so well and how he's loved me so well, I wouldn't envy them.

And so, if you want to see love grow and envy die, we need to be preaching that gospel to ourself. We need to be preaching this is how he has loved me and I need to satisfy and rest myself in that love.

[18:49] I'm rich. You're rich, Christian. You are blessed. Jesus loves you. That dries up envy. The lions have fallen for me in pleasant places and we need to get back and if I did a better job of counting my blessings, then I would be happier than instead of going around moping for what I don't have.

We just aren't healthy. We just aren't healthy when we are forgetting how he has loved us. God has truly loved us so wonderfully, so generously.

And so, do you have a rotten envy spot on your heart? Bring Jesus' love and apply Jesus' love to it, to you. But you know what else I have found to be extremely helpful?

When I have, you know, interrelational problems of any kind, but let's just talk about this envy. what really helps me is when I think about how Jesus loves them.

So, let's say I'm envying something that you have. I am forgetting that the source of that blessing is how the Lord has loved them. And I think so much better of people when I think about how Jesus loves them.

[20:15] So, so that person you are envying, just think about how Jesus feels about them. Just think about the delight that Jesus has in doing them good, that God has in doing them good. And so we need to connect Jesus to that person.

So not only connect Jesus' love to me and my heart, but connect Jesus and his love to them. Why are they blessed? What's the source of that? It's, it's Jesus Christ.

He's the fountain of every blessing. So think about what Jesus has done for them. Stop untying them from Jesus. Connect Jesus and them together the way it's supposed to be.

So Jesus has blood blessed them. Jesus has died for them. Love also says there's going to be blood. Love is blood earnest as well.

And, and Jesus shed his own blood for them. And now I'm going to be envious of them. Jesus lives for them. He's their great high priest.

[21:15] He's praying. He's bringing them before his father constantly. He shed his blood for them. Jesus agonized for their souls. Jesus was crushed to bless them.

He's, he's in the garden of Gethsemane to do them good. He loves that person. He's committed to, to be their good shepherd.

He's always plotting and planning their good. He's full of love for them. If he's full of love for them, will I hate them?

Will I hate them? Will I be angry with their blessing if it came at such a cost? Will Jesus love them and delight to do them good and then I'll begrudge them that?

His heart seems to be, the river of his heart is running one way and it's like my heart is running the other way. God is delighting to do them good and I don't like that at all.

[22 : 23] Jesus looks on them with generosity and love and so will I really look on them with envy and jealousy? See, in the light of Jesus' love for them, my heart and my envy is shown for what it is.

Just completely out of sync with what his heart is. And more than that, when I think of how Jesus loves them and what he's done for them and is doing for them, you know, it's not only that it puts a wet blanket on my envy, it kindles the fire of love for them.

Have you ever seen, have you experienced that? I've experienced this again and again. So, Jesus loves them. So, something in my heart, the spirit of God in my heart sets a flame of love for them as well.

If he loves them, I want to love them. If he wants to do them good, then, well, I want to do them good. And so, envy is smothered and love's flame grows.

So, Jesus loves them and cares for them, then all care for them. Jesus wants to see them blessed and thriving and happy. Well, I want to see them blessed and thriving and happy. His flame jumps into my heart.

[23 : 36] The forest fire of his love spreads into my heart. So, love does not envy. It's the exact opposite. So, drag your envy to Jesus' heart and watch it die and watch love grow in its place.

So, Jesus is this perfect fountain of love. So, out of my envy I come. And I come. And I need to get close.

I need to line my heart up with his heart. I need to get his generosity and my own desires in line.

He's got love to spare, brothers and sisters. He has envy-killing love.

And so, let's go to him and let's ask him for it. Let's pray. Our God, you have been so wonderful and generous to us.

your blessings are beyond measure and number and count. All of your thoughts for us far outnumber all the grains of sand on the seashore and all of those thoughts of doing us good.

[24 : 56] Your generosity, your love for us shines a bright light on the ugliness of our small envious hearts.

and we would ask, oh, Spirit of God, bring Christ's love into our own hearts. Make us to love instead of to envy.

Help us not to cut ourselves off from the gospel, but to live in it and to experience that. But also, help us not to cut off other people from the gospel and how you have loved them and done them good.

But give us these gospel lenses to look at ourselves to look at you and to look at other people. And then we will love as you love. So do us good.

Bring us your peace and your joy. I pray this all in Jesus' name. For his sake. Amen.