

# **The Desired Christian Personality (#2)**

- 1 - Does not Envy**
- 2 - Not Puffed Up**
- 3 - Not Rude**
- 4 - Does Not Seek Its Own**
- 5 - Is Not Easily Provoked**
- 6 - Thinks no Evil**

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*Lesson One*  
***"Does Not Envy"***

In our first six lessons on **The Desired Christian Personality** we looked at the six "positive" expressions of Love! Now, we want to look at the six "negative" expressions that **do not** correctly express love! These expressions or non-expressions of love are found in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7.

**Quote:** *"Pride, envy, and avarice are the three sparks that have set the hearts of all on fire."* Do you agree with this statement? If so, why?

**Defined:** *"It is to be unhappy with the success or blessings of others."* It is to look, but look with ill-will towards others. If envy is not dealt with, it can grow into bitterness and hatred of others. Envy is identified with base things such as—holding grudges, being jealous, having an evil eye, being discontent, hurting others, etc. Jealousy may fear losing what it does have, but envy feels pain at seeing what others have. It is at first an attitude, but leads to overt bad actions toward others. It is condemned in the listing of sins.

**Rom. 1:29** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Gal. 5:21** \_\_\_\_\_

**The Outcome of Envy**

Our actions are usually governed by our attitude or spirit within our hearts. Envy, as an attitude, will lead to many very undesirable results. It can divide friends, families, communities, and nations. It can lead to destruction and death physically—but primarily spiritually! Look at the following passages to see how the outcome of envy is described:

**Prov. 27:4** \_\_\_\_\_

**Job. 5:2** \_\_\_\_\_

**Prov. 14:30** \_\_\_\_\_

**Jas. 3:14-16** \_\_\_\_\_  
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A person may dislike or hate someone and not fully realize that it may be envy behind it all. We can envy a person's clothes, car, house, money, success, friendships with others, self-confidence, abilities, etc.

**Admonitions against Envy**

Look at the following passages that let the Christian know that envy can have no place in his life.

**Rom. 13:13** \_\_\_\_\_

**1 Cor. 3:1-3** \_\_\_\_\_

**2 Cor. 12:20** \_\_\_\_\_

**Gal. 5:26** \_\_\_\_\_

**1 Pet. 2:1** \_\_\_\_\_

How do you get rid of envy? If it is wrong, sinful, destructive, then we need to get it out of our hearts. The answer is simple, that which gets rid of envy is love! Love does not envy! Love helps us to be happy with the success of others and not to be discontent. Notice what the two references below show that love will do:

**Matt. 5:43-45** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Rom.12:14-21** \_\_\_\_\_

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Love does not grieve when others are blessed, but rejoices with them! Love does not become bitter because we do not have what others have. Love is not frustrated by the success of others.

**Examples of Envy in the Bible**

There is no better place to go to than the Bible to see examples of envy and its devastating results.

**1. Cain and Abel.** (Gen. 4:1-8). Both boys brought their sacrifice to God. Both were giving recognition to the God who had brought them into existence. But Cain's offering was flawed, but Abel's was acceptable. Cain did not like God's decision in the matter—evidently thinking that his offering should have been accepted. Cain was envious or jealous of Abel's offering being recognized and

accepted when his was not. The outcome of his bad attitude was---murder! He killed his own brother over envy.

**1 Jn. 3:12**

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**2. Saul and David.** (1 Sam. 18:8-9). King Saul was already having problems with God because of his disobedience. David came on the scene as a young man, but a man of faith and courage. He became so popular with the people that Saul was sure David would soon become the new King. He became so envious and jealous of David's success that he tried to kill him on several occasions.

**3. Jesus and Jewish Leaders.** (Matt. 27:18). Jesus was becoming so popular with the people that the leaders feared the outcome for themselves. Out of envy, they plotted to kill him and succeeded in getting Him put to death by the Romans. When Jesus was brought before Pilate, the Scriptures state that Pilate knew that the Jews had delivered Jesus out of Envy.

**4. The Apostles and Jewish Leaders.** (Acts 5:17-18). The Apostles were having so much success with the people that the leaders of the Jews were fearful of the outcome—especially for themselves. They put them into prison for a short period of time hoping to get them to stop preaching. All of this came out of their envy or jealousy (indignation) of the success of the Apostles.

**5. Paul and the Jews at Thessalonica.** (Acts 17:1-9). Many of the people at Thessalonica responded to the Gospel, but among the Jews some were envious of the success of the Gospel and wanted to stop the preaching. To save themselves, Paul and Silas left the city by night.

**6. Problems with the Church at Corinth.** (1 Cor. 3:1-3). The Apostle pointed out that the church, instead of acting out of love, was acting out of a spirit of envy that had led to strife and division.

### **Concluding Thoughts**

Envy can find root in anyone's heart where love is not present as it should be. The Apostle told about some preachers in Rome that were preaching Christ out of envy and strife, selfish ambition and not sincerely. The danger of envy is all around us. Christians need to fill their hearts with God's love to keep envy out. We are commanded not to envy one another (Gal. 5:26).

*True or False*

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. The envious person is unhappy at the success or blessings of others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Envy, itself, is not condemned, but the wrong actions it can produce.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Our actions are governed by our attitudes.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Envy is described as "rottenness to the bones."
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Dislike of a person has no connection with envy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Envy is condemned along with malice, deceit, hypocrisy, and evil-speaking.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Love returns good for evil, while envy results in evil.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. The Bible says that Cain was envious of his brother Abel.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. King Saul had good reasons for being envious of David.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. The Scriptures state that Pilate "knew" that Jesus was delivered because of envy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Envy was back of much of the problems at Corinth.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Even preachers can preach Christ for the wrong reason according to the Apostle Paul.

*Lesson Two*

***"Not Puffed Up"***

We are looking at the negative side of love—what it will not do! In this lesson, we can see that love is not puffed up! The following list is how different versions translate this phrase:

- a) "love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up"
- b) "love is never boastful"
- c) "love is not arrogant"
- d) "love is not conceited"
- e) "love does not put on airs"
- f) "love does not cherish inflated ideas of its own importance"

As you can see there are several synonyms that the translators used to help us to understand what love will not do. The following Scriptures can also be helpful in giving additional ideas.

- 2 Tim. 3:4** \_\_\_\_\_
- 1 Tim. 6:17** \_\_\_\_\_
- 1 Tim. 3:6** \_\_\_\_\_
- Prov. 8:13** \_\_\_\_\_
- Phil. 2:3** \_\_\_\_\_
- Jere. 48:29** \_\_\_\_\_

There are also additional synonyms or phrases that help to define the concept of "pride."

- a) "does not hold inflated ideas of one's own importance"
- b) "does not brag"
- c) "Does not magnify or display its real or supposed advantages over others."
- d) "Makes no boast of its own work or accomplishments"
- e) "looking down on others"
- f) "Silent about any advantage over others"
- g) "an inflated ego"
- h) "an excessive amount of self-esteem"
- i) "to raise up self or run down others to show superiority"
- j) "to boast of one's education, wealth, abilities in order to show one's superiority"
- k) "to use one's talents for self-glorification"
- l) "the desire to impress others"

It should be easy to see that there can be no real loving relationship with God or men when one's mind is so fixed or filled with self! The opposite of pride would

be humility.

**Eph. 4:2** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phil. 2:3-4** \_\_\_\_\_

**2 Chron. 32:26** \_\_\_\_\_

Love will cause a person to be humble, not prideful! Pride usually shows contempt or disregard of others, but love wants to bless and serve others. How do you feel about the following quotation?

*"Love receives its endowments with gratitude; regards them as a gift from God; and is disposed to employ them not in vain boasting, but in purposes of utility, in doing good to all others on as wide a scale as possible."*

Boasters usually become known more for their boasting than their accomplishments. The person that does good is the least likely to boast. Love develops esteem for others and raises our value for them.

**Rom. 12:10** \_\_\_\_\_

How do you feel about these quotes?

*"The less people speak of their greatness, the more we think of it."*

*"Where boasting ends, there dignity begins."*

God's advice to us—*"Put a seal on your lips and forget what you have done."*

**God's View of Pride**

**Prov. 6:16-17** \_\_\_\_\_

**Prov. 29:23** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dan. 4:37** \_\_\_\_\_

**1 Jn. 2:16** \_\_\_\_\_

Rom. 1:30-32 \_\_\_\_\_

Jas. 4:6 \_\_\_\_\_

### **The Outcome of Pride**

The Bible has quite a bit to say about the outcome of pride in our lives. It is often illustrated in the lives of people to impress upon us the reality of what is being said about pride.

1. **It caused Nebuchadnezzar to fall. (Dan. 4:28-33)**
2. **It caused Haman's destruction. (Esther 3:5-6; 7:10)**
3. **It caused the Devil's fall. (1 Tim. 3:6)**
4. **Pride characterized the great "falling away." (2 Thess. 2:3-4)**
5. **Pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall. (Prov. 16:18)**
6. **Pride brings shame. (Prov. 11:2)**
7. **Pride brings strife. (Prov. 13:10)**
8. **Pride can deceive. (Obadiah 3)**

### **Concluding Thoughts**

We must not let attainments or position go to our heads (Matt. 20:25-28) but remain humble servants of God. Jesus, again, is our great example of humility (Phil. 2:1-8). God not only resists the proud, but He gives grace to the humble (Jas. 4:6). When we humble ourselves before God, He will lift us up (Jas. 4:10). Let us learn, as God's children, to esteem others better than ourselves (Phil. 2:3). Love will enable us to be this kind of a person.

**Questions for Discussion**

*True or False*

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Boasting is a form of pride.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. To be "high-minded" is to think on higher (spiritual) things.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. A person can be prideful even if he doesn't boast about himself.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. It is impossible to have a close relationship with God when one is so fixed or filled with self.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Selfish ambition is not the same as pride.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Pride usually shows contempt or disregard of others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Boasters are known more for their boasting than accomplishments.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. The person who does good is the least likely to boast.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Where boasting ends, there dignity begins.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. God cannot hate pride, but He doesn't like it and its outcome.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Pride is listed as one of many sins that alienates us from God.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. We know that the Devil fell because of his pride.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. God does not offer grace to the proud.

## ***"Not Rude"***

We continue with what the Bible says that love will **not** do! ***"Love does not behave itself unseemly."*** Our one word that tries to stress this is that love is not **rude!** Other translations state:

- a) **"love is not unmannerly"**
- b) **"Love is not indecent"**
- c) **"Love is not offensive to others"**

If love is not rude; then, it must be courteous, polite, or tactful—showing concern for others. Love will not act disrespectful of others, but will have a delicate sensitivity for the feeling of others. This is love expressed in little things that help to bond people together. To speak the Gospel in an offensive manner does not help a person "receive the truth gladly;" but probably the very opposite. It is hard to convince a person we really care for them when we are discourteous and rude in our presentation of the truth. The Gospel is to be preached with love (not rudeness) (Eph. 4:15).

Rudeness or Courtesy may vary with time and the particular culture you may be involved with. For instance, it may be courteous to take your shoes off in one culture, but in another it may be rude to do so. Christians will strive to show love in whatever culture they are in.

We show courtesy to people in positions of authority by using proper terms that denote courtesy. Even though men may have established these over a period of time, the Christian will observe these courtesies because of his love of people. Not to show respect is looked upon as "being rude!"

What do you think of this quote?

*"Small courtesies are the oil that helps to ease the friction of social contact."*

Some people may think that they are too busy or too important to bother with such courtesies and are willing to be classified as "rude!" As a Christian we may be obedient to God's will in a lot of things, but still be rude or discourteous towards others about us. But God's Word still says that love is not rude!

Even when we look at such "minor details" as table manners, the Christian should strive to not be offensive. What if you were eating with someone in your home and that person ate his food with his hands, with food dribbling all over the table and himself and he was making noises like an animal eating—how would **you** feel?

**Love is not Rude—Will not Offend!**

If love is not rude, then it will show good manners, be courteous, be polite, and be tactful—showing concern for people. Some people who claim to be a Christian seem to take pride in being tactless, crude, unkind, and insensitive to even their fellow-Christians. But if they have the love of God in their hearts, they will not be guilty of these things. Love is sensitive to how others feel.

**2 Tim. 2:24-25** \_\_\_\_\_  
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To be tactful is not to deceive people, but it is to avoid misunderstandings and mistrust. How do you like the following quote?

*"We do not tactfully hide the truth, but tactfully declare the truth."*

We need to show courtesy and respect to most of all God! Then, we should be respectful of rulers, older people, parents, etc.

**Heb. 12:9** \_\_\_\_\_

**Eph. 6:1-3** \_\_\_\_\_

**1 Pet. 2:13-17** \_\_\_\_\_

**Offend or Offense** is another term that probably should be included in this discussion on Rudeness. Jesus came into the world and became an offense to people, not because He wanted it or didn't care about people's feelings; but, people were offended in His message and claims (Isa. 8:4; Gal. 4:16). There is another concept involved that would be included in our study on rudeness—that is, not caring about people or their feelings.

**Rom. 14:20** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Rom. 16:17** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Matt. 18:6-7** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**1 Cor. 8:13** \_\_\_\_\_  
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Notice the emphasis upon speaking or acting in such a way that you do not cause a brother to stumble. If we love one another, we will be concerned about each other and try to avoid anything that would offend. A haughty spirit will lead to an offense and making it hard to be reconciled to one another.

**Prov. 18:19** \_\_\_\_\_

**Prov. 16:18** \_\_\_\_\_

It is important that we do not offend.....**even in things that are lawful or not forbidden!** The Apostle's statement about this is very revealing to us all.....

**2 Cor. 6:3** \_\_\_\_\_

We should have the same spirit as the Apostle did!

**Concluding Thoughts**

The Apostle Paul stated about the matter of offense again in Acts 24:16:  
***"I myself always strive to have a conscience without offense toward God and men."*** God's command for us in this regard is: ***"Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the church of God."*** (1 Cor. 10:32). Paul also desired that God's people be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ (Phil. 1:10).

God's people must not be rude, unseemly, discourteous, or offensive. This is God's love being expressed in "little" things!

**Questions for Discussion**

*True or False*

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. A person's table manners have nothing to do with our study.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. To be disrespectful of someone is not behaving unseemly.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. My job as a Christian is to speak the truth and the rest is up to the person who hears.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Rudeness and courtesy may vary with time and culture.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. To show respect to a person in authority is not the same as being courteous to them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. I am too busy to be concerned about people's feelings.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Being tactful and courteous is a command of God.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Being tactful is just another way to be dishonest.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. A mature Christian will be courteous to others and strive not to offend them or their consciences.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Causing a brother to stumble is an offense and a sin.

*Lesson Four*

***"Does Not Seek Its Own"***

Our fourth negative that love will not do is generally labeled as *"Love is not Selfish!"* Other versions express it the following ways:

*"Never selfish"*

*"Does not insist on its own way"*

*"Does not insist on its rights"*

*"Never self-seeking"*

*"Does not pursue selfish aims"*

*"Is not interested only in himself"*

The idea seems to be that love does not seek things for itself at the expense of others. Love is willing to forego their own interests or rights for the good of others. Love puts others first. Most of us are familiar with the concept:

**"God first; others 2nd; and self last!"**

We again are reminded of what Paul quotes from Jesus: ***"It is more blessed to give than to receive."*** (Acts 20:35). Of all of the examples that Deity has set before us—this is the most obvious! God gave His Son for us! Christ gave up Heaven to become a man and die for us! (Jn. 3:16; Rom. 5:6). We have a great challenge to follow their example in this matter. The more unselfish we become, the more we are like God! The following two passages state this concept so clearly:

**1 Cor. 10:24** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phil. 2:3-4** \_\_\_\_\_

**Selfishness**

Synonyms are often helpful in getting a better idea behind a word. The following are some synonyms of selfishness: **Self-interest, Self-centeredness, egotism, egoism, and egocentricity.** A little baby comes into the world—helpless, needing constant attention. One or both parents will have to sacrifice themselves (time, energy, interest, activities, etc) in order to care for the baby. It helps to force the parents to grow up, mature, get out of self, and put the baby's interest or welfare before their own. To grow up, in reality, is to become less self-centered! The more unselfish we become, the less we dwell on self. What do you think of this quote?

***"Self-seeking is a major cause of unhappiness, loneliness, and despair."***

What do you think of this quote?

*"If you want to be miserable, think about yourself, about what you want, what you like, what respect people should show to you, and what people think of you."*

It should be obvious that an unselfish person will not seek his own happiness exclusively or mainly; and, certainly, it does not seek its own way to the injury of others.

**Self-Denial**

In order to become a follower of Jesus, one must begin the hard road, but the glorious road, to self-denial. You can't be saved your way, or other men's way, but only God's way! You either deny yourself and obey him or you will be lost forever.

**John 14:6** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Matt. 16:24-26** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Gal. 2:20** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Rom. 6:6-10** \_\_\_\_\_  
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Living the Christian life is a life of putting to death the works of the flesh that causes separation from God.

**Col. 3:5-6** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Titus 2:12** \_\_\_\_\_  
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The rewards of self-denial are great:

**Mk. 10:28-31** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phil. 3:7-11** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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If we try to hold on to our life in living it the way we want to, we will lose our lives with God eternally. It is when we deny self, lose or give up living the way we want to and live the way God decrees, that we will then gain our life.

**Matt. 10:39** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Jn. 12:24-25** \_\_\_\_\_  
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### **Selfishness and Marriage**

Selfishness can be the "death-nail" to a marriage! Selfishness is a sign of emotional and spiritual immaturity. Parents generally try to teach their children to share and respect the rights of others, but fall into the same way of acting as their children. The challenge of marriage is not only the adjustments that have to be made in order to live together in close harmony, but to also become an unselfish person—putting one's mate before him or her self. This is indicated in the following verses:

**Eph. 5:25** \_\_\_\_\_

**Eph. 5:28** \_\_\_\_\_

**Eph. 5:33** \_\_\_\_\_

Godly love is the fulfilling of the Law of God! Another way to put it would be: *"Godly love will help us to become more and more unselfish."*

### **Selfishness and the Church**

If unselfishness can help a marriage, you know it can help the church. The church is made up of people who have matured to the point that they are concerned for others; while some are or have remained immature and think only of what they want, their desires, their ease, etc. The challenge is for the "strong" or "mature" to bear with the immaturities of the weak, so that they can be motivated to "grow-up" or mature in Christ also. If you have all "weak" in a congregation.....you could be in deep trouble! Unselfish service to others should be the goal that every Christian is seeking in their lives.

Gal. 6:1-2 \_\_\_\_\_

1 Jn. 3:16 \_\_\_\_\_

**Closing Thoughts**

Godly love is basically the solution to all of man's problem with other human beings. God is the ultimate unselfish being! Our goal should be to become as much like Him as we possibly can—totally unselfish! How do you feel about this being your goal in life?

**Questions for Discussion**

True or False

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Love should help us forego our own interests or rights for the good of others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Happiness is found in giving up self, rather than being selfish.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. We are commanded to seek the well-being of others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Egocentricity is to be self-centered!
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Self-seeking is a major cause of unhappiness, loneliness, and despair.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. An unselfish person does not seek his own way to the hurt of others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Unselfishness and self-denial is the same thing.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. A person cannot follow Christ without denying himself.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. To be crucified with Christ is another way of saying that a person has put to death his own way and wants to follow Christ.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. The rewards of self-denial are only after this life is over.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Selfishness must be overcome if a marriage is to succeed.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. The wife must submit to her husband's will, but the husband does not have to submit to the wife's will.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. To be strong, mature, or unselfish is the same thing.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. Selfishness in the church can be the cause of most of its problems.

*Lesson Five*

***"Is Not Easily Provoked"***

The Greek word here is translated "to provoke" or "to irritate." Evidently, the word "easily" is not in the original Greek text, but the translators felt that it is understood. All of us have to deal with provocations or irritations, but the real issue here is how we deal with such or how we handle such. Are we easily upset, irritated, or provoked by people or events? Or, can we remain "calm, cool, and collected" in the midst of such? Look at the way other versions handle this expression:

*"Never provoked"*

*"Not quick to take offense"*

*"It is not irritable or resentful"*

*"It is not touchy"*

*"Is even-tempered"*

We need to always keep in mind that "Godly Love" is concerned for the welfare of other persons. We are to look out for the interests of other people besides ourselves. When we say that *"Love is good-tempered or even-tempered,"* it is a way of indicating that love helps us to be in control of our temper or even our anger.

If a Christian were to take everything said or done to him as a personal affront and react quickly to it in a worldly way, his influence would be gone in the eyes of those who witness such. Usually, the problem with this type of person is—too little Godly love and too much love of self! Christians need to mature to the point where they are not over-sensitive, embittered or enraged by abuse, insult or personal injury. We should not be susceptible to violent anger or exasperation in our dealings with others. We should be serious, calm, and patient. When we are injured, we govern our temper and restrain and subdue our feelings.

**Prov. 16:32** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Jas. 1:19-20** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Be Angry and Not Be Angry!**

All of us have to deal with the feelings of unfairness, unjustness, or evil done to us or others. The very way we are made and our normal thinking is to react to these wrong things. If you are watching a movie that is showing a person doing some terrible things wrong to another person, you

would probably have some strong feelings about that "wicked" person and that he should be punished. When he is punished, there is a sense of justice done and you no longer have those strong feelings. This is normal and most people go through this process many times in their lives.

When we examine Scriptures concerning anger, we can see a possible contradiction between them. One set of Scriptures tell us to put away anger (along with other wrong attitudes).

**Eph. 4:31** \_\_\_\_\_

But just a few verses before the above, the Scriptures tell us that if we get angry, don't sin!

**Eph. 4:26** \_\_\_\_\_

Is anger wrong? Is anger a sin? There is a sense in which anger would be normal, natural, and justified.

**Acts 17:16** \_\_\_\_\_

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We should be provoked by sin and its consequences in our lives. We should not let such provocation cause us to be harsh, bitter, or resentful toward anyone; but we should oppose sin.

Why do the Scriptures emphasize the need to be slow to anger, if anger is a sin or wrong?

**Prov. 15:18** \_\_\_\_\_

**Ecc. 7:9** \_\_\_\_\_

**Titus 1:7** \_\_\_\_\_

Is it okay to be angry, but not sin? Is anger justified in some situations, but wrong in others?

Our translators probably have gone through the same line of questioning in order to come up with the way they translated this phrase—*"not easily provoked."* All of us get provoked at wrong, evil, wickedness, etc., but how do we feel toward the one that did the provoking? We must love the provoker! We must even love our enemies who definitely provoke us. But we should not be so easily provoked by little things that can cause us to

lash out at people, even though they are wrong in their actions. The dangers of anger are real! So many evils have been committed because of anger. Some people lose their sensibilities in their anger and say and do some very harmful and hurtful things.

**Eph. 4:26** \_\_\_\_\_

Jesus again is our perfect example of how to deal with unfair, unjust, and uncalled for provocation.

**1 Peter 2:21-23** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

He wholly submitted His will to the Father's will—even in a very difficult situation. He would not be provoked to strike back at the persons who were mistreating Him. Our heavenly Father is long-suffering to His rebellious creatures—he is not quick to anger or wrath like men. He wants to give men time to come to repentance.

**2 Pet. 3:9** \_\_\_\_\_

**Prov. 15:1** \_\_\_\_\_

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God's love in our hearts will help us to treat our fellow-man the same way that God does—even in hard circumstances. This would be the ultimate!

**1 Pet. 4:12-16** \_\_\_\_\_

**Concluding Thoughts**

A Christian should grow to the point where he is not easily provoked to anger. While the Temperament of people may play a role somewhat in all of this; regardless, we are to be slow to anger and put such out of our lives as quickly as possible. Our soul and the souls of others are at stake in how well we are matured in these matters.

**Questions for Discussion**

True or False

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. The word "easily" is not in the original Greek Text and needs to be looked at carefully to see if it is justified.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. "Not quick to take offense" is a good translation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. An "even-tempered" person is one that is in control of his emotions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. The easily provoked person probably has too little Godly love and too much love of self.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. The Christian is told to put away anger, but he is also told that if he has anger don't sin.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. One of the qualification for an elder is that he is not to have anger in his heart.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Anger is a sin.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. The Christian must not allow someone to provoke him to anger, but rather do good to him that tries to provoke you.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. So much evil has been caused by being expressing their anger towards others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Jesus would not allow his persecutors to provoke him to anger.

*Lesson Six*

***"Thinks No Evil"***

It is interesting to observe how translators have to work at trying to find the right concept and wording in their translation from the Greek into English. One of the best ways to see this problem is to look at the various versions and see how they treat the same word or phrase. The NKJV uses the above phrase ("***thinks no evil***"); but notice these others:

*"Never reckons up her wrongs"*

*"Love keeps no score of wrongs"*

*"It does not keep account of evil"*

*"Does not hold grudges"*

The Greek word has four basic usage:

- 1) To reckon
- 2) To place to the account of, to charge with
- 3) To reason, argue, to infer, conclude
- 4) To think, suppose

From the above, it is easy to see why most versions emphasize that love does not keep score of wrongs, or keep account of evil, nor does it hold grudges. Love is what the overly-suspicious person needs. In an atmosphere of faith and trust...men will expand and find needed encouragement. So, love thinks the best of people. It does not impute bad motives to others. It sees the bright side of things. It puts the best construction on others' actions. Love is forgiving and does not hold a grudge. Many people are unhappy and are unable to get along with others because they keep score.

**The Guileless Person**

Jesus said of Nathanael: "***Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit (guile)!***" (John 1:47). He is open, readable, and he is who he is, not who he pretends to be. He does not put on a front in order to deceive people about himself. I am not sure that this is exactly the same type of person that our lesson is talking about, but some evidently do make a connection.

It is obvious that what one thinks is important. Jesus said: "***For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. These are the things which defile a man....***" (Matt. 15:19-20). What we think about others definitely can affect our actions or non-actions toward them. This seems to be dealing with the root of the problem. Keeping score of the evil of others is just an outcome of the state of mind of the person. If

he suspects no evil, he will have no reason to keep account of evil. This person looks for the good and beautiful, not the ugly. He looks for the noble, not the ignoble—the bright and cheerful, not the dark and gloomy—the hopeful instead of the despairing.

**Thinking the Best About People**

This comes back to having faith in people that they can, will, and hopeful want to do good and not evil. To impart evil motives to a person may indicate that you have a problem with that person. No one is perfect—all of us make mistakes. It should behoove us to make some allowances for others—as we do for ourselves! Why not:

- 1—Put the best possible construction on the conduct of others?
- 2—Be blind to their faults, mistakes, weaknesses, or oddities?
- 3—Even when you see the sin, you do not crush the sinner but

seek to save him?

Love desires to believe the best about a person, not the worst; and is slow to question the goodness of any man's heart. But probably above all, he does not keep account of the injuries he receives, and tries to hold no malice against the person.

Have you ever heard of people who literally write down all the bad things that are done to them by others, so that they can bring it up at the proper time. This can be done mentally, but some people literally write the things down ....**so they won't forget!**

One translation of this Greek phrase is straight to the point: **"No ledger keeper!"** He tries to pay no attention to suffered wrongs or hurt feelings. He does not hold a grudge and has no intent of "balancing the account"—getting even! Christianity is based on mercy, not JUSTICE! God is merciful and gladly willing to forgive and forget wrongs against Himself. Love is grieved at any kind of wrong doing. Love also is concerned for others and it does not wish for bad things to happen to anyone. Our joy is the downfall of wrong, not people!

**1 Cor. 6:6-8** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**2 Cor. 7:2-3** \_\_\_\_\_  
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Job's friends (?) might be a good illustration of "thinking evil" or imputing evil to Job because of what he was suffering. They certainly were convinced of his guiltiness! Instead of listening to him or even believing in him, they condemned him with their thinking.

**Job 19:13-19** \_\_\_\_\_

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**1 Cor. 12:14-27**

These verses in 1 Corinthians 12 certainly help to illustrate the right kind of thinking about one another. We are members of the same body (the Church of our Lord); each has its proper function to make the body work correctly; concern is shown when any member suffers; we all rejoice when any member is honored. We not only think the best about one another but we want the best for one another. We are members of the same body!

**Concluding Thoughts**

Listen to how the **Living Bible** states what love will do: *"If you love someone, you will be loyal to him—no matter what the cost! You will always believe in him, always expect the best of him, and always stand your ground defending him."* That sounds pretty good, don't you think? Is that what you would like for someone to do for you?

**Prov. 10:12** \_\_\_\_\_

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**1 Pet. 4:8** \_\_\_\_\_

*"Love covers a multitude of sins!"* When God forgives, our sins are covered! What a blessing! But also, what a blessing to be around people who have faith in us, who do not impute evil purposes in our actions or even our wrong actions. What a blessing to have true friends who think the best of us!

**Questions for Discussion**

*True or False*

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. I believe the translators did justice to this phrase in this lesson...."Thinks No Evil."
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Overly suspicious people are lacking in their love for others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. To impute wrong motives to others is sinful.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Love is forgiving, while hate keeps an account of the wrongs.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Unhappy people are those who keep a ledger of wrongs done to them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. A guileless person does not impute wrong motives for others actions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. What one thinks is important because it can affect his actions toward others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. To ascribe evil motives to a person may indicate that you have a problem with that person.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. I know of people who have kept a written record of wrongs done to them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Love is slow to question the good intent of any man's heart.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Christianity is known for its emphasis upon mercy, not justice.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. The joy of the Christian is the downfall of wrong, not people.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. Job is a good example of one whose friends (?) imputed evil to him because of what he was suffering.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. Love not only is willing to forgive sins, but also does not hold a grudge concerning them.



