



Strife—a Deadly Enemy

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Leader's Notes

I. Every evil work.

- James 3:16, *"For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work"* (KJV).
- Envy and strife don't seem so bad.
- Envy and strife lead to EVERY EVIL WORK.
- Some evil works: murder, theft, lying, rebellion, hatred, violence...you get the picture.

II. What is envy?

- Envy wants something that belongs to someone else, like things, relationships or achievements of recognition and respect.
- For example: wanting someone else's spouse, car, house or the respect they receive.
- Taking away what belongs to someone else is theft and that stems from envy.
- Another name for envy is covetousness.
- Envy also leads to jealousy, hatred and retaliation.
- Genesis 4:8, *"Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him"* (NLT).
- Titus 3:3, *"Once we, too, were foolish and disobedient. We were misled and became slaves to many lusts and pleasures. Our lives were full of evil and envy, and we hated each other"* (NLT).



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- Mark 7:21-23, *“For from within, out of a person’s heart, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, wickedness, deceit, lustful desires, envy, slander, pride, and foolishness. All these vile things come from within; they are what defile you”* (NLT).
- The Law of Moses was given as instructions for outward actions.
- Jesus stressed that the inner man must also be changed.
 - Matthew 5:21-22, *“You have heard that our ancestors were told, ‘You must not murder. If you commit murder, you are subject to judgment.’ But I say, if you are even angry with someone, you are subject to judgment! If you call someone an idiot, you are in danger of being brought before the court. And if you curse someone, you are in danger of the fires of hell”* (NLT).
- Evil and sin begin in the heart.

III. What is strife?

- Strife represents a struggle—one person’s will against another person’s will.
- Arguments, complaining, demanding your way, divisions, harsh words, disagreements, emphasizing differences are all products of strife.
- From strife comes confusion and every evil work.
- Repent from strife!
- Ask God to forgive any words you’ve spoken to stir up arguments.
- Replace your words with God’s words of love.
 - Ephesians 5:3-4, *“No coarse, stupid, or flippant talk; these things are out of place; you should rather be thanking God”* (NEB).
- You can’t speak harshly and thank God simultaneously.
- You can’t criticize those around you, if you have a thankful attitude about them.



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- Brother Copeland renews his mind to the love of God by saying 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 in the first person, making it personal:
 - 1 Corinthians 13:4-8, *“I am patient and kind. I am not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. I do not demand my own way. I am not irritable, and I keep no record of being wronged. I do not rejoice about injustice by rejoice whenever the truth wins out. I never give up, never lose faith, am always hopeful and endure through every circumstance.”*
 - Do whatever it takes to stay out of strife.
 - Let your words be full of encouragement, and let God’s love shine out of you to others.
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Confession

Thank You, Father, for revealing to me the dangers of envy and strife. I ask You now to help me to replace words of strife and argument with Your Words of love. I receive Your help now. Thank You.

In the Name of Jesus Christ, Amen.