

Staff Work

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Mean, Green Jealousy Machine

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Mean, Green Jealousy Machine

Abstract

"If we let our jealous, bitter, hateful thoughts toward another person—or situation—lead our heart and desires, we will forget about Christ."

Posting about overcoming envy from *In All Things* - an online hub committed to the claim that the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ has implications for the entire world.

<http://inallthings.org/the-mean-green-jealousy-machine/>

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Comments

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The Mean, Green Jealousy Machine

 [all in allthings.org/the-mean-green-jealousy-machine/](http://allthings.org/the-mean-green-jealousy-machine/)

Lisa Smith

December 21,
2016

Daily Scripture Texts

[1 Samuel 2:1-10](#)

[Genesis 37:2-11](#)

[Matthew 1:1-17](#)

Is there a person who rubs you the wrong way? Maybe someone who earned an achievement or recognition for doing the same exact thing you do, thanklessly. Maybe someone who said something that hit a little too close to home, or a sibling whom you have never really seen eye-to-eye with on anything. Or, maybe this person could even be a friend who always has more social plans than you do, someone who seems to have it all together—a well-paid job, an endearing spouse, beautiful and talented kids, and one of those houses that looks like it walked off an episode of *Fixer Upper*.

When I reflect on my own life, I can come up with a few scenarios in which I faced people like these. One of these situations was in college. I liked someone, which tends to happen in college, but there was a problem. I noticed—before my close friend did—that this guy clearly liked her, and not me. Yes, I was involved in a notorious love triangle. I instantly became jealous. That jealousy began to fester within me, controlling my thoughts and causing me to dislike her and him. I didn't want to see them together. Soon, I began to feel hatred towards her.

The longer that I engaged in those jealous thoughts, the more I realized that entertaining such thoughts were making me into someone I didn't want to be. I could no longer be who Christ made me to be, because I was letting jealousy drive how I treated and engaged with others. I felt heavy from carrying so much anger. I finally gave the negativity up to Christ and told Him that I didn't want that jealousy to be a part of me. Unfortunately, it was not a flip of a switch. I had to fight the jealous thoughts. Who I had become terrified me and drove me to tears. I liked both of my friends, but this situation had turned me into an unkind and unhappy person. So, for the next few weeks, I prayed that God would take the anger away. It wasn't easy, and it wasn't quick, but God helped me let go of the jealousy and draw me back to what mattered: my relationship with Christ.

If you look at Joseph's story in Genesis, you notice that when Joseph told to his brothers about his dreams, his brothers "hated him all the more" (Genesis 37:5). They let it multiply; they let it fester. They scrutinized Joseph's life for reasons to not like him. They didn't like him because their father had taken a liking to him. "Israel loved Joseph more than any of his other sons, because he had been born to him [Jacob] in his old age; and he made a richly ornamented robe for him" (Genesis 37:3). This was a pattern of hatred spurred from jealousy that the brothers had towards Joseph. Then, Joseph told them about the second dream of the sun, moon, and stars. This was the final strike against Joseph, so his brothers made a plan to kill him. They were "jealous of him" (Genesis 37:11).

While reading this passage, I realized that Joseph's father, Jacob, also was hated by his brother—Esau. Esau sought to kill Jacob because the Lord blessed him, and the Lord blessed Joseph as well. But, what eventually dawned on me about the two stories was that when we let these thoughts of jealousy, hatred, and discontentment linger, they grow. We think that our jealousy could never grow to something so horrible as murder, but Esau and Joseph's brothers likely didn't imagine that either. As those thoughts allowed Satan to get ahold of their hearts, they were unable to surrender to Christ's redeeming work.

In the same way, if we let our jealous, bitter, hateful thoughts toward another person—or situation—lead our heart and desires, we will forget about Christ. Ridding these thoughts from our minds is hard work, but realizing we need Christ back at the center of our lives—instead of jealousy, anger, frustration, or discontentment—is the first step in letting God redeem us. You cannot do it by yourself. On your own, you will only make the jealousy and hatred worse.

I want to give you a challenge today – one that I need possibly even more than you do. There are always things in life obstructing your walk with God. Is there some area in your heart you need to give back to Christ? That comment made by a friend which might have hit too close to home. The sibling you avoid talking with since arguments are the only conversation you have. That friend and his/her perfect *Fixer Upper* home. Whatever it is, it is getting in the way of being the hands and feet of Jesus. Put aside your prideful self and fall at the feet of Jesus. Ask him to take it away from you. Forgive because you have been forgiven. Find Christ, and you will find freedom from that sinful bond.