

# Jealousy

Two shopkeepers were bitter rivals. Their stores were located across the street from each other, and they would always keep tabs on how their competitor was doing. One night, an angel appeared to one of the shopkeepers and said, "I will give you anything you ask, but whatever you receive your competitor will receive twice as much. Would you be rich? You can be very rich, but he will be twice as wealthy. Do you wish to live a long and healthy life? You can, but his life will be longer and healthier. What is your desire?" The man thought for a moment and said, "Strike me blind in one eye." — That is the insidious nature of jealousy!



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"Jealousy" comes from the Greek word *"zelos,"* which is where we get our English word "zeal." The idea is a burning passion toward something. It can be used positively (2 Corinthians 11:2) or negatively (2 Corinthians 12:20). Most often, we use the term in a negative sense. Jealousy is a burning sense of envy or resentment toward others for what they have. It is a bitter feeling excited by another's perceived good.

The jealous man is not content and constantly compares himself to others. He feels that their fortune is his misfortune; that their promotion is his demotion. Moreover, the jealous man does not love, for love "is not jealous" (1 Corinthians 13:4, NLT). It is no wonder then that Christians are to avoid jealousy (Romans 13:13; Galatians 5:19-21; James 3:13-15). It is a horrible vice that makes a victim of both parties.

I recently saw a quote that said, "Jealousy is when you count someone else's blessings instead of your own." May God help us to start relishing the gifts we have been given rather than resenting the gifts of others!