

UNIT 1: The Attributes of God

Section 22: God's Jealousy

Assigned Reading:
A. W. Pink – The Attributes of God
No Assigned Reading

Introduction:

As we near the end of our study of Theology Proper (The Attributes of God), we're going to discuss two more subjects. This morning we will look at "the Jealousy of God," while next week we'll examine "summary attributes of God – His Beauty, Blessedness, and Glory." It is appropriate as we bring this specific study to a close for us to contemplate the motivation behind God's actions. God is intensely concerned about one thing... And that concern is seen in his attitude towards us...

Q1: *What is God's ambition and what implication does that ambition have for us?*

Q2: *What is God zealous for? Why? What should we be zealous for?*

Q3: *Why does God describe Himself as being "jealous?" Is this right and good?*

Outline:

I. Understanding the Jealousy of God

A. Our Typical Reaction to "God being Jealous"

1. We typically think of jealousy as being an extremely horrible vice, a sinful selfishness.
2. Therefore, to attribute "jealousy" to God, who is altogether good, seems wrong to us!
3. No one would "imagine" a jealous God, but meanwhile that is exactly our point – we are not engaged in knowing a fabricated imaginary God, but instead a God who has revealed Himself to us by providing a "public record" of Himself in His Word (the Bible).
4. God has made available to all people elements about Himself in the sheer act of Creation (**Rom 1**) but meanwhile ungodly and unrighteous men have suppressed the truth in unrighteousness... And then He has gone even further in revealing Himself by providing us with written record of His nature and works and desires, but men continue to neglect this precious gift...
5. Knowing that if left up to our own imaginations, man would suffer all sorts of delusions, deceptions, and errors in their worship of God, God has provided infallible testimony regarding Himself so men would know Him rightly and worship Him appropriately!
6. All of this leads us to acknowledge the plain Biblical Truth that God is "a Jealous God."
 - a. **Exodus 20:5** "You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a **jealous** God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me,
 - b. **Exodus 34:14** -- for you shall not worship any other god, for the LORD, whose name is **Jealous**, is a **jealous** God—
 - c. **Deuteronomy 4:24** "For the LORD your God is a consuming fire, a **jealous** God.
 - d. **Deuteronomy 5:9** 'You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a **jealous** God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, and on the third and the fourth *generations* of those who hate Me,

- e. **Deuteronomy 6:15** for the LORD your God in the midst of you is a **jealous** God; otherwise the anger of the LORD your God will be kindled against you, and He will wipe you off the face of the earth.
 - f. **Deuteronomy 32:16** "They made Him **jealous** with strange *gods*; With abominations they provoked Him to anger.
 - g. **Joshua 24:19-20** Then Joshua said to the people, "You will not be able to serve the LORD, for He is a holy God. He is a **jealous** God; He will not forgive your transgression or your sins.²⁰ "If you forsake the LORD and serve foreign gods, then He will turn and do you harm and consume you after He has done good to you."
 - h. **1 Kings 14:22** Judah did evil in the sight of the LORD, and they provoked Him to **jealousy** more than all that their fathers had done, with the sins which they committed.
 - i. **Psalms 78:58** For they provoked Him with their high places And aroused His **jealousy** with their graven images.
7. **Q:** *Why is God jealous? What is He jealous for? What does His jealousy bring about?*
- a. **REMEMBER:** Descriptions of God as being jealous are "anthropomorphisms" – descriptions of God drawn from our life as humans. Ex) God's arm, finger, seeing, smelling, etc. –
 - b. These are all used as mediums of communicating with us, and since only man, of all physical creatures, was made in God's image, it is more illuminating and less misleading for God to picture Himself to us in human terms than any other...
 - c. **J.I. Packer**, "But we need to remember that man is not the measure of His Maker, and that when language of human personal life is used of God, none of the limitations of human creaturehood are thereby being implied—limited knowledge, or power, or foresight, or strength, or consistency, or anything of that kind. And we must remember that those elements in human qualities which show the corrupting effect of sin have no counterpart in God. Thus, for instance, his wrath is not the ignoble outburst that human anger so often is, a sign of pride and weakness, but it is holiness reacting to evil in a way that is morally right and glorious. 'Man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires' (**Ja 1:20**)—but the wrath of God is precisely his righteousness in judicial action. And in the same way, God's jealousy is not a compound of frustration, envy and spite, as human jealousy so often is, but appears instead as a (literally) praiseworthy zeal to preserve something supremely precious."

B. *The Sinful Type of Jealousy*

1. A Couple Biblical Examples of "jealousy"

- a. **Rachel: Genesis 30:1** Now when Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, she became **jealous** of her sister; and she said to Jacob, "Give me children, or else I die."
- b. **Joseph's Brothers: Genesis 37:11** His brothers were **jealous** of him, but his father kept the saying *in mind*.
- c. **Jewish Religious Community:**
 - (1) **Acts 5:17-18** But the high priest rose up, along with all his associates (that is the sect of the Sadducees), and they were filled with **jealousy**.¹⁸ They laid hands on the apostles and put them in a public jail.
 - (2) **Acts 13:45** But when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with **jealousy** and *began* contradicting the things spoken by Paul, and were blaspheming.

- (3) **Acts 17:5** But the Jews, becoming **jealous** and taking along some wicked men from the market place, formed a mob and set the city in an uproar; and attacking the house of Jason, they were seeking to bring them out to the people
2. **A Few Commands Prohibiting Christians from “jealousy”**
- 1 Corinthians 3:3** for you are still fleshly. For since there is **jealousy** and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men?
 - 1 Corinthians 13:4** Love is patient, love is kind *and* is not **jealous**; love does not brag *and* is not arrogant,
 - 2 Corinthians 12:20** For I am afraid that perhaps when I come I may find you to be not what I wish and may be found by you to be not what you wish; that perhaps *there will be* strife, **jealousy**, angry tempers, disputes, slanders, gossip, arrogance, disturbances;
 - Galatians 5:19-21** Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, **jealousy**, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, ²¹ envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.
 - James 3:14-16** But if you have bitter **jealousy** and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and *so* lie against the truth. ¹⁵ This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic. ¹⁶ For where **jealousy** and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing.
3. **Q:** *What makes “jealousy” evil and wrong in these illustrations and commands?*
- How does sinful jealousy show itself? What expressions does it make?
 - What underlying attitudes are thereby evidently present?

C. *The Righteous Type of Jealousy*

- Q:** *What makes “jealousy” good and right?*
- That which defends the Justice of God:**
 - Nahum 1:2** A **jealous** and avenging God is the LORD; The LORD is avenging and wrathful. The LORD takes vengeance on His adversaries, And He reserves wrath for His enemies.
 - Ezekiel 36:5-6** therefore thus says the Lord GOD, "Surely in the fire of My **jealousy** I have spoken against the rest of the nations, and against all Edom, who appropriated My land for themselves as a possession with wholehearted joy *and* with scorn of soul, to drive it out for a prey." ⁶ "Therefore prophesy concerning the land of Israel and say to the mountains and to the hills, to the ravines and to the valleys, "Thus says the Lord GOD, 'Behold, I have spoken in My **jealousy** and in My wrath because you have endured the insults of the nations.
- That which defends God’s Covenant of Marriage:**
 - Zeal to protect a love relationship or to avenge it when it is broken!**
 - Song of Solomon 8:6** "Put me like a seal over your heart, Like a seal on your arm. For love is as strong as death, **Jealousy** is as severe as Sheol; Its flashes are flashes of fire, The *very* flame of the LORD.
 - See **Num 5**... “the Law of Jealousy”
 - Packer**, “Scripture does not hint at [the husband’s] attitude being morally questionable; rather, it treats his resolve to guard his marriage against attack, and to

take action against anyone who violates it, as natural, normal and right, and as a proof that he values his marriage as he should.”

4. ***That which defends God’s Covenant w/ His People:***
 - a. **Zeal to protect a love relationship or to avenge it when it is broken!**
 - b. Here we see the connection between the Covenant of Physical Marriage (with our spouse) and the Covenant of Spiritual Marriage (with our Lord)...
 - c. God saw his covenant with His people as a marriage – therefore demanding unqualified love and loyalty. The worship of idols and practice of sinful behaviors, God declared as spiritual adultery and was provoked to jealousy and vengeance!
 - d. **Zechariah 1:14** So the angel who was speaking with me said to me, "Proclaim, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, "I am exceedingly **jealous** for Jerusalem and Zion.
 - e. **Ezekiel 16 – The Judgment for Israel’s Harlotries**
 - f. **2 Corinthians 11:2** For I am **jealous** for you with a godly **jealousy**; for I betrothed you to one husband, so that to Christ I might present you *as* a pure virgin.
 - g. **Calvin**, “As the purer and chaster a husband is, the more grievously he is offended when he sees his wife inclining to a rival; so the Lord, who has betrothed us to Himself in truth, declares that He burns with the hottest jealousy whenever, neglecting the purity of His holy marriage, we defile ourselves with abominable lusts, and especially when the worship of His deity, which ought to have been most carefully kept unimpaired, is transferred to another, or adulterated with some superstition...”
 - h. **Q:** *Why is God concerned about the behavior of His people?*
 - i. **Ezekiel 39:25** Therefore thus says the Lord GOD, "Now I will restore the fortunes of Jacob and have mercy on the whole house of Israel; and I will be **jealous** for My holy name.
5. ***That which upholds the Glory of God!***
 - a. God’s driving ambition is His own glory!
 - b. God alone is worthy of all our attention, praise, and adoration!
 - c. **Packer**, “God’s ultimate objective, is threefold – to vindicate his rule and righteousness by showing his sovereignty in judgment upon sin; to ransom and redeem his chosen people; and to be loved and praised by them for his glorious acts of love and self-vindication.” – God is zealous for the Glory of His Own Name as seen particularly in Justice and Mercy!

~Good Summary of Last Week~

Unrighteous Jealousy – Jealousy Of... Desiring your own betterment at another’s expense
Righteous Jealousy – Jealousy For... Desiring the betterment of another...

In the Ultimate Sense the best we can receive is God Himself! So when God is jealous over His people, it is for their betterment – that they would value and appreciate that which is infinitely precious! He is surely not “jealous of” us... for He is independent and perfectly satisfied in

Himself – so His jealousy is that which contemplates the rightful appraisal of things and desires the creatures He has made to follow in that rightful appraisal!

II. Responding to the Jealousy of God

A. Implications for the Lost

1. **God is zealous for His Own Name – which means that those who live their lives in sinful rebellion against Him will be judged...**
2. **Zephaniah 1:18** Neither their silver nor their gold Will be able to deliver them On the day of the LORD'S wrath; And all the earth will be devoured In the fire of His **jealousy**, For He will make a complete end, Indeed a terrifying one, Of all the inhabitants of the earth.
3. **The good news is that until that judgment while man still has physical life, an offer is made to Him by the Lord in which He can escape the coming wrath...**
4. **John 3:18** Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.
5. Interesting that in **Rom 11** we see that God is inciting the Jews to **jealousy** by use of the Gentiles, in order that some of them might be saved!
6. **Q:** *Do you admit that your sin has offended the glory of God who made you in His image? Have you repented and trusted in Christ (He who conquered sin and death)?*

B. Implications for the Saved

1. The jealousy of God requires us to be zealous for Him!
 - a. As our rightful response to God's love of us is love for him, our response to His jealousy is to be greatly zealous for Him!
 - b. This is the heart of the 2nd commandment: We are not merely to forsake idols, but that should be the necessary consequence of seeking hard after God.
2. **Numbers 11:28-29** Then Joshua the son of Nun, the attendant of Moses from his youth, said, "Moses, my lord, restrain them." But Moses said to him, "Are you **jealous** for my sake? Would that all the LORD'S people were prophets, that the LORD would put His Spirit upon them!"
3. **James 4:4-5** You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. Or do you think that the Scripture speaks to no purpose: "He **jealously** desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us"?
4. **J.C. Ryle**, "Zeal in religion is a burning desire to please God, to do His will, and to advance His glory in the world in every possible way... A zealous man in religion is pre-eminently a man of one thing. It is not enough to say that he is earnest, hearty, uncompromising, thorough-going, whole-hearted, fervent in spirit. He only sees one thing, he cares for one thing, he lives for one thing, he is swallowed up in one thing; and that one thing is to please God... He burns for one thing; and that one thing is to please God, and to advance God's glory. If he is consumed in the very burning, he cares not for it—he is content. He feels that, like a lamp, he is made to burn; and if consumed in burning, he has but done the work for which God has appointed him."
5. **Num 25:11-13** "Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, has turned away My wrath from the sons of Israel in that he was **jealous** with My **jealousy** among them, so that I did not destroy the sons of Israel in My **jealousy**."¹² "Therefore say, 'Behold, I give

him My covenant of peace; ¹³ and it shall be for him and his descendants after him, a covenant of a perpetual priesthood, because he was **jealous** for his God and made atonement for the sons of Israel."

6. **Q:** *Does zeal for God eat us up? Are we consumed with this one thing?*