

God is a Jealous God

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Lovers stay peaceful if there are no quarrels. Their love relationship stays strong if they continue to be faithful to each other. But we know that there is no love relationship without any problem. What is the most common cause of conflict between lovers? One reason for break up is that the guy is womanizer or the lady is also gentlemanizer. Some lovers went out together happily, but went home in sad mood. Why? One of the partners is “jealing jealing” (*jealous*). When one of the couple glances at the human scenery (*beautiful ladies or handsome guys*), the other gets jealous. What can a jealous person do? Do we want to be an object of jealousy?

By the way, what is the difference between jealousy and envy? Let us first define what is jealousy. According to wikipedia, “**Jealousy** is a second emotion and typically refers to the negative thoughts and feelings of insecurity, fear, and anxiety over an anticipated loss of something that the person values, particularly in reference to a human connection. Jealousy often consists of a combination of presenting emotions such as anger, sadness, resentment and disgust. It is not to be confused with envy.”¹ So what is envy? “**Envy** (also called **invidiousness**) is best defined as a resentful emotion that "occurs when a person lacks another's (perceived) superior quality, achievement, or possession and either desires it or wishes that the other lacked it." Envy can also derive from a sense of low self-esteem that results from an upward social comparison threatening a person's self image: another person has something that the envier considers to be important to have. If the other person is perceived to be similar to the envier, the aroused envy will be particularly intense, because it signals to the envier that it just as well could have been he or she who had the desired object.”²

One of the characteristics of God is that He is a jealous God, not an envious God. He is not an envious God because He is exalted above all. He has no problem of self-esteem. He does not desire something that others have. God is a jealous God because He does not want to lose us. He values us highly, worthy of keeping forever if we allow it or want it. He loves us so much. I am sure we are very familiar with what we can read in John 3:16. It says, “**For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.**”³

In the Old Testament times, God Himself declared that He was a Jealous God. Where can we read this? In Exodus 20:2-6 we can read, “**I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.**” In Exodus 34:12-16 we can read, “**Take heed to yourself, lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land where you are going, lest it be a snare in your midst. But you shall destroy their altars, break their sacred pillars, and cut down their**

1 <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jealousy>

2 <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Envy>

3 All Scripture quotations are taken from NKJV

wooden images (for you shall worship no other god, for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God), lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they play the harlot with their gods and make sacrifice to their gods, and one of them invites you and you eat of his sacrifice, and you take of his daughters for your sons, and his daughters play the harlot with their gods and make your sons play the harlot with their gods.”

In Deuteronomy 4:23-27 we can read, ***“Take heed to yourselves, lest you forget the covenant of the LORD your God which He made with you, and make for yourselves a carved image in the form of anything which the LORD your God has forbidden you. For the LORD your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God. When you beget children and grandchildren and have grown old in the land, and act corruptly and make a carved image in the form of anything, and do evil in the sight of the LORD your God to provoke Him to anger, I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that you will soon utterly perish from the land which you cross over the Jordan to possess; you will not prolong your days in it, but will be utterly destroyed. And the LORD will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations where the LORD will drive you.”***

In most cases, we always talk about God as a Jealous God if we try to teach that idolatry is wrong. Of course, the verses refer to idolatry. But what is idolatry? For us idolatry refers to bowing down before images. Yes, that is very much repeated throughout the Bible. But brethren be reminded that idolatry is not just bowing down before images. It can be anything that we make as an idol in our lives. The suffix “latry” literally means “serving.” We can still be an idolater if we are greedy of material things. Do you agree with me? In Colossians 3:5 we can read, ***“Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.”*** Here it is very clear that we are still idolaters if we are still greedy for gain or we are covetous.

So idolatry is anything that we serve other than God. So let us ask the questions, “Who are the people that we easily serve rather than God? What are the things that we desire to have more than God?” Brethren, if there is someone who is more important than God to us now, we have to repent or change our minds or hearts. God is sure to be jealous of us. If there are things that we value highly more than our service to God, let us repent or change because God is already jealous of us. His wrath can be implemented anytime.

Sometime last last week, my third degree cousin texted me. It read, “Relative Rob, naa may fight si Pacquiao, kuyogi ko bi tan-aw ta didto sa USC gym” (*Relative Rob, Manny Pacquiao has fight, please accompany me to watch it at the USC gym*). I replied, “Kanus-a gani ni?” (*When is this?*) She texted me, “Karong November 13” (*This coming November 13*). I texted her, “Ay sorry. Sunday man na, unahon nako ang pagsimba sa Dios kay mas labaw Sya kaayo kay ni Pacquiao” (*Ah sorry, it’s a Sunday, I worship God first because He is much greater than Pacquiao*). She texted, “Ok.” So why did I respond her like that? Because I knew that God would get angry with me if I would do that because He was a Jealous God. Who is Manny Pacquiao? He is the person who keeps signing of the cross inside the boxing ring. Do we think he is a man of God? Even if he is a man of God, I will not idolize him because God will be Jealous of me.

Do we think God is happy during the fight of PacMan? I believe it is the saddest time of God. It is the time when He is Jealous of the people the most. Why? There are more people watching the fight than people worshiping God on that same day. Besides, God can see that the people will come early so as not to miss the first round, but not so with God’s worship. So

how does God feel during that day. I'm sure God is Jealous because the people even paid so much just to watch it, whereas the worship of God is free but yet rejected. So everytime Manny has a fight, I want to make sure that my scorecard is marked with "Xs" for God only, that is, PacMan gets no "X" mark from me. But I still managed to watch his fight after the service for free. I was even lying down watching his fight.

Let me read to you Deuteronomy 6:13-16, ***"You shall fear the LORD your God and serve Him, and shall take oaths in His name. You shall not go after other gods, the gods of the peoples who are all around you (for the LORD your God is a jealous God among you), lest the anger of the LORD your God be aroused against you and destroy you from the face of the earth. You shall not tempt the LORD your God as you tempted Him in Massah."*** Brethren, if we substitute "watch Manny Pacquiao" for "go after other gods" and "world champion" for "the gods", it reads like this, ***"You shall fear the LORD your God and serve Him, and shall take oaths in His name. You shall not watch Manny Pacquiao, the world champion of the peoples who are all around you (for the LORD your God is a jealous God among you), lest the anger of the LORD your God be aroused against you and destroy you from the face of the earth. You shall not tempt the LORD your God as you tempted Him in Massah."***

Brethren, if you want to please God rather than the object of His wrath, I hope you will heed my advice to you. If we complain about traffic that makes it difficult for us to reach this worship place on time, then this is the best time to come on time because there is no traffic. Think about this. What if Christ will come on the same day as Manny's fight? Will Christ find us faithful. What if our death comes during this day, will God find us faithful?

Brethren, I hope you don't get me wrong. As dearly beloved to me, I just want to remind you how dangerous it is if we put anyone or anything more important than God in our lives. It is not just Manny's fight. It can be our work, our study, our hobby, our family, etc. If these things can cause us not to worship God on His day, these can destroy our loving relationship with God. Just like Paul, I am also jealous of what you might do. We can read in 2 Corinthians 11:1-2 where Paul says, ***"Oh, that you would bear with me in a little folly--and indeed you do bear with me. For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ."*** I just want to spare you from God's wrath and the possible consequences thereof.

To end this sermon, let me read to you the warning from prophet Nahum. Nahum 1:2-3 says, ***"God is jealous, and the LORD avenges; The LORD avenges and is furious. The LORD will take vengeance on His adversaries, And He reserves wrath for His enemies; The LORD is slow to anger and great in power, And will not at all acquit the wicked. The LORD has His way In the whirlwind and in the storm, And the clouds are the dust of His feet."*** How awesome is our God who is able to punish us in different ways like the calamities that Nahum cited! Please be spared from all of them.

Thank you very much. May we not get the wrath of God as punishment for idolatry!

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