



Harvest Warriors NEWSLETTER



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Warring to Harvest

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ROOTS: Jealousy and Servant Hood

Jealousy — hostile toward a rival or one believed to have an advantage (Webster's Dictionary)

In short, jealousy wants what someone else has, and being angry with another person because they have something you don't have.

God's word has a lot to say about jealousy.

**"Jealousy as cruel as the grave;
Its flames are flames of fire,
A most vehement flame." Song of Solomon
8:6**

**"You shall not covet your neighbor's house;
you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor
his male servant nor his female servant, nor
his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is
your neighbor's." Exodus 20:17**

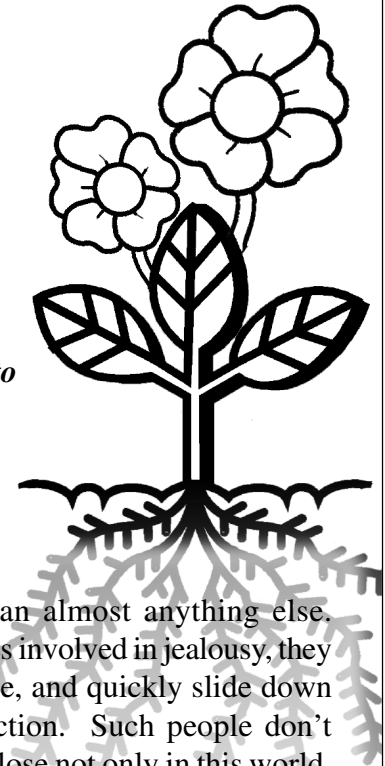
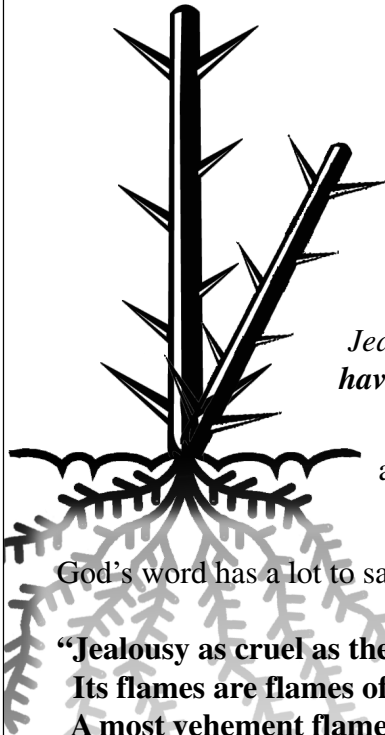
Jealousy leads to anger, hatred, bitterness, then on to gossip, lying about another person, character assassination, unforgiveness, and a host of other sins, even murder. The emotions of jealousy are intense and extreme. King Solomon said that jealousy is cruel, extremely cruel, and that it burns with a vehement flame. Not just a little fire, a great big bonfire! In all the years I, Rebecca, have worked with countless people, I would have to say that jealousy destroys a per-

son more quickly than almost anything else. Once a person becomes involved in jealousy, they are on a slippery slope, and quickly slide down into complete destruction. Such people don't gain, they lose. They lose not only in this world, but they lose with God! I urge you to stop right here, take a minute, and ask the Holy Spirit to show you if there is any jealousy in your life!

Through a recent experience, the Lord taught me lessons about jealousy that I had never really thought about before.

The root of jealousy is a lack of understanding of the concept of servant hood, and an unwillingness to serve.

While Jesus was here on earth, he modeled the whole concept of servant hood. This is one of the greatest lessons He wanted his disciples to learn. God demands that every one of His servants learn and practice this concept, if they do not, then they will never progress or flourish in



God's kingdom. *No matter how rich you become or how important you may be, you will ALWAYS have to serve.* Anyone in the ministry, who has reached the point where they think they no longer have to serve others, has fallen into great error. If you desire to become rich or important or become a leader, you must first learn to serve. Countless numbers of people are called into the ministry and never grow or flourish or increase in a ministry because they first stumble at becoming a servant. This is especially true of the youth today. I don't know exactly where this concept is taught, but the youth of today think that they should start off at the top. Somehow they have the idea in their minds that they should start at the place it took their parents and other folks 30 years of hard work to achieve. Truly we live in an instant generation!

The concept of being a servant is so important to God that Jesus had much to say about it while He walked here on earth as a man. He also became a servant Himself. Think of it! *This infinite, all powerful, all knowing God, powerful enough to create this whole universe and you and me and everything else, actually humbled Himself and became a servant to the very creatures He Himself had created!* This is how important the concept of being a servant is to God almighty! Let us take a few minutes and look at some of the lessons Jesus taught us about servant hood.

“Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods. But if that evil servant says in his heart, ‘My master is delaying his coming,’ and begins to beat his fellow servants and to eat and drink with the drunkards, the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an

hour that he is not aware of, and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” Matthew 24:45-51

“For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. . . . After along time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them. So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying ‘Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.’ His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’ . . . Then he who had received the one talent came and said, ‘Lord I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.’

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But his lord answered and said to him, ‘You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. Therefore take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents. For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he

will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” Matthew 25:14-30

This is a classic example of jealousy! The

vant to whom the lord gave only one talent was jealous of his master. You see, the master did not tell the servants they would have a wage, he simply gave each some money and told them to work for his benefit, not their own! He did not promise them anything in return. The thoughts in the wicked servant's mind were as follows: "Why should I work hard and use this talent to make more money for my master? He already has more than he needs. He should have given this money, little as it is, for my own use. I need it more than he does. Why should I spend my time and energy working to make MORE MONEY FOR THIS RICH MAN? I need the money myself!" This is jealousy. As jealousy grew, so did anger and hatred and bitterness. "It's not fair! This master is rich and I am poor. I have a right to a wage if I am to work for him to benefit him. He should pay me more. I deserve more!" Pretty soon, the servant went on to think, "This master is evil. He reaps where he has not sown and gathers where he has not scattered seed. This man does not work, but he expects ME to make him richer by my work!" Do you see the progression in jealousy? This man had no real concept or understanding of servant hood, neither was he willing to serve another. He only wanted to serve himself to make his own life better and obtain the things he wanted to obtain.

"He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least is unjust also in much. Therefore if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if you have not been faithful in what is another man's who will give you what is your own? No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon." Luke 16:10-13

This section of scripture is THE GREAT STUMBLING BLOCK to everyone who wants to grow

and prosper! This is true whether you are a Christian or not. It is true whether you wish to grow and prosper in the world or in God's kingdom, in secular work, or in a full time ministry. *Always, you must first prove yourself faithful and righteous with little before you can gain much. If you do not, and gain by unrighteous means, you will quickly lose all that you have gained.* Look at any heir to a great fortune. If that person has not been well trained by his or her parents, once they inherit the fortune, they quickly go down into destruction. This is because they never had to work and learn to be faithful in little.

I see this over and over again in the ministry. I cannot tell you the number of people I have met who were called by God into a full time ministry. A large number of them never get started in any ministry because they are waiting for God to drop a large sum of money into their laps so that they can go to the top immediately. Or, they become bitter and angry because God first expects them to work in someone else's ministry, or because they must start out small. So many never grow or progress in the ministry God has called them into because they refuse to be faithful and happy in the days of small things. Instead they are jealous.

Many more refuse to work any secular job. They force themselves and their family and children to live in terrible poverty because of this refusal to work. What they are really doing is demanding God to supply them with everything. They call this "living by faith." I call it being lazy and arrogant! It never seems to occur to these people that God is demanding that first they learn to work under a boss! First, they must learn to be a servant. Only much later can God bring them into a position of leadership in His church. I know many will disagree with me, but I firmly believe that every person called to the pastorate should first learn to work under a boss in a secular job! There is no quicker way to learn to be a servant and to learn discipline and humility! *Remember, even*

There is no quicker way to learn to be a servant and to learn discipline and humility!

the great apostle Paul worked in the tent making industry WHILE he was ministering. Because he was so humble, God even worked miracles through the sweat of his brow on rags as he worked in a secular job! (Acts 19:12) These rags and aprons soaked in Paul's sweat were taken and laid on people who were ill and they were miraculously healed. I have no doubt that one of the reasons why there are so few miracles today amongst God's people is because so few of His people really know the true meaning of being a servant.

One of the hardest things Jesus taught is found in this scripture quoted above in Luke.

“And if you have not been faithful in what is another man's who will give you what is your own?” Luke 16:12

This is an area of servant hood in which EVERY servant of God will be tested. *If you cannot be faithful in serving and prospering what belongs to someone else, God will never give you what is your own! This is true both in secular goods as well as in the ministry.* Both Daniel and I have been tested repeatedly in this area. We have also been the testing ground for many others. Through the years God has called a number of people to come help us. Each one of them came expecting to jump into leadership and a glamorous ministry instead of becoming a servant. Also, they immediately assumed that whatever belonged to us, belonged to them equally! Every one of them stole from us continually. Oh, they did not think they were stealing, they simply assumed that whatever was ours, was now theirs as well. Not a single one of these people ever grew or prospered in the Lord. God never opened doors for them to enter into their own ministry. They quickly grew jealous of us, then angry with us, and finally left us determined to destroy us if they could.

What I consider to be our Lord's greatest teaching on servant hood is found in Luke 17:

“And the apostles said to the Lord, ‘Increase our faith.’ So the Lord said, ‘If you have faith

as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, ‘Be pulled up by the roots and be planted in the sea,’ and it would obey you. ‘And which of you, having a servant plowing or tending sheep, will say to him when he has come in from the field, ‘come at once and sit down to eat’? ‘But will he not rather say to him, ‘Prepare something for my supper, and gird yourself and serve me till I have eaten and drunk, and afterward you will eat and drink’? ‘Does he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I think not. So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded say, ‘We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.’” Luke 17:5-10

In the western world, very few of us have any understanding of what it means to be a servant. We expect to be rewarded for everything we do. The same is true in the church. We expect God to reward us for every little thing we do. If He does not, then we become angry, and a rift develops in our relationship with God. The same is true in the secular realm. I have learned that the more I do to help someone less fortunate than me, that person shortly expects that I should be his or her best friend, and quickly comes to feel that I should share everything I have with them. I had a young woman working part time for me. I made a job for her so that she could pay her rent, as she would otherwise have been out on the streets. About a year after she started working for me, Jami, my personal assistant came to work with me. This young woman became incredibly jealous of Jami and then bitter and angry toward me. She told me that I had no right to hire Jami, instead I should have given her that job. When I pointed out to her that she had neither the qualifications nor the skills needed to do this job, her answer was, “Well, you should have taught me.” Now she no longer works for me, she is full of anger, and hatred and bitterness and is set on a course of trying to destroy us if she can. This person's jealousy arose out of a lack of understanding of servant hood.

Many of us have a good example of this type of

servant hood in our everyday lives. Consider the average married couple. The husband goes out and works all day, and mostly, so does the wife. But when the two come home after work what happens? The husband sits down to relax and watch TV while he expects the wife to continue working and fix the dinner and take care of the kids!

The most interesting thing about this section on servant hood is that Jesus taught it in response to the disciple's request that He increase their faith. Now what is faith? It is a choice. Hebrews 11:1 tells us that faith is "the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen." Faith is choosing to accept as fact that God always performs His word. Faith is choosing to accept as fact, that God IS. If we expect God to always reach out and reward us for everything we do, then when God does not do this, or when He allows bad things to happen to us, we stumble in our faith. *However, if we truly understood the concept of being a servant, then we wouldn't expect the reward in the first place. We would understand that we are only doing those things that a servant should do.*

We belong to God! We are His servants, and He has the absolute right to do anything with our lives that He wants. He does not have to ask our permission, He has the perfect right to allow terrible things to come into our lives! However, because He is a God of love, He promises to "work all things together for our good." (Romans 8)

The scripture tells us that Jesus was tested in every way just as we are. (Hebrews 4:15) This in-

cludes in the area of faith. Here is where faith and servant hood are linked together. When Jesus was suffering on the cross, God the Father turned His back on Him and rejected Him totally as He became sin for us. In that moment Jesus cried out, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me?" In that moment of time, the connection between Jesus and God the Father was severed. I am sure that in that terrible time, Satan and the demons were all around mocking Jesus telling Him, "You see? God the Father has deserted You, He won't be back! All is lost!" What a terrible test this was! But, Jesus thoroughly understood being a servant. In spite of all this, He continued to serve. He continued to willingly suffer until the entire price was paid for our sins. Then in the end, in a move of pure faith He said, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit."

Do you want God to increase your faith? Then learn to be a servant!

When all is completed and we finally arrive in heaven, the greatest reward any of us can ever receive is for God to tell us, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

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