

## Keeping Ourselves Unspotted from the World

(Lesson 14)

### Introduction:

1. According to James 1:27, "pure and undefiled religion before God" includes "keeping ourselves unspotted from the world."
2. The Bible addresses many issues that relate to keeping ourselves unspotted from the world.
3. In this lesson we are concentrating on one activity that must be overcome: "envy."

### Discussion:

#### I. LET US FIRST DEFINE "ENVY"

- A. Envy: resentment or bitterness toward others because of their advantages, possessions, or successes [jealousy]
- B. With this definition in mind, let us examine several illustrations of "envy."
  1. The Philistines envied Isaac because of his possessions (Genesis 26:12-15).
  2. Joseph's brothers envied him because he was Jacob's favorite (Genesis 37:3-4, 11).
  3. Saul envied David because of the attention he received (1 Samuel 18:6-9).
- C. To illustrate the destructive nature of "envy," the Bible describes it as:
  1. "rotteness of the bones" (Proverbs 14:30)
  2. "earthly, sensual, devilish" (James 3:14-16).
- D. Now that we understand what "envy" is, let us examine passages that show us . . .

#### II. WHY WE MUST OVERCOME "ENVY"

- A. We must overcome "envy" because the Bible prohibits it (see Romans 13:13; Galatians 5:26; 1 Peter 2:1).
- B. We must also overcome "envy" because of its consequences.
  1. "Envy" can lead to murder (Matthew 27:18 -- Pilate knew that the Jews had delivered Jesus to him "for envy").
  2. "Envy" produces division (1 Corinthians 3:3).
  3. "Envy" will keep a person out of God's kingdom (Galatians 5:19-21).
- C. Let us turn our attention to passages that show us . . .

#### III. HOW TO OVERCOME "ENVY"

- A. We must learn to "rejoice" with those who rejoice (Romans 12:15).
- B. We must practice the kind of love taught in the Bible (1 Corinthians 13:4).
- C. We must "walk in the Spirit" (Galatians 5:16, 22-23).
- D. We must learn "contentment" (Philippians 4:11).
- E. We must take advantage of God's grace (James 4:5-7).