

Prestonwood Connection #10

Love's Obstacles—Part 1

1 Corinthians 13:4

Wednesday, November 6, 2002 • Dr. David McKinley

[Dr. McKinley, message, Love's Obstacles: Envy & Ego] <side 1 @ 70>

Thank you Joel Rutherford. Let me ask you something did you write that? [Yes sir.] I thought you did. That's Joel's song and a... the words and the lyrics are there in the back obviously from the Scripture. But, hey, awesome man, I appreciate you singin that tonight and a... I'm glad to know that a... these sermons, if nothin else inspired a song. That's great. So a... thank you, thanks for sharing that with us tonight and Joel we're so thankful that you're a part of this a... weekly praise team here in the Connection Service. Now I have to admit being here and being in this situation tonight, very excited about what's unfolding behind us. But you know normally when we're together we have a great big banner up there that says, *Get Connected!* And I kept wondering tonight if we shouldn't just say get disconnected? Cause it looks like everything in this building is disconnected tonight. A... we are of course in the process of preparing for the Dallas Christmas Festival. A... all of the work that goes in behind the scenes you're really sort of getting to see unfold as it goes on in the midweek fashion, typically a..., during this season of the year this building has been empty and open between Sunday's and so a whole lot of construction goes on and they've done a lot of work, really, just since a... last Sunday morning when we were here together. And so we will be in this configuration, at least I believe so, for the next couple of weeks and yet a... as we are we get to see the progress unfold behind us. I did try to find out if they'd let me fly in on one of those things tonight, just land right here. It seemed like fun if nothing else and a..., a... you know we'll have flying angels in here and that's what those are all about. Thankfully they're not quite that a... outstanding in the midst of the presentation. But a... those, that's where the angels fly and a... come in and of course we have to have those angels in creating the beautiful scenes of the birth of Christ and all that is involved there. So it's gonna be an incredible opportunity. We've already had over 40,000 tickets sold and a... we...we're planning for 12 presentations and a... we do still have tickets available and I hope that many of you are gonna to be able to be a part and are gonna be able to bring friends and all those kinds of things. It is going to be a... an incredible effort. Tonight our choir and our orchestra and others in other aspects of this presentation are here on campus and they're preparing and they're rehearsing tonight and then of course we've probably got 8 or 9 hundred children over in the Awana Ministry, that's going on tonight. Students ministries all over a... the community normally but they're here on campus tonight and so we have a variety of things that are happening around us tonight and we give God the glory and the praise for all of it and I'm thankful that you're here. And I want you to help me

to say thank you to a group of guys that are right down here in front of me because they were committed to not only trying to help do all they need to do for the technical support of setting up for the a... Christmas Festival but getting us set up in some fashion to be able to be here tonight. Would you say thank you to all these guys right here a... [applause] on the soundboard and the tech crew. We got lights and video and sound and all of that and they're always here you don't always know they're here cause most of you sit on that side. But they're back here and they're busy and they're working and sadly they have one of those jobs that typically you know it when they make a mistake and a... that's not always enjoyable. They kinda have a target, you know, type a... a... job. But a... they do a wonderful job regularly and I really am thankful for all that they've done.

A long time ago I heard a little proverb that goes like this. "Blessed are the flexible for they rarely get bent out of shape." And so tonight I thank you for being flexible and for being a part of a..., of what we're doin together. We've been studying together on the subject of love and if you'll turn to the great chapter of love in the Bible, 1st Corinthians 13 I would appreciate it if you'd join me there. We're going to be looking at a number of passages of Scripture tonight and a... it would be great for you to either have a Bible or get with someone so that we can look at these passages of Scripture together. Now I wanna put a... something on the screen tonight and I wanna see if you know what it is. Have any of you ever seen somebody wearing a pin or seen a booklet with these two little question marks on it, has any body seen that, if you have, think you know what it is, lift you hand. Okay, a number of you. Tell me what do you think it is? [Two questions for EE] Two questions for EE. EE is not meaning that a... EE is a symbol for something, it is Evangelism Explosion and there are 2 questions that are often used. In fact people will wear a pin with those question marks so people'll say, "What are the questions?" And then you can look at them and say question number one, "Have you come to the place in your spiritual life where you know for certain if you died today that you're gonna go to heaven?" And so that's the first question. The second question is this. "If you were to die today and to stand before God and He were to say to you why should I let you into my heaven?" What would you say? Now those are 2 very significant questions and those 2 questions have been used to lead many people to move beyond their sin and their lost condition and to move into a place where they understood that the way that you go to heaven and the way that your sins are forgiven is that you put your faith and your trust in Jesus Christ and Him alone for eternal life and then for living everyday right now. Two penetrating questions, well, tonight we're going to look at 2 areas, 2 diagnostic questions to help you to determine the strength, the reality and the vitality of love in your life. We've been studying the subject of love here and we've looked at the positive aspects of love as Joel was singing that song he was singing about 2 of those aspects, love is patient and love is kind. And the last 2 weeks we've studied those positive dimensions of love. But tonight we're going to study and begin studying some of the negative dimensions of love. And what we're going to end up with tonight is something that's going to bring some exposure, some diagnosis, if you will, as to how well we're

doing in the arena of love with our families, with our friends and our closest relationships in life. Sometimes I've afraid we hide behind and we hide beneath the very things that we're going to look at and to expose tonight.

I heard about a pastor, a pastor who was making a follow-up phone call to some visitors at the church. He called and when the telephone picked up on the other end a little voice when, "Hello" and he said, "Who is this?" and the little boy said, "Jimmy" the pastor said, "Well Jimmy" he said a... "Is your daddy there?" And the little boy said, "Yes" and he said, "Can I speak to him?" and he said "No, he's busy." He said, "Well, then Jimmy, is your mom there?"

And he said, "Yes" and he said, "Well, may I speak to her?" and he said, "No she's busy too." He said, "Well, Jimmy, are there any other adults in the house?" He said, "Yes" he said, "Well whose there?" He said, "The police are here." [pause for congregation laughter] He said, "Well, Jimmy, may I speak with one of the policemen?" and he said, "No, they're busy." [pause for congregation laughter] He said, "Now Jimmy is there anybody else, any other adult in the house." And he said, "Yes, the firemen are here." [more laughter] He said, "Jimmy the firemen are there?" "Yes" "Well Jimmy may I speak with one of the firemen?" he said, "No, they're busy." [more laughter] He said, "Now Jimmy" he said, "What in the world are they all doing." He said, "They're looking for me." Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha. [pause for more congregation laughter] Well, tonight I'm looking for you and I'm looking for me and I wanna take some of the things that we hide behind and some of the things that shadow the realities of love and life and I want us to expose them and I want us to begin to deal with them and to see them in light of how the Scripture would have us to see them.

So lets look together 1st Corinthians chapter 13 and we begin reading in verse 4:

Love is patient, love is kind...

And then the Bible says,

...Love does not...

What? Envy! Let's all say it together. Love does not envy.

Envy is the opposite of love. Envy is an obstacle to love. In fact my subject tonight is, *The Obstacles of Love*. A good night to speak on obstacles isn't it? And so tonight we're gonna look together at one of those obstacles and the Bible says that envy is an obstacle to love. But then it goes on to say that not only is envy an obstacle of love but it goes on to say:

Love does not parade itself, it is not puffed up; ⁵it does not behave rudely, it does not seek its own,...

The Bible says, in this section, that there are two things, two diagnosis to help us determine how our love quotient is in life and one of them says if you've got envy in your heart then you need to check out the reality of your love and the Bible says if ego is being displayed in your life through parading itself and seeking it's own then you'd better check out what you called love. Because the two greatest obstacles to true love in life is envy and ego, envy and ego. Now, let's begin by examining envy together.

The word envy, in and of itself, simply means to boil or to seethe. It means that something is churning and moving on the inside. And when we are envious of someone else we're simply bubbling up and boiling over on the inside. To be envious is to want what someone else has or maybe even more to wish that they didn't have it. It was what Shakespeare called, "The green sickness." Have you heard, green with envy? Well you can attribute that to Shakespeare. He called it the green sickness. The Bible says in the book of Proverbs that envy is as rottenness to the bones. Others have said that envy is the enemy of honor and that envy provides the mud that failures throw at successes. You see envy is a great reality in our world. In fact the majority of our marketing in the world today is based on cultivating envy. Did you know that? I remember back when I was a kid, there was a commercial that used to just really get under my skin. There was a little boy who would always sing,

"My dog's better than your dog. My dog's better than..."

Do you all remember that commercial. And what did his dog do? He ate Kennel-Ration. That's right and my dog didn't eat Kennel-Ration, you know and I wanted to pop that kid, cause I didn't like the fact that he was al..

"My dog's better than your dog."

You know? But don't you feel like in life that that's how it is so many times? People are going around sayin...

"My car's better than you car."

"My church's better than you church."

You know, the whole thing and it's always the way of which the world tries to get at us is to always play this king of the hill game. Who's on top of the hill? I'm above you. You're below me and so the result of that is that many of us live with this tension in relationships that is called envy and envy boils up and envy pours over in our lives and before long I don't just get ticked at the fact that you've got greener grass. I want the green grass and I want yours brown. Heh, [pause for congregation laughter] and the reality is that envy begins to take over in my life and so I have to understand the impact and the injury that envy can bring into my life and to my relationships. Let me give you 5 things that envy does that is destructive and that is injurious in life and in relationship, why envy is an obstacle and ultimately an enemy to true love.

Number 1, **ENVY CAUSES CONFLICT**. I talked about that, the boiling, the seething, the struggle. But I want you to see what the Bible says about that. Hold your hand there in 1st Corinthians 13 and look over in the book of James chapter 3 for just a moment. James chapter 3, actually James chapter 4 and we'll begin reading in verse 1. Here the Bible says:

¹Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? ²You lust and do not have. You murder and covet...

Or literally envy.

...and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. ³You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.

The Bible says, one of the reasons that there's so much conflict in the world is that the world is injured, the world is ultimately impacted by an internal attitude of envy and when I live with the spirit of envy I have a conflict that's going on in me. I can't ever be happy at the...in the work and at the job because I'm always lookin at the person next to me or around me who always seems to have the edge on me and envy creates conflict and before long I'm just no good because I'm constantly in conflict inside and lookin for ways to pick fights on the outside. That happens in many homes when there's an envy between husbands and wives, a competitiveness between jobs and schedules and benefits and pleasures and responsibilities and roles and yes many times it's just purely envy in life.

There's something else that envy does. **ENVY BREEDS RESENTMENT**. It not only causes conflict but it breeds something inside of me, a spirit of resentment. You know our Pastor's been preaching through the book of Genesis and in particular we've been looking at the life of Joseph. But do you remember what happened at the outset of Joseph's life? He was favored by his father. He was given a coat of colors. He was a dreamer and believed that God has something incredible that He was gonna do in his life. But what happened in Joseph's life was that his brothers who lived in the same house and who had many of the same benefits and privileges were envious and jealous of him. Envy is often thought of in light of things. Jealousy is often thought of in light of people. And so whether it's envy or jealousy it's like an interchangeable part. It's that internal part that begins to resent what others are and have. Not only do we see it in the book of Genesis, I think one of the most tragic of all of the stories in the Bible is the story of the Parable of the Lost Son. You know the story that there was a prodigal who went away, he despised his father and all that he had and he went off in the far country and he wasted his life. But he came back home broken and humble. And there's this beautiful picture in the story of, of, of how the father saw that son worn and tattered comin home and the son had rehearsed this speech that he was gonna say, father, you know, I'm not worthy to be your son, I'll be your

slave and the father ran and kissed him and held him and brought him in and there's this incredible picture of forgiveness and reconciliation. But it doesn't end there. There's a brother, an elder brother. And you wanna see one of the saddest pictures in the Bible? It is that elder brother in Luke 15, whose pouting and saying, you never threw me a party. This son of yours went off and lived against everything that we are and yet you embrace him and look at how you treated me. And the father looked and said son you've been with me, you've shared my blessing, you've had all these things. But you see the son wouldn't have anything to do with it because he was filled with jealousy and envy and resentment and I'm convinced that this is something that we're very often not ruthless with spiritually but instead we use it as a point of leveraging in our spirituality and our families and our finances and it's incredible the injury and the damage that it does in each of our lives. Envy causes confli...conflict. Envy breeds resentment.

ENVY BRINGS INJURY. Listen to Song of Solomon, chapter 8, verse 6 from the RSV:

...Jealousy is as cruel as the grave; it flashes...a...it's flashes are flashes of fire.

The Bible says that it's like having a fire burning inside of you and when envy is present in your heart and in your life, though it may be just a little fire, the reality is that you would not permit fire to burn in the wall of your house. In a fireplace yes, but in the wall no! It doesn't matter if it's a small fire or a medium fire, you know that fire is gonna consume and fire is gonna destroy and that's why love is not envious, because love, true love is not burning on the inside with a destructive quality toward others. Proverbs chapter 27 and verse 4, look over in the book of Proverbs. We'll probably look at several Proverbs tonight but Proverbs 27 and verse 4, let's see what the Bible says, it says:

Wrath is cruel and anger is a torrent, But who is able to stand before jealousy?

Or as your translations may say envy. As bad as wrath and anger may be and all that you see in that, the Bible says there's something even worse. Who can stand before envy and jealousy? And it's amazing how many times that injury is going on inside of us.

And then **ENVY CULTIVATES MISERY.** Proverbs 14 and verse 30, look at Proverbs chapter 14, you were there in Proverbs 27 but look in Proverbs 14. It says:

³⁰*A sound heart is life to the body, But envy is rottenness to the bones.*

Just as cancer, physically, can be on...going on inside the human body consuming and destroying from the inside. The Bible says that envy is like rottenness in the bones and when envy is present it is a destructive quality in my relationship with God and with others. In fact Paul used

envy as a descriptive of what had been done away with, the foolishness of the old life. Look again in the New Testament in Titus chapter 3, Titus chapter 3. I figure if I had to keep your attention if I just keep you turnin you'd at least stay awake tonight so, and you remember what I told you last week? The 5 T's are all together right, Thessalonians, Ti...Timothy and Titus all 5 T's there together. So you get to those "T" books in the New Testament and they're all right there together. Titus chapter 3, lets see what the Bible says in verse 3:

³For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and...

What?

...envy, hateful and hating one another. ⁴But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior appeared toward men, ⁵not by works of righteousness which we've done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and newing...renewing of the Holy Spirit, ⁶whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior,

You see the whole quality of new life in Christ is to be done with envy. And yet there's so many believers who are still living in shackles and chains and injury of envy and the misery of envy in life.

There's one other thing that I would tell you about envy tonight and that is that **ENVY IS A TOOL OF THE ENEMY**. If there's any tool that Satan loves to use in your life it is the tool of envy. Look in the book of James again, chapter 3 and verse 16, James chapter 3 and verse 16, the Bible speaking here says:

For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing will be there.

Let me read that one more time.

For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing will be there.

Why?

Because envy is the tool of the evil one, of the enemy to work in the mind and the heart of the believer and to keep us from living according to the plan and the purpose and the standard of God. In one of his works Oscar Wilde told the story of the Devil crossing the Libyan Desert. It says that:

As he was crossing the desert he came upon a group of demons who were trying very hard to tempt one of the monks who had committed his life to living among the desert nomadic peoples. In his story Wilde says that as the Devil came by that the demons were trying to tempt him with all sorts of sins of the flesh because he was isolated out in the desert. But this

monk being true to his covenant, to his church and to his commitment kept saying no and resisting and resisting. And finally the Devil was absolutely frustrated with his demon horde so he decided that he would teach them a lesson. He said, "Gentlemen watch this." He simply leaned over and had one of the demons whisper in his ear. "Did you know that your brother has just been made the Bishop of Alexandria?" And in the story it goes on to say that suddenly there was a scowl and suddenly there was a, a pouting of the lip and suddenly this monk was absolutely overcome and overwhelmed with resentment and jealousy that someone else had been chosen over him. You see ladies and gentlemen it's incredible how subtle the enemy will use the tool of jealousy and of envy in your life to destroy you and to consume you and he will do it emotionally and he will do it financially and he will do it spiritually. And that's why the Bible says love does not envy because envy is the opposite of everything that is needed in my life to have a strong and vibrant relationship with God. Someone has said and I think it's worth repeating and I think I have it here on the screen behind me.

"Envy may be a sign to acknowledge that today's unfulfilled areas are the result of unrealistic...unrealistic choices made in the years past. It may mean it's time to accept the material limits of growing older and losing physical advantages once taken for granted. It may lead to a change of values to a less materialistic and more spiritually fulfilling way of life."

How much injury comes because of envy, because envy is an obstacle to love. But not only do we see envy, envy getting in the way of love. There's something else that we want to do we want to expose the other part of this and that is ego, not only to examine envy and understand it but ego. Now let's look again at 1st Corinthians 13 and see what the Bible tells us here about ego. And I got watch just in case you're concerned about the clock. Don't worry about it I'm gonna watch it and a... you know if I decide to do anything about it, it'll be fine, if not we'll just keep teachin and meetin for awhile here. [pause for congregation laughter] But I just wanted you to be comforted, you know, I felt like it'd be an encouragement, you know. But somebody may be envyin my watch so I better put it away down here. [pause for more laughter] All right:

⁴Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy;...

And then the Bible says:

...love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; ⁵does not behave rudely, does not seek its own,...

Four ways of looking at ego, four expressions of pride that is out of control in my life. It's amazing how attuned we are to the mindset of ego and of pride in our world. Let...I'm just curious, let's see if you can complete these phrases.

You've got to look out for number... [One!]

Um, hum.

If you've got it... [Flaunt it!]

Flaunt it, yeah, you go it. [pause for laughter]

Sometimes you have to blow your own... [Horn!]

Okay.

I've got to do what's best for... [Me!]

My taste is simple and I simply want the... [Best]

It's expensive, but I'm... [Worth it!]

[pause for congregation laughter] Amazing what you can learn from yourself, isn't it? [pause for more laughter] I'm tellin you, we got this ego thing down ladies and gentlemen. We're scorin a hundred on a pop quiz tonight. [more laughter] It is absolutely incredible. Why? Because the reality is, is that nobody has to teach us to look our for number one. Nobody has to teach us to try to take care of ourselves in the sense of indulgence and in the sense of giving ourselves permission. You see it's such a natural thing to seek our own. And the Bible is so clear that this is the very attitude, this is the very disposition, this is the very obstacle that gets in the way of building, lasting and satisfying and healthy love relationships and so it's so very important that again we deal honestly and ruthlessly with the issue of ego. Now how does the Bible describe it? Well it says first that ego likes a parade. Love does not parade itself. That ego loves a parade. It loves to be seen. It loves to, to be, to be the center of attention. Now everybody loves a parade, right? Except for when that parade has 3 people, me, myself and I. Heh! And we don't like to be around people who parade themselves and yet so many of us inflate who we are and what we are and, and we're constantly as though it were, blowing our own horn and, and calling attention to ourselves. From childhood we, we learned to say, "Watch me mommy, watch me daddy, watch me, watch me." And you never outgrow it. You don't run around saying watch me mommy, watch me daddy but you say hey look what I'm drivin, look where I live, look who I know, look at my job, look at my...you know it's, it's all look at me. And whether it's the cloths that we wear or whether it's the, the other things around us in life we love to feed the parade of self and yet the Bible says, hey, true love, God kind of love it doesn't parade itself.

And then the Bible goes on to say that love is not puffed up. I just immediately start thinking. Whoo, whoo, whoo, whoo, whoo, whoo, whoo, whoo, whoo a big old balloon. The Bible says when love is present it's not puffed up, it's not, it's not, not only not strutting itself but it's not full of itself and the Bible says that ego is puffed up. That's the very nature of ego it's to live my life puffed up, full of me, full of interest

in how everything relates to me and how everything touches me. Recently I've been really just thinking again and pouring again over the Scripture of what does Jesus demand of me as a follower and I go to the book of Philippians just a few pages here from 1st Corinthians, chapter 2 and I read something that is so contrasted to what I've just talked about. Ego likes a parade, ego gets puffed up but look at Philippians chapter 2, verse 5:

⁵Let this mind...

Or literally this attitude.

...be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶who being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, ⁷but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a servant, and coming in the likeness of men. ⁸And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even death of the cross.

Everything I read there says Jesus deflated Himself in order that He might give me what I ultimately need and yet I spend my life trying to inflate myself. What does Jesus want in me and in you? He wants us to get deflated. He wants us to let the air out. He wants us not to live our lives, trying to be parading and puffed up but to be a vessel that can love and if you're ever gonna be able to love your mate, to love your children, to love others in your world, you're gonna have to be willing to be deflated because you can't have it both ways. Love does not parade itself. Love is not puffed up.

And then the Bible say, love is not rude and in some translations says it does not act unbecoming. Literally the Bible is saying here, that, that it is not [pause] in its behavior, a behavior that puts others down or takes advantage of others. It's a behavior that cares and concerns itself with others. The word rude in its core means where our word comes from scheme or schematic. It's something that has no scheme and no schematic to it. But instead of being rude, love has a scheme and loves scheme it has a shape and a form and it is a form that is like unto the character of God and God is interested in us living, not rudely but courteously. And when I am discourteous I'm filled with ego. I'm interested in me, myself and I.

And then there's that final thing that it says, ego seeks it's own. Love doesn't seek it's own but ego seeks it's own. Ego lives with one question, how does it effect me? Do you know what's wrong with most of our marriages is that we are always looking at everything, but how does it effect me? Do you wanna know what's so often wrong in the job? How does it effect me? Do wanna know what's so often wrong with you? Is that your always just worried about how does it effect me. And ladies and gentlemen it's so important to realize that when that is present, love is absent. And so the Bible in describing the obstacle of love just literally says, hey here they are, two big posts, just like these posts right here. You, you wanna know what it is that so often keeps you from being loving? Envy and ego, pillars in your life and so they become injurious obstacles. Well, we need

to embrace love. Obviously God has called us to love. How are we going to live...to love as God intends?

Well, let me give you 2 quick solutions tonight in embracing love in life and I believe that they will be very beneficial if you'll take time to think through them and pray over them in your life.

Number one if I ask myself the question how do I avoid the obstacle of envy? Well, lets see what the Scripture says. Look over in the book of Psalms 37, Psalm 37 because I believe that we have the answer to envy in the Scripture. Psalm 37 in verse 1 says this:

Do not fret because of evildoers, Nor be envious of the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb,

Literally the Bible says, it's easy for you to look at how good other people have it and before long you are fretting, you are envious, you are frustrated because many of them aren't even seeking God and they've got it better than you. But what does the Bible say in verse 3? Could we all read verse 3, the first word out loud together?

³*Trust...*

Trust in the Lord, and do good; Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness, ⁴Delight yourself in the desires of the LORD and He will give you the desires of your heart. ⁵Commit your ways to the LORD, Trust also in Him..

Do you know how you can avoid envy in your life? Trust! You wanna know what the problem is with envy? I feel like I'm getting a bad deal. I feel like God is not taking care of me. I'm not sure that I can rely on His faithfulness and all of these things work against faith in my life and the result is that instead of me being trusting and confident in the Lord I am eaten up with anxiety and distrust towards God. You see we need to get right with God and getting right with God means that we ultimately understand what envy is. It is failure to trust God to supply everything that I need.

And then there's the issue of ego. How do I handle it? Well, we've already looked at the text lets just go back and finish there, Philippians chapter 2. Because in that passage talking about the self-emptying of Jesus we read really the secret to overcoming ego in life. It's a perspective. It's a way that I look at life. Instead of me living with my own eye trouble always looking at I, I, I, me, me, me the Bible says in Philippians chapter 2, verse 4:

Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

The secret to overcoming ego is choose to be a servant. The secret to

overcoming envy? Choose to trust God. The secret to overcoming ego? Choose to be a servant. And if day-by-day, step-by-step, moment-by-moment I will choose to trust God when I am tempted to envy and I will choose to serve others when I am tempted to only take care of me. I will be able to remove the obstacles and then my life begins to be a platform for sharing the love of Christ with others. It's amazing what can happen when envy and ego get out of the way.

On Friday night October the 22nd in a high school football game in Southern Ohio, the game was going such that one of the teams was absolutely just dominating. I mean, they'd run the score way up 50 or 60 points. There was no way the other team was gonna come back and the coaches actually got together and made a decision and the decision was, was that the team that was already winning would allow a young man, a young man who was a senior by the name of Jake Porter to come in and to be a part of the final play. Jake Porter had only been in one other game even though he had been around the team he'd only been in one other game because he had physical and mental handicaps that had limited his ability to play. But because the team loved him and had taken care of him, they'd let him one time, take a snap and just take a knee. But this time they all agreed that what they would do was let him come in, let him take the ball and that he would run the ball toward the goal line. Well, Jake took the ball and the members of both teams came along beside him and started cheering him and championing him and, and yelling for him and running. And that night Jake Porter crossed the goal line, scored the final points in the game and he went home believing that he had won the football game. Envy to ego were put out of the way and the amazing thing was everybody was able to cheer a young man all the way to win.

Now that is a picture of love isn't it? It's caring. It's caring for others and God wants us to be those kinds of people in our homes and God wants us to be those kinds of people in our friendships and relationships because love does not envy. Love does not parade itself. Love is not puffed. Love is not rude and love doesn't seek it's own.

Father would You help us to be people of love. Lord would You teach us how to share the love of Christ and to become the vessels of that love. And father while we talk about wanting to be loved and wanting to experience love, Lord would You help us to really deal with the problem, the obstacle that so often stands in our way of enjoying and experiencing love that we're so filled with envy that we're encumbered with ego that we're not able to be used by You or to be able to love others. And so Father teach us to love we pray. And Lord I just pray that in these moments that as we close this time we've had together tonight that we would prove the strength of You love in each of our lives.