



Title: Jealousy

Category: Serving Self

Tags: Proverbs 27:4, 1 Samuel 18:5-9, David, Jealousy, Saul, Serving Self

“Anger is cruel and fury overwhelming, but who can stand before jealousy?” (Proverbs 27:4)

We know how destructive anger can be. All of us have had anger get the best of us. It’s amazing how quickly anger can negate any wisdom or intelligence we might have had. And fury, or rage, is anger amplified. Rage has killed people. Does it get any worse than that? Yes, the scripture says jealousy is worse.

David and King Saul met in the Valley of Elah where the Philistine giant Goliath was taunting the Israelites. We know the story: David killed Goliath and the Israelites won a great victory over the Philistines. The account says from that day on Saul kept David close to him. And, who wouldn’t? This David is a warrior. He wins all the battles. I’d want him by my side!

Saul kept David close but jealousy was close, too. Here’s the account from 1 Samuel:

“Whatever Saul sent him to do, David did it so successfully that Saul gave him a high rank in the army. This pleased all the people and Saul’s officers as well. When the men were returning home after David had killed the Philistine, the women came out from all the towns of Israel to meet King Saul with singing and dancing, with joyful songs and with tambourines and lutes. As they danced they sang: ‘Saul has slain his thousands, and David his tens of thousands.’

“Saul was very angry; this refrain galled him. ‘They have credited David with tens of thousands,’ he thought, ‘but me with only thousands. What more can he get but the kingdom?’ And from that time on Saul kept a jealous eye on David” (1 Samuel 18:5-9).

“Anger is cruel and fury is overwhelming.” Yeah, that’s true; those are emotions that erupt; but, they need something to trigger them. Jealousy isn’t an emotion like anger. It’s a temptation; and, as such we can refuse to give in to it. Saul could have been thankful for the good David has brought to him. He could have acknowledged that David deserved the praises he was receiving. Instead, he let jealousy ruin his life.

“But who can stand before jealousy?” We may not be able to do anything about jealousy directed towards us, but we can do something about any jealousy we harbor. We can choose to be jealous of the good that God does for others, or we can be grateful for the blessings that are ours.