

# SAMPLE CONTENT EDIT

## Chapter 1: It Does Not Envy

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“Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.”

Galatians 5:26

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I'm not sure why we compete with one another, why we feel like God or others loves someone else more because of what has been given to or done for them. But what I do know is that love isn't a contest, and envy is a venomous toxin that will rob you of a healthy fulfilled life. Envy likes to come first, and therefore is always focused on a win. It doesn't want silver or bronze, only gold. And when gold isn't good enough, it will yearn for platinum. It will never be satisfied with anything it perceives as less than. It's self-image driven. Envy wrestles with the fear that it missed out on something or life hasn't been fair to itself. It fears that there isn't enough of whatever it craves so it dwells in disbelief. It dwells in defeat. It operates with hatred and disgust toward others because others remind it of a false underprivileged place.

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When everything around you screams you're not where you'd like to be, it can be a challenge to share in another's happiness. Still, all I can tell you is to find joy in celebrating others anyhow; it will inexplicably help silence the cries of discontent. He says when you are faithful in little, He will promote you to much (Luke 16:10). Don't get tripped up by the fruit you see in someone else's garden, as you have no idea what it took to harvest that fruit. If you knew the amount of toil it took to get him there, you will find yourself at ease with your current stance.

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### Envy Feeds Control

What are you really accomplishing by looking into someone else's life and saying what they can or cannot have...what they do or don't deserve? It's not your life or decision to make.

You don't get to decide another person's fate or happiness. Envy is about control. There is only one in control. Don't get blind-sided by ego and judgment. Don't let an ill desire drive you to hate.

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### Envy Says I Am the One Who Deserves It

Envy is also about entitlement. Envy says what about my blessings? Envy says I am the one who deserves that blessing. It's an arrogant fixation that the world owes you something. Nobody owes you anything. Love celebrates others and is genuinely happy when something amazing is happening in their life even if that something amazing hasn't happened for you. And even if that something amazing is happening to someone who has wronged you, love still celebrates. Even if that person has wronged you, who are you to say they don't deserve God's unconditional love. You have no right to say who gets His mercy. You're getting all upset about something that has nothing to do with you yet you're making it about you. Please know it was never meant to be about you. The sooner you can come to that realization the better you'll be able to heal and know real love. What you throw into the universe is often times what comes back to you. If you sow hatred toward others, you will find yourself enveloped with hate even if the bulk of that hate is your own. Learn to appreciate what you have. Don't take for granted what's already been given to you.

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### Envy Operates in Defeat

Envy's address is 0000 Defeat Street. It lives in conquest, yet it doesn't realize that defeat is a mindset. It's always looking in the rear view mirror and focused on where it is in the race.

Love is not a race. Love focuses on forward movement not moving ahead. Keep your eyes on the prize.

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### Envy as a Condition

It's uncomfortable to be in the presence of envy because somewhere in it all, you know it wants to see harm or misfortune shown your way. For envy dislikes anything less than center stage. Because of its hunger for center stage, it's easy to spot when it's not in its "rightful" place. It's hard for it share in your happiness. You can forget the genuine support as love and envy mix like oil and water. They just don't coexist well without someone getting hurt. To make a move with envy is an attempt to get rid of your disdain toward another through ill intentions. Envy is an exposure of anxieties that you are attempting to hide by thoughts or talks of he or she thinks they're all that or I could do it better. It's never about what someone else did to them but more about what someone else reminds them that they are not or have not. It's rooted in unhealthy competition against others, and it won't stop until it has won its game. Living an envious existence can be lonely because no one really has the time nor interest to be entertained by something so remedial. Because of its loneliness it will attempt to provoke you too to join in with its shenanigans and invite you to also convert to a covetous lifestyle. It's greedy and never focuses on what it does have with gratitude. It's drawn to want and more want. Its thirst is never quenched. Envy says, "I have but I don't have that and I would like that."

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When I have to visit the doctor for a condition or injury, I always ask the doctor two questions: 1) What is the cause of the issue and 2) How do I heal and tackle it at the root cause? I ask these questions because I want to understand how I got into the situation to begin with, and I

want to do the work to heal and move forward restored. I don't want to mask my condition with Band-Aids or medicines that only treat the symptoms. So it is with envy. It's a condition or injury that must be tackled at the source. Envy is a deep-rooted reflection of who you want to be but for whatever reasons are just not there at the moment. Instead of recognizing that the circumstances are just temporal, you project those feelings of inadequacy or apparent loss onto others when it has nothing to do with the other person. Be careful about wanting what someone has or endeavoring to align your life with theirs. You never know what yoke has been upon them. In everything give thanks, be content, and believe the very best for your life and others.

I have a good friend from college who has been my healthy competition and motivator. We met in the honors program at Langston University our freshman year. Our motivating competition started when we were working on a research paper that we had to submit to the honors program director. He happened to show me his paper before we had to turn it in and it had these awesome pictures and very organized references to support his paper. I was like I want some awesome pictures so I went and added pictures to my paper and showed it to him. Well, it was more like...in your face (giggling)!! We laughed about it and have always done that for one another making sure we have presented the best we have to offer. We have kept that kind of motivation between us over the years and we often talk about how that kind of friendship has propelled us. Whenever one of us is celebrating a milestone, ~~the other is~~ there front and center. My friend has gone on to do a great many of things in the field of education and each time we catch up with one another, we share our papers and inquiry about those pictures. If one is looking to be ahead of the other, we ask about those pictures... ~~“What do you got now?”~~ I'm thankful that experience has been a motivator for us and not created any malice or envy in our hearts for the other. ~~We~~ want the best for one another and challenge ~~each other~~. He's not my only

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motivator but one of many who has consistently kept me on my toes. Surround yourself with others who don't mind showing you their pictures...how they overcame...and want you to be great. It's easier to be happy for others when they are happy for you when your time comes. And even if they aren't, still celebrate them even if it's just in your prayers. God knows and sees all. Trust that He will reward you in due season. You don't have to worry about your blessings; they will come. You can choose to destroy your spirit by stewing over someone else's blessing or you can invest that time and energy in loving the One who can change your circumstance and focusing on what you can be and do to make your life better. I choose the latter. I rather have fun making the most of the life He gifted me than wasting time I can never get back resentfully honed in on someone else's divine order.

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Choose to focus on your own blessings. Resist the need to compare yourself with others. Instead, focus on being the most amazing you. What is it YOU want to become? Not what is defined by what others are or what they have, but what do YOU want from YOUR life? Take some time to really think and pray about that. If you were given 1 year to live, what would you do with it? Who would you be? How would you want to leave this world? Then focus on the answer you receive. And if it doesn't come together as you would like it, know that in His eyes it's perfect and it's still good. I can't tell you why at times it feels like life seems unfair. But one thing I know for sure, there is a divine plan for it all. You just have to learn how to trust the divine plan. While you're learning, still celebrate you for all that you've become and celebrate others for what God is doing in their lives. I have celebrated tons of others in my lifetime. It's one of my greatest joys. And I'll tell you this, God has always sent the most delightful surprises of support. If those I give to want to give back so be it, and I sincerely appreciate the support as someone's time is a gift and their resources are a double portion. If those I give to don't give

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back, I no longer worry about it. I used to get my feelings hurt when I didn't know better but when I made a decision to give God's way, I've never lacked.

The truth is there is enough blessings to go around for everyone. God, as omnipotent as He is, is able to meet you where you are and bless you beyond your wildest dreams. But you have to do the work to change your circumstance for the better and simply believe. You have to want a future that honestly celebrates others instead of a present that secretly seeks to see others as second best or at their worst.

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### Love in Action: From Envy to Support

1. Loves does not covet and is not resentful. Ask God to reveal areas in your life where you have been and are envious of others and to purge that attitude from your heart and actions.
2. Reflect on your journey and the positive impacts you've made in life. Celebrate those victories with something that brings you personal gratification. It doesn't have to be grandiose; it could be something as simple as writing yourself a thank you note for all you do for yourself and/or others.

3. Identify someone who has a success, relationship, possession, and/or dream you covet. Rid yourself of the temptation to compete with him or her. Choose to be genuinely happy for the other person, and uplift and support them. Make his or her happiness that of your own.

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## Chapter 2: It Does Not Boast

“For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.” [Matthew 23:12](#)

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Lights, camera, action! It is not the loudest who speak with flattering words that show love but the strength of commitment that doesn't have to say anything for they show you with their walk, not just their talk.

Love delights in the triumphs of others. It dances at the news of a new born baby. It rejoices in your singing of a new song yet comforts in songs of sorrow. It enjoys praising the contributions of others. It shows up when you need it most. It puts the interests of others ahead of its own. It's gentle. It's that moment when you realize you were wrong and you have the courage to say, "I apologize." It has no need to shine as to bring attention to itself. Modest love is a quiet confidence. It lends a helping hand to those in need. It doesn't mind being the ghost writer in others' lives. It knows grace and mercy full well and gives it in abundance with an audience of one.

Nonetheless, it is perfectly natural to want to share your joys and blessings with the people around you. [We](#) want those whom we love to share in our happiness. God warns, however, of boasting. No one likes a bragger. [When your joy of sharing becomes a constant tooting of your own horn, it can cause people to do the exact opposite of what you were aiming to accomplish...boosting your self-esteem.](#) [Jeremiah 9:23](#) says, "Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom or the strong man boast of his strength or the rich man boast of his riches..." There is a clear distinction between sharing with others your gladness as a result of God's hand on your life versus bragging about your successes or connections apart from Him. When your sharing

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honors God, it glorifies His works. Boasting rears its ugly head when you rob God of His glory and take credit for the very thing you're boasting about. It's often disguised as a good deed but when the mask comes off, you can see that it's merely a cry for appreciation: a cry for elevation based on what you do and who you are presenting yourself to be but that's not love. Love is not contingent upon how well you can impress others; that's superficiality.

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### Don't Do It For Show

What is your motivation when you give? Whatever the reasons, don't do it for show.

Love doesn't seek attention. 1 Corinthians 13:3 says, "If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing." Even the most charitable of gestures and sacrificial attempts are meaningless if done for self-promotion. "But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you." Matthew 6:3-4.

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We all want to feel appreciated and celebrated. Though, when you're not feeling appreciated for who you are or recognized for your efforts, bragging can seem like the logical medicinal antidote. As God knows how intoxicating this distorted view of love can be, He warns of such behaviors: "Be careful not to do your 'acts of righteousness' before men, to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven. So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full."

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Matthew 6:1-2.

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God looks at our hearts not our acts. He says obedience is better than sacrifice. When the need for others to recognize you is greater than the deed itself, your giving is no longer about the act of love; love gives with no conditions for a return on its investment. The investment of love itself is enough reward.

### Love is Not a Contest

When your sharing of achievements is about one-upmanship, that's not love; that's manipulation. Love does not rub its accomplishments in someone else's face to make them feel bad about where they are. Love is not a contest or a debate. It considers others. If you know someone is struggling in a certain area, avoid constantly mentioning that area is not a struggle for you. How does that serve you or the other person? That's great that it's not a source of contention for you, but the point is that it is for someone else. Instead of boasting about your position, have a heart that is bent toward the other person. Desire to see them do well and make some steps toward helping them get there. How gratifying would it be to make it to the mountain top together?

A modest heart and spirit cares more about doing the right thing than being right. It's sensitive to the needs of others and lends a listening ear. It's focused on doing good in the world and less about the accolades or need for fame or fortune. It acts out of the goodness of its heart not for a reward. It understands that only what it does for Christ will last.

### Be Careful Not to Boast of Your Gifts or Strengths

Divine gifts don't exempt you from a loveless heart. You can be blessed with amazing spiritual talents but with a lack of zeal, they become merely superficial traditions or rituals in

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your life. 1 Corinthians 13:1 points out that you can be gifted in speaking in tongues but without love it's straight noise...annoying and repelling, lacking a sweet melody. It describes such talk as a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. You can shout about Heaven all day but your conversation spoken without love is mere emptiness. Further, having the gift of prophecy, understanding and knowledge even with mustard seed-size faith profits no one if arrogance and disdain reigns in your heart. "What's love got to do with it?" ...absolutely EVERYTHING. We must do our work with a pure heart and do it to honor and glorify God. When our hearts seek to please Him, love will fill our souls and our work then becomes much more powerful and effective here on earth. For, we cannot have power without His love.

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Moreover, proceed with caution when speaking of your strengths. "So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!" 1 Corinthians 10:12. We can think that it is our weaknesses that cause us to fall prey but surprisingly it can be our strengths that cause us to stumble. Don't be deceived as it is in your strengths that you tend to be most relaxed. It's also the most attractive for the enemy as his goal is to weaken your position in the faith. If he's not bothering you, either he already has you where he wants you or it's just a matter of time before he comes knocking at your door. Have the security cameras on standby and whatever you do, don't answer the knock.

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### Let Others Praise You

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There is nothing like an unsolicited compliment or unexpected praise report from someone other than yourself. However, when that rarely happens, it can be tempting to want to take the mic and make it known what you've done. You then have to ask yourself, did you really do it for the cause? If that answer is followed by a relentless series of announcements about all you believe you are, well then you know where your heart is truly. Solomon encourages the

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opposite: “Let another praise you, and not your own mouth; someone else, and not your own lips” Proverbs 27:2.

When you are genuine and your efforts are done with a spirit of reverence toward the Father, people can see that and will innately be drawn to you as a result. They will, without solicitation, want to speak well of you. Even those who might otherwise have spoken negatively will eventually find themselves speaking of the good news of finding and knowing such a rare humble individual as yourself. Drop the mic and let others praise you. If they don't, speak praises to yourself.

### Allow Others to See the Real You

I get it. You want someone to see you...the real you and still love you. The danger about bragging is that it is an imbalanced portrayal of yourself. Boasting tends to promote only the good, thus tipping the scales of an exaggerated sense of one's self. It creates a misunderstanding that you need an unshared spotlight with an audience of many and can oftentimes come across to others as an annoying need to glorify one's own feats. In its excessive pride, bragging invites others in by attempting to attract only the falsified finer qualities about yourself but it doesn't allow others to see the total you. Allow others to see the real you. Modest love is not about putting yourself down but being fearless enough to share a balanced view of yourself.

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**Moved up [1]: Let Others Praise You!**  
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### Boast About His Goodness

“If you are to boast, boast in the Lord” 1 Corinthians 1:31. Brag about His goodness! Tell everyone you meet about His love! Take backstage and shine the spotlight on Him. Make Him the focal point of your success. God loves it when we magnify and bring credit to His name. When we humble ourselves before Him and allow Him to have His rightful place in our lives, there’s nothing He won’t do for us. His word says that if we delight ourselves in Him, He will give us the desires of our hearts (Psalm 37:4). Honestly, I cannot stop talking about Him (smiling)!

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### Love in Action: From Boast to Modesty

1. James 4:16 describes boasting as arrogant and evil. Pray that God will transcend your heart from the need for others to see only the good in you...that others will see the complete you and still love you. Honor God by giving Him the credit for all that is good in your life.
2. Make a commitment to be true to yourself based on God’s truth. Allow yourself to be transparent and share equal scales of yourself with others. Be discerning about who you share the most intimate aspects of yourself.
3. Choose to boast about the goodness of God and others. Elevate someone who is hiding, someone who rarely makes any noise and/or always has a spirit of modesty through speech. Resist the need to include yourself as a contributor to who they are or what they’ve achieved.

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