

God's Jealousy—Our Assurance

Why didn't the Lord get rid of the apostles?

They continually squabbled about their selfish ambitions. Each considered himself superior to the others. They misunderstood Jesus' words. On one occasion a couple of the apostles wanted to burn down a Samaritan village. Just before Jesus' arrest, these friends of Jesus declared their willingness to die with him. Instead, they fled when the arresting officers seized him. Peter denied even knowing Jesus. Following Jesus' death the terrified apostles barricaded themselves behind locked doors.

So, why didn't Jesus throw the apostles overboard and replace them with stronger, smarter and more reliable people?

Why? "The Lord, whose name is jealous, is a jealous God."⁽¹⁾

God's Name is Jealous

God didn't say he was jealous. He said his name is Jealous. There is a difference between feeling jealousy and being called Jealous.

When God gave himself the name Jealous, he designated jealousy as a part of his person. He doesn't merely feel jealous—he is the very essence of jealousy.

The Bible also names God love. "God is love."⁽²⁾ He isn't merely loving—he is the essence of love. Love is God and God is love. All his thoughts, his motivation and his desires originate in unselfish, complete concern for others' welfare. Although all creation illustrates his loving nature, sacrificing his son on the cross for the sake of sinners definitively demonstrates his loving person.

The God whose name is jealous burned with a passionate determination to fulfill his purposes for the apostles. Although their behavior threatened to spoil the good life he planned for them, he didn't waiver in his commitment to them. His determination to bless them consumed him with an unflinching ambition to protect them from utter ruin. The idea of replacing them never entered his mind because he always sticks with his projects. His jealous person flared up with anger against all the foes of his will for the apostles.

A Time To Be Angry

God designed your life. You are on earth because he determined you to be here. Randomness has nothing to do with our existence. We live because God purposefully designated a place in his plan for each of us.

But there are many enemies who wish to destroy God's purpose for us and tear us away from his loving embrace. But what our enemies, the enemies of

God's plan for us, don't count on is God's anger.

There is a proper time for anger. When God sees failure about to destroy us, indignation against failure flares up within his heart. When Satan tempts, entices and ridicules us, God's jealous anger boils over. He zealously attacks all who would take us from him.

When the apostles bragged about their steadfast commitment to die with him, Jesus endured it. Their unfounded confidence in mere human strength inflicted great pain upon our Lord. Nevertheless Jesus ignored his injury and asked his heavenly father to rescue them from themselves.⁽³⁾

On the other hand, when Satan asked permission to destroy the apostles Jesus refused to tolerate the devil's requests. Our precious Savior, whose name is Jealous, feels the pain our enemies attempt to inflict upon us. Then, his jealous anger rages against everyone and everything that threatens us. Our enemies are in tremendous danger!

Why We Feel Insecure

We are very aware of our lacks, inabilities and personal limitations. Every once in a while memories of our failures tug at our consciousness.

But it's not really our human frailties that plague our minds. Remembering what we are like and forgetting what God is like is the heart and soul of our battles with feelings of insecurity. When emphasizing ourselves, we de-emphasize the Lord.

It's Time to Feel Secure

Let's remember the Lord whose name is jealous. His greatness is what counts, not our smallness. His power is the issue, not our weakness. Let's focus on his infinite genius, not our lack of wisdom and understanding.

The Bible is a book about God. It describes him and points our minds in his direction. "I cry out to God most high, to God who fulfills {his purpose} for me."⁽⁴⁾ **God fulfills his purpose** for us. It's all about God so we don't have to fear ourselves, ridicule self, condemn self and in general feel down on self. "He will keep you strong to the end."⁽⁵⁾ "**He will keep you strong.**" God's the issue, the jealous God who fights for you, who is on your side. "He does not take his eyes off the righteous."⁽⁶⁾ Put your name in that verse. Jesus' righteousness robes you so, "[God] does not takes his eyes off [your name]." Boundless, divine, eternal love is the heart and core of the God who watches over you and your family. Consequently, a canopy of divine protection hovers over you. It's time to feel secure.

Footnotes:

1. Exodus 34:14

2. 1 John 4:8 & 16
3. Luke 22:32
4. Psalm 57:2
5. 1 Corinthians 1:8
6. Job 36:7

