184 Envy (*Invidia*)

According to the teachers,[[1]](#endnote-1) envy is sorrow or sadness concerning another’s good. Wherefore it is called envy as if no sight (*non vidia*) from not seeing (*non videndo*) because hardly does he want to see the good of another. But this can happen in many ways or from this that one fears for himself or his circumstances if another prospers. And thus, there is no sin according to Gregory, *Moralia* 22,[[2]](#endnote-2) or because it is lacking to oneself this which another has and thus one can be zealous or because one sorrows that another surpasses him in goods of nature, grace, or reputation. He sins when this is against charity.

However, it is born from many things and first from pride because according to Augustine,[[3]](#endnote-3) the proud man cannot be; therefore, he is envious.

Again, it is born of opulence. Wherefore Augustine, *Super Joannem,* homily 32,[[4]](#endnote-4) take away envy and yours is what I have, and mine is what you have. Envy separates, charity unites.

Again, envy arises out of the estimated excellence of another. Wherefore, Seneca, *De ira,* the third book,[[5]](#endnote-5) no man looking at another’s goods is pleased with his own. Concerning this Ovid says *De arte amandi* versus:[[6]](#endnote-6)

¶ The more fertile grass is always in the field of others. And the cattle of the neighbors have larger udders.

¶ And it is very difficult to guard against envy passively, just as Valerius says, book 4, c. 6,[[7]](#endnote-7) there is no modest cause of felicity what can avoid the teeth of malignity. for in Christ curing the Jews envied, Matt. 27[:18]: “For Pilate knew that for envy they had delivered him.” In this matter they report that Socrates responded to Plato his disciple concerning the envious complaining of his fellow disciples, “If you wish,” he said, “to avoid the envy of others entirely, be miserable and murderous and no one will envy you.”

¶ Wherefore Isidore says, *De summo bono,* book 3, c. 25,[[8]](#endnote-8) that misery lacks envy, but among these it is to be noted that the envious contribute much to the invidious. For in this he excites him to the exercise of virtue, thus also Jacob who on his staff went across the Jordan, however not at all did he return with two companies lest he agitate him with fraternal envy, Gen. 32[:11]. Nor would Joseph have been in Egypt except that fraternal envy sold him, Gen. 37[:27]. Wherefore concerning this material it is to be known with the enhancement of the injury three things usually arise concerning the injured one, namely rancor in the heart, insult in the mouth, and effects of hate in work which happens doubly either through subtraction of the good, or through the bringing in of evil, but nothing of these ought to be admitted unless the one injuring is an enemy of the church or the public good, because however much more of this kind prospers the more it injures the church. Wherefore Gregory in *Moralia*,[[9]](#endnote-9) the evil are not to be reconciled nor through this they become the more incorrigible by how much more they were of one accord. Wherefore Gregory, *Moralia* 23,[[10]](#endnote-10) just as the harmful usually exists if unity lacks the good, so the pernicious exists if it does not lack the evil. Wherefore also Paul broke up this unity standing in the middle of the Sadducees and Pharisees speaking of the resurrection of the dead, [Act. 23:6-7]. But one ought not sorrow for the spiritual good and enemies, nor subtract the good which is the material of life or the soul.

Again, note that the condemnation of the world is great. For when envy is its own punishment, it deprives itself of its own and others’ goods. For according to Gregory, *Pastoralis*, book two,[[11]](#endnote-11) our goods are those that although we cannot imitate them in others, however, we love them, and on the contrary what we do not love we lose.

¶ Again just as for those loving God they cooperate in the good, so if all the world cooperates in evil, because when they are tormented by the goods of others and thus transforms how much is in him, he converts gold into copper, a jewel into mud, the grain into straw, wine into water, honey into poison, the rose into a stem, nectar into poison. Because of this Seneca said:[[12]](#endnote-12) It seems the envious in all the cities can have eyes and ears so that thus they may be tormented by the successes of all.

Second the iniquity of the envious is great because when no beast is provoked by inequality of its own kind, man however is freely moved against man.

Again, the other vicious and gluttonous slippery ones having been filled with enticements rest, but not the clean.

¶ Again other vices have some cause of their impulse, but not envy.

Again, according to Augustine,[[13]](#endnote-13) since God is so good, but not envy.

Again, according to what he knows of our evils he chooses the good.

¶ Again great is the folly of humankind because he wants to destroy himself to this end that the ass of his neighbor may be destroyed. And he wants to gouge out one of his eyes so that eye of his neighbor may be gouged out. Wherefore Chrysostom, *Super Mattheum*,[[14]](#endnote-14) as some column has accepted a weight turns aside and inclines more, so the perverse heart by hearing and seeing the goods of another is not strengthened but is excited more to envy. Thus, priests against Christ when they hear boys proclaim in the marketplace.

¶ The example for this when two boys want to measure their height who is the greater, they arrange themselves together, but because the one who is lesser tends to stretch his quantity, thus some damn others whom they perceive as greater than them.

Again,[[15]](#endnote-15) because envy is sadness for another’s joy, therefore he is as a worm in the wood, as rust in iron, as a moth in clothing which gnaws all things because of the substance before others and harms themselves more.

Again,[[16]](#endnote-16) the envious is like the leper who wants that no one be healthy, and he is like Judas who was indignant over the wasted of oil, that is, the good odor of brotherly reputation.

¶ Again,[[17]](#endnote-17) the envious is dissimilar to every creature because creatures share their goods, the envious one not, rather he proposes to annul the others.

¶ Again,[[18]](#endnote-18) every single vice is opposed to another virtue as pride to humility, lust to chastity, and thus concerning the others, but envy is opposed every good. Therefore, it is called “an evil beast,” Gen. 37[:20]. Therefore, it is not wonder if envy makes man unhappy when from the beginning it is deficient, concerning life it dies away.

¶ Again, the envious is compared to the lynx because it hides its urine under the sand lest a gem of stone be born from it for men to dig up, but when there it congeals more quickly into a stone according to Pliny, book 8, c. 29.[[19]](#endnote-19) And according to Isidor, *Etymologiae,* book 12.[[20]](#endnote-20) Wherefore the poet:[[21]](#endnote-21) The envious one pines away for the fat goods of another and sees the prosperous things of another with tears.[[22]](#endnote-22)

¶ For so great is the malice in the heart of man that the ray from his eye going out infects the good which he sees in another, Wis. 4[:12]: “For the bewitching of vanity obscures good things.” And Eccli. 14[:8]: “The eye of the envious is wicked.” For as it is said in *Policraticus*, book 4 c. 14,[[23]](#endnote-23) In Illyricum which is part of Greece there are certain men having a double pupil in their eye who if they are angered, they kill by the sight alone.

¶ Again, it is to be noted that someone has said he has not been sad except once and this once was always and someone else said that he remitted injuries to himself daily three times per day in the morning because of the mass, at noon because of the meal, in the evening because of sleep.

Again, that it is said in Job 5[:2]: “Envy slays the little one.” The Philosopher in his, 2 *Rethorice*,[[24]](#endnote-24) gives the reason that the little ones think all things which they see are great and therefore they envy them.

¶ Again, Saul envied David who attributed more to him in the chorus of the singers, that is, 1 Kings 16[:17]. When therefore love of his own singing becomes predominant and envy is the hate of happiness, he is in the presence without connection because envy is born from pride. For whoever by loving his own excellence or he envies equals because they are equal to him or to inferiors lest they are equal to himself or superiors because he is not a coequal to them. Therefore Chrysostom, homily 27, *Super Mattheum* 20[:13]:[[25]](#endnote-25) “Friend, I do you no wrong.” these do not envy like those defrauded of their wages, but that others receive more than they merited. This is proper to envy. Because when something is added to another, thus he sorrows as if it was taken from him. In as much as if the envious one sees someone richer than him, he thinks because of this is made poor; and if another knows, he believes he because of this is deceived. Therefore, see how from vain glory envy arises. And now he sorrows to be second, because he desires to be first, Eccle. 4[:4]: “I considered all the labors of men, and their industries are exposed to the envy of their neighbor.” Therefore, says Isadore in his *Soliloquies*,[[26]](#endnote-26) that the taller tree is more forcefully shaken by the winds. Wherefore the cause of envy on the part of the patient is good in another kind of good either of nature or of fortune or of grace.

¶ For the devil seeing humankind ordered to great things envies it, Wis. 2[:24]: “By the envy of the devil, death came into the world.”

¶ Again, the Apostle prohibits this vice, Gal. 5[:26]: “Let us not be made desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.”

¶ The example for this the body above never eclipses the body below, but not on the contrary, John 3[:31]. Rachel being infertile, envied her fertile sister, Gen. 30[:1]. No one throws stones at an infertile willow tree, or at a sterile tree, but at fruit bearing tree because of its fruit. In willow trees we hand our musical instruments, not in pear trees nor in a hazel nut tree lest they be destroyed through envy, so no one throws stones of detraction at an unfruitful man but at virtuous men.

¶ Again, just as it is in objects above, that the body lacking light eclipses the luminous body, so among men the dark and vicious tend to obscure the virtuous.

¶ Again, the envious man properly is said to be blind because just as the blind man judges badly concerning colors, but the envious man is even worse concerning virtues because he always judges delays. For he turns good into evil “and on the elect he will lay a blot,” just as it is said in Eccli. 11[:33]. If you fast,[[27]](#endnote-27) he says you are a hypocrite, if you eat, greedy. He says if you laugh, you are causing a disturbance. If you say nothing, he says you do not know how to speak, if you speak, he says you are garrulous. If you give alms, he says you are desirous of vain glory, if you do not give alms, he says you are avaricious. If others find fault, he will be a witness. If they praise, he will place an obstacle.

1. Hugh Ripelin of Strasburg, *Compendium Theologicae Veritatis* 3.16 (8:136b): Invidia est ut ait Augustinus odium feliciinvenitur tatis alienæ Secundum Joannem Damascenum invidia est tristitia de alienis bonis Dicitur auvero tem invidia a *non videndo* quia non potest vised dere bona aliorum. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Cf. Gregory, *Moralia* 22.2.4 (PL 76:214): Qua in re dubium non est, quia tanto quisque minus dolet quod desint aeterna, quanto magis gaudet quod adsint temporalia; et qui minus dolet quod desint temporalia, certius exspectat ut [Col.0214B] adsint aeterna. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Cf. Augustine, *De natura et gratia* 28 (PL 44:262): et discas superbus non esse. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Augustine, *In Joannis Evangelium tractatus,* Tractatus 32. Ab eo loco, In novissimo, 8 (PL 35:1646): Tolle invidiam, et tuum est quod habeo: tollam invidiam, et meum est quod habes. Livor separat, sanitas jungit. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Seneca, *De Ira* 3.31.1 (LCL 214:330): Nulli ad aliena respicienti sua placent. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Ovid, *Artis Amatoriae* 1.349-350 (LCL 232:36): Fertilior seges est alienis semper in agris, / Vicinumque pecus grandius uber habet. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. Valerius Maximus, *Facta et Dicta Memorabilia* 4.7. ext. 2b (LCL 492:428): Verum nulla tam modesta felicitas est quae malignitatis dentes vitare possit. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. Isidore, *Sententiae* 3.25.De invidia, 4 (PL 83:700): Nulla est virtus quae non habeat contrarium invidiae malum; sola miseria caret invidia, quia nemo invidet misero, cui re vera non livor objicitur, sed sola misericordia adhibetur. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. Gregory, *Moralia* 33.31.55 (PL 76:709): Perversos quippe unitas corroborat, dum concordat; et tanto magis incorrigibiles, quanto unanimes facit. De hac unitate reproborum. [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. Gregory, *Moralia* 33.31.55 (PL 76:708-709): Nam sicut esse noxium solet si unitas desit bonis, ita perniciosum est si non desit malis. Perversos quippe unitas corroborat, dum concordat; et tanto magis incorrigibiles, quanto unanimes facit. [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. Gregory, *Regula Pastoralis* 3.10 (PL 77:63): Nostra sunt nimirum, quae etsi imitari non possumus, amamus in aliis; et amantium fiunt quaeque amantur in nobis.

    Cf. *St. Gregory the Great Pastoral Care*, trans. Henry Davis, S.J. (NY: Newman Press, 1950), pp. 114-115: In fact, those thing are ours which we love in others, even if we cqannot imitate them, and what is loved in ourselves becomes the possession of those who love it. [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. Seneca, cf. Hugh Ripelin of Strasbourg, *Compendium theologicae veritatis* 3.16 in S. Bonaventurae *Opera omnia*, ed. A. C. Peltier, vol. 8 (Paris: Vives, 1866), p. 137a: Seneca: Utinam invidi in omnibus civitatibus oculos et aures haberent, ut, de omnium profectibus torquerentur. [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
13. Augustine, *De Natura et Gratia* 43.50 (PL 44:271): Verum est autem quod ait, Quod Deus tam bonus quam justus talem hominem fecerit, qui peccati malo carere sufficeret, sed si voluisset. [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. (Pseudo-)Chrysostom, *Opus imperfectum in Mattheum,* Homilia 38 cap. 21. 15, (PG 56:842): Quemadmodum columna in templo, si steterit recta, accepto pondere amplius confirmatur, sed amplius vadit at latus: sic et cor hominis si rectum fuerit, videns opera alicujus viri justi, aut audiens…. [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
15. William de Lancea, *Diaetae salutis* 1.4 (8:252b): Invidia enim habet multas similitudines odio sas est enim sicut vermis in ligno rubigo in ferro tinea in vestimento Nam sicut ista ro dunt proprium subjectum et consumunt illud plusquam alia sic invidia rodit invidum et plus invidus nocet sibi quam aliis. [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
16. William de Lancea, *Diaetae salutis* 1.4 (8:252b): Tertio similis est leproso Judæ proditori et diabolo Leprosus enim vellet quod nullus esQui set sanus et diabolus quod nullus esset bonus Unde dicitur*: Invidia diaboli mors intravit in orbem terrarum.* Judas contristatus fuit de effusem sione unguenti super Christum ut habetur in *Matthæo*: sic invidus instar leprosi et diade boli dolet de bono proximi etiam ad modum Judæ proditoris tristatur de bona fama fratris et odore virtutis. [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
17. William de Lancea, *Diaetae salutis* 1.4 (8:253b): Nono invidus similis est nihilo pro eo quod dissimilis est tam Creatori quam omni creacit turæ sive bono creato Creator enim commuponere nicat bona sua liberaliter et creatura similiter. [↑](#endnote-ref-17)
18. William de Lancea, *Diaetae salutis* 1.4 (8:253b): Alia namque vitia oppotimant nuntur uni virtuti ut superbia humilitati luxuvertunt ria castitati avaritia largitati et sic de aliis invidia vero ut dictum est opponitur omni bono unde non tantum dicitur mala sed pesdicitur sima Hæc est enim fera pessima quæ devoravit Joseph sicut dicitur in Genesi. [↑](#endnote-ref-18)
19. Pliny, *Historia Naturalis* 8.57.137 (LCL 353:96-98): Lyncum umor ita redditus3 ubi gignuntur glaciatur arescitve in gemmas carbunculis similes et igneo colore fulgentes, lyncurium vocatas atque ob id sucino a plerisque ita generari prodito. novere hoc sciuntque lynces, et invidentes urinam terra operiunt eoque celerius solidatur illa.

    The urine of lynxes solidifies into drops like carbuncles, colored like flame; this substance is called "lynx-water" (lyncuriam). Lynxes know that this happens, so they cover their urine with earth to make it solidify more quickly. [↑](#endnote-ref-19)
20. Isidore, *Etymologiarum* 2.20 (PL 82:437): Lynx dictus, quia in luporum genere numeratur: bestia maculis terga distincta, ut pardus, sed similis lupo. Unde et ille λύκος, iste lynx. Hujus urinam converti in duritiam pretiosi lapidis dicunt, qui lincurius appellatur, quod et ipsos lynces sentire hoc documento probatur; nam egestum liquorem arenis, in quantum potuerint, contegunt, invidia quadam naturae, ne talis egestio transeat in usum humanum. [↑](#endnote-ref-20)
21. Cf. Horace, *Epistles* 1.2.57 ed. (LCL 194:266-267): Invidus alterius macrescit rebus opimis.

    Cf. *Carmina burana*, ed. Alfons Hilka and Otto Schumann (Heidelberg: Carl Winter’s Universitaetsbuchhandlung, 1930), 1:30 #13.2 Invidus alterius rebus macrescit opimis. Alternate reading: rebus marcessit. [↑](#endnote-ref-21)
22. Cf. Alternate reading: Ln. 57. Vincentius Bellovacensis specul. histor. VII 68; sed utrobique et in florileg. Nostradam. post v. 57 hic legitur pentameter: ‘et videt illius prospera cum lacrimis’ <http://www.horatius.net/index.xps?3.902> [↑](#endnote-ref-22)
23. John of Salisbury, *Policraticus* 5.15 (PL 199:576): Eosque ipsos mares, feminasque qui visu nocentes sunt, pupillas in singulis oculis habere bina. Apollonides quoque perhibet, in Scythia nasci feminas, quae Bithiae vocantur, et easdem in oculis binas habere pupillas, et perimere si quem visu forte iratae aspexerint.

    Cf. John of Salisbury, *Policraticus* ed. and trans. Cary J. Nederman, 5.15 (Cambridge: University Press, 1990), 96: The same book refers to men living among the Illyricians who kill by looking at those whom thjey have long viewed with anger, and says that thos men and women who do harm by their gaze have two pupils in each eye. Apollonides also assertrs that women are born in Scythia who are called Bithiae, and who likewise are seen to have two pupils in their eyes and to kiill whoever angers them if the person catches their gaze [↑](#endnote-ref-23)
24. Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 2.10 1387b34 (Barnes 2:2211): And small-minded men are envious, for everything seems great to them. [↑](#endnote-ref-24)
25. (Pseudo-)Chrysostom, *Opus imperfectum in Mattheum,* Homilia 34 cap. 20.13 15, (PG 56:822): Ergo illi non dolebant, quasi fraudate de mercede sua, sed quia illi amplius quam merebantur acceperant. Hoc est enim proprium invidiae: quando alteri aliquid additur, sic dolent invidi, quasi illis sit aliquid subductum, quod illi est additum: utputa, si viderit fieri aliquem ditiorem, putat invidus se pauperem factum; si alter sapientior fuerit factus, ita dolet quasi ipse sit insipiens factus. Intelligis quia ex vana gloria nascitur invidia? Nam ideo dolet esse secundum, quia desiderat esse prior. [↑](#endnote-ref-25)
26. Isidore, *Synonyma* 2.89 (83:865): Alta arbor a ventis fortius agitatur, et rami ejus citius in ruina confringuntur; excelsae turres graviori casu procumbunt. [↑](#endnote-ref-26)
27. Cf. *llave de Oro* Ed. R. P. Richardo Arsdekin (Barcelona: Libreria Religiosa, 1860), p. 78: Nam si jejunas, dicit te hypocritam, si comedis, voracem, si quiescis pigrum, si rides inquietum, si taces stultum, si loqueris praesumptuosum, si tua pauperibus das vel erogas, dicit te esse vanum et gloriosum, si non erogas, avarum, si sapiens es, superbum, si religiosus, dicit te hypocritam.

    <https://books.google.com/books?id=D-k7AQAAMAAJ&pg=RA1-PA78&lpg=RA1-PA78&dq=si+jejunas,+dicit+te+hypocritam+si+comedis&source=bl&ots=_V9IyfaPte&sig=ACfU3U3QyLDH22Ie0tHug0Hsu_mbbU8TbQ&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwipg9n3zcjgAhUHM6wKHTm2DkMQ6AEwCHoECAkQAQ#v=onepage&q=si%20jejunas%2C%20dicit%20te%20hypocritam%20si%20comedis&f=false> [↑](#endnote-ref-27)