

Proverbs 3:31

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Envy thou not the oppressor, and choose none of his ways.

Analysis

Do not envy the oppressor or choose any of his ways. Envy of the wicked arises when their prosperity and apparent success tempts admiration. Yet choosing their ways means adopting their values and methods, which lead to destruction. Psalm 73 addresses this temptation - envying the wicked until understanding their end. The command assumes tendency toward envy requiring active resistance through right theology.

Historical Context

Addresses perennial temptation when the wicked prosper and righteous suffer. Ancient Israel saw oppressors accumulate wealth and power, tempting covenant members to adopt unrighteous means to similar ends.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. Whose success tempts you to envy and consider compromising your convictions?

2. How does contemplating the wicked's ultimate end help you resist envying their present prosperity?

Interlinear Text

בְּכָל תְּבַנֵּן רֵאל סְמִינָה אֶל
 H2555 H408 H3605
 Envy thou not the oppressor and choose
 H7065 H376 H977

דְּבָרָיו:
 none of his ways
 H1870

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 24:1 (Parallel theme): Be not thou envious against evil men, neither desire to be with them.

Psalms 37:1 (Parallel theme): Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity.

Ecclesiastes 5:8 (Parallel theme): If thou seest the oppression of the poor, and violent perverting of judgment and justice in a province, marvel not at the matter: for he that is higher than the highest regardeth; and there be higher than they.

Proverbs 23:17 (Parallel theme): Let not thine heart envy sinners: but be thou in the fear of the LORD all the day long.

Galatians 5:21 (Parallel theme): Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Proverbs 12:12 (Parallel theme): The wicked desireth the net of evil men: but the root of the righteous yieldeth fruit.

Psalms 73:3 (Parallel theme): For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

