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## Reflections

### Should I Envy?

ENVY is one of the strongest emotions that has been inveterate in human nature from the very beginning.

It is generally understood as a negative emotion which one has against another as the result of lack of one's own superior quality, possession or achievement.

Socrates (470/469 – 399 BC) had taught, 'Envy is the ulcer of soul' following that in the beginning of 4th century AD, the Christian ethical education spoke of envy as one of the seven deadly sins.

They called it 'capital' sin since it was the source from which other vices originated.

These wise and pious statements had been put under rigorous scientific investigation recently.

EEG (electro-encephalography) research studies on people with raging envy found increased neural activity at prefronto-striatal network of the brain. These areas are usually associated with cognitive, motor and behavioural functions in a person. Normal neural activity in these areas involve planning, organization, adaptation to changes and decision making.

Any impairment in this process results in behavioural problems. That is the reason envious people either over value what others have or undervalue what they have.

Envy significantly impairs interpersonal relationship, self



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awareness (alexithymia) and other socially desirable behaviours.

Raging envy (strong negative emotion) tends to intensify neural activity at prefronto-striatal network of the brain. If unaddressed, increased frequency over a prolonged period might lead to neurodegenerative disorders (Alzheimers and Parkinsons) and neuropsychiatric disorder (OCD, ADHD, Schizophrenia and depression).

These findings help us to understand the seriousness of this emotion and the need to deal with it - effectively and more over to avoid it if at all possible.

Being unaware of the 'envy emotion' is like an undiagnosed cancer which tends to destroy the person affected.

The Bible has over 100 references both directly and indirectly to 'envy' enlightening us with its serious consequences and the need to avoid it. It explains why so many in the world envy our Bible.