

# Unit 1: 7 Deadly Sins

## Lesson 1.3 Envy

### Teacher Preparation and Materials Needed:

**For the Lesson:** Orthodox Study Bible or Holy Bible: Armenian Church Edition

**Recommended Orthodox Study Bible** [HERE](#).

**Recommended Holy Bible: Armenian Church Edition** [HERE](#).

**Scripture Reference:** 1 Corinthians 13:4; Proverbs 14:30; Genesis 4:1-16

### Activities:

Implement based on available time. Detailed instructions and materials lists are provided in the lesson.

Activity #1: Class Activity – “Envy Poison vs. Love Medicine”

Activity #2: Feelings of Envy and Jealousy Wordsearch

### Words of the week:

նախանձ - nakh-ants - envy

թոյն - toyn - poison

սէր - ser - love

### Objective:

Students will understand that envy is a dangerous sin that destroys relationships and separates us from God’s grace, while love and gratitude bring joy and peace to our hearts and honor God’s goodness to all His children.

### Moral Character Focus:

**Knowledge:** Explain how envy led to the first murder (Cain and Abel) and identify biblical examples of envy’s destructive power

**Understanding:** Recognize how envy poisons relationships, blinds us to our own blessings, and makes us resent God’s goodness to others

**Application:** Identify envious thoughts in themselves and others, and choose loving responses that celebrate others’ blessings instead of resenting them

**Values:** Develop a desire to practice love and gratitude by rejoicing in others’ success and trusting God’s perfect plan for their lives

### Memory Verse:

“Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant.”

1 Corinthians 13:4

# Lesson

## Lesson Opening & Creating Interest:

*\*Wisdom Prayer, written by St. Nersess the Grace-filled (Shnorhali).*

### Open with prayer:

Իմաստութիւն Յօր՝ Յիսուս, տու՛ր ինձ իմաստութիւն, զբարիս խորհել եւ խօսել եւ գործել առաջի Քր՝ յամենայն ժամ. ի չար խորհրդոց եւ ի բանից եւ ի գործոց փրկեա՛ զիս. եւ ողորմեա՛ Քր արարածոց եւ ինձ բազմամեղիս: Ամէն

Eemasdootyoon Hor Heesoos, door eents eemasdootyoon uzparees khorel yev khosel yev kordz arachi ko hamenayn jham. Ee char khorhrtos yev paneets yen kordzots prgya zees yev voghormya ko araradzots eents pazmameghees. Amen.

Wisdom of the Father, O Jesus, grant to me the wisdom to think, speak, and do that which is good in Your sight. Save me from all evil and distracting thoughts, words, and deeds. Have mercy upon your creatures and upon me, a great sinner. Amen.

## Lesson Body: Envy

Last week, we learned about pride, the weed that makes us think we don't need God. Today, we're looking at another dangerous weed in the garden of our soul: envy.

Imagine you're at a birthday party, and everyone is celebrating your friend. They get amazing gifts, everyone's attention, and lots of praise. At first, you might smile and clap along. But then something dark starts growing in your heart, you begin to wish it was your party, your gifts, your moment. You might even start hoping something goes wrong for them. That poisonous feeling twisting in your chest? That's envy.

In our spiritual garden, envy is like a thorny vine that wraps around the beautiful flowers and slowly chokes them to death. It doesn't just want what others have, it wants them not to have it. Envy is one of the most destructive weeds because it turns God's blessings into sources of bitterness and transforms our hearts from gardens of love into wastelands of resentment.

**Q:** *What do you think are some ways envy shows up in our daily lives?*

### Why Envy Is Dangerous

Envy is one of the most destructive sins because it acts like acid that eats away at our souls from the inside out. When we become envious, we lose the ability to be grateful for our own blessings because we're so focused on what others have that we think we deserve. Envy blinds us to God's goodness in our lives and makes us believe the lie that we're being treated unfairly, leading to constant dissatisfaction and spiritual emptiness.

Envy also opens the door to many other sins. History is filled with examples of envy leading to gossip, slander, theft, violence, and even murder. When we envy someone, we become willing to hurt them through our words and actions, spreading rumors to damage their reputation or undermining their success out of spite. Envy makes us celebrate when bad things happen to others and feel disappointed when good things happen to them, completely reversing the way God calls us to love our neighbors.

Most dangerously, envy separates us from God's grace because it fills our hearts with bitterness and resentment instead of love and gratitude. The Bible warns us that "envy rots the bones" (Proverbs 14:30), meaning it destroys us from within, making us spiritually sick and unable to receive the joy and peace that God wants to give us. This is why we must recognize envy as a deadly spiritual poison and fight against it with all our strength.

**Words of the Week:****նախանձ - nakh-ants - envy****թոյն - tooyn - poison****սէր - ser - love****Memory Verse:****“Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant.”****1 Corinthians 13:4****1. Envy Makes Us Hate God’s Goodness to Others**

Envy is much more dangerous than simply wanting something someone else has — it’s resenting that God blessed them at all. When envy takes root in our hearts, we stop seeing other people’s blessings as gifts from God and start seeing them as unfair advantages that should have been ours instead. The Armenian word նախանձ (nakhants) carries the sense of ill-will and malice toward another person’s good fortune, revealing how envy transforms us from people who celebrate God’s goodness into people who despise it.

This is why envy is so spiritually deadly. It makes us angry at God’s generosity. Instead of trusting that our loving Father knows exactly what each of His children needs, envy convinces us that God is playing favorites or being unfair. When we envy, we’re essentially telling God, “You made a mistake giving them that blessing. I deserved it more.” This attitude poisons our relationship with God because it replaces trust and gratitude with suspicion and bitterness, making it impossible for us to receive His love and blessings with a pure heart.

**2. Envy Was Behind History’s First Murder**

The very first murder in human history happened because of envy. Cain and Abel both brought offerings to God, but God accepted Abel’s sacrifice while rejecting Cain’s. Instead of asking God how he could improve his offering or examining his own heart, Cain let envy consume him. The Bible tells us that *“Cain was very angry, and his face fell”* (Genesis 4:5). God even warned Cain directly, saying, *“Sin is crouching at your door. Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it”* (Genesis 4:7).

But Cain chose to feed his envy instead of fighting it. He invited his brother Abel into the field and murdered him in cold blood. This shows us how envy progresses. It starts as a bitter thought, grows into resentment, and can eventually explode into violence and hatred. Cain’s envy didn’t just destroy his relationship with his brother; it separated him from God and made him *“a fugitive and wanderer on the earth”* (Genesis 4:12).

This story teaches us that envy is never *“just a feeling”*. It’s a spiritual cancer that spreads and destroys everything it touches. Like Cain, when we allow envy to take root, we become capable of hurting the very people God calls us to love and protect.

**3. Envy Destroys Our Ability to Love**

Envy is the opposite of love because it makes us incapable of rejoicing when others are blessed. True love, as St. Paul teaches, *“does not envy”* (1 Corinthians 13:4), it celebrates when others succeed, feels happy when they’re honored, and finds joy in their achievements. But envy twists our hearts until every blessing someone else receives feels like a personal attack, every success they have feels like our failure, and every moment of their happiness becomes a reminder of what we lack.

This is why envy destroys friendships, breaks apart families, and tears communities apart. When we envy our friends’ talents, our siblings’ achievements, or our

**What the Bible Says About Envy**

**Proverbs 14:30** - *“A heart at peace gives life to the body, but envy rots the bones.”*

**James 3:16** - *“For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice.”*

**Galatians 5:26** - *“Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.”*

**Romans 1:29** - *“They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness.”*

**1 Peter 2:1** - *“So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander.”*

classmates' popularity, we can no longer genuinely care for their well-being. Instead of being friends who support and encourage each other, envy turns us into competitors who secretly hope for each other's downfall. Envy makes us smile on the outside while harboring bitterness on the inside, creating fake relationships built on hidden resentment rather than authentic love.

The Armenian Church teaches that we are called to be one body in Christ, where *"if one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together"* (1 Corinthians 12:26). Envy makes this impossible because it convinces us that someone else's blessing diminishes our own worth, when in reality, God's love is infinite and His blessings are abundant enough for everyone.

#### **What Envy Can Do:**

- Destroys friendships - Makes us resent people we should love and support
- Blinds us to our blessings - We can't see God's goodness in our own lives
- Leads to gossip and slander - We spread rumors to hurt those we envy
- Creates constant dissatisfaction - Nothing we have ever feels like enough
- Makes us celebrate others' failures - We find joy in their pain instead of their success
- Poisons our prayers - We can't genuinely thank God when we're bitter
- Opens the door to hatred - Resentment grows into active malice
- Causes us to waste our talents - We're too focused on others to develop our own gifts
- Destroys family relationships - Sibling rivalry and competition replace love
- Makes us fake and dishonest - We pretend to be happy while harboring bitterness
- Separates us from God's grace - Envy blocks our hearts from receiving His love
- Leads to violence and revenge - Like Cain, envy can drive us to hurt others

## **What the Church Fathers Say**

*"Envy is the mother of hatred."*

– St. Basil the Great

*"The envious man grows thin with the fatness of his neighbor."*

– St. John Chrysostom

*"Envy is the adversary of the fortunate, and the torment of the envious."*

– St. Gregory of Nazianzus

## Activity #1: Class Activity – “Envy Poison vs. Love Medicine”

### Materials:

- Clear plastic cups (two per student)
- Dark food coloring (for “envy poison”)
- Clear water
- Light food coloring in bright colors (for “love medicine”)
- Labels and markers
- Index cards and pens

### Setup & Activity:

*Visual demonstration:* Give each student two cups with clear water. Add dark coloring to one (label “Envy”) and bright coloring to the other (label “Love”)

*Discussion:* “See how the dark envy spreads , even a small drop, and makes everything murky? That’s what envy does to our hearts. The love cup is beautiful and clear - that’s what love does to our souls.”

*Personal application:* On index cards, students write one situation where they might feel envy, then flip and write how they could choose love instead

*Take-Home:* Students take home their “Love” cup and card as reminders to choose love over envy.

## Activity #2: Feelings of Envy and Jealousy Wordsearch

I Y F Y M D B M E H O Z Q R W R G R K H B P A B  
 U D K U E T T L U F T N E S E R M Q Y B R L Q B  
 T N Z V N E U J X U I V N W H F H A X B N F R L  
 T K C G V Q E V R E J E C T E D A W R A W E M M  
 K T L E Y J Z G N I H T E M O S G N I T N A W Q  
 I H D J R B V I Y Z L L W P Z L D R C Y W R M D  
 F K E D G T Y X D P U V X A R B P W D T S O H Y  
 K U V E K E A F J E T E J A X C M E T V H F U N  
 X R H K J J X I V K R B H K Z F E E X D E L B E  
 Y B Y I Y C S K N A Q A H C T R L G C E M O A H  
 L D Q L E H J B Z T O C C E G S O P Y W O S G W  
 L M E S L H T Y L X Y U N S D H C E Q L L I F S  
 I D X I Z Y T G T M T A O Y R H I Q W N O N E P  
 E C T D R A F T C Q R N O T N G Q G H H N G J A  
 W P L E O R L U F T B U O D V C L K I A E S P Y  
 L A P C Y J O X R L T F P A L S K Z F Y L O V B  
 D Z A N Y H F W H D Y V Y W G B Y K X P Y M A A  
 R C G L W A Q T H I T P S H Y S S D V Y J E N C  
 O H F N Q X X H B M F R U T O C E F K F U T X K  
 A L Y I O O A Y D K J E O M A N R Z P S M H D K  
 I S X R X T F M A I U U L S N D T B D U D I O H  
 E V H H E T U A E D X H A Q T D R N I O V N N A  
 A O Q L N P D Q Y J V Q E C C X F O K C W G U L  
 Y N E F V N D H T S P O J G E B N I F D X P P H

fear of losing something

resentful

rejected

worried

lonely

shy

wanting something

doubtful

jealousy

greedy

hate

uncertainty

disliked

payback

scared

envy

## Special Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Holy Spirit, true God, with your peace that surpasses all wisdom and understanding, comfort us your servants, by accepting our supplications. Through your benediction, blot out our transgressions worthy of dreadful punishment. Expiate and hear us, remit and forgive our sins. Make us worthy to thankfully glorify you, together with the Father and the Only-begotten Son, now and always and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Խաղաղութեամբ քով Յոգիդ Սուրբ Աստուած ճշմարիտ, որ ի վեր է քան զամենայն միտս եւ զխորհուրդս, մխիթարեա զանձինս ծառայից քոց, ընդունելով զաղաչանս մեր. անցո ի մէջ զցասումն պատուհասի յանցանաց մերոց բարերարութեամբ քով: Ներեա եւ լուր մեզ, քաւեա եւ թող զմեղս մեր, արժանաւորեա գոհութեամբ փառաւորել զքեզ ընդ Յօր եւ ընդ Որդւոյն Միածնի, այժմ եւ միշտ եւ յաիտեանս յաիտենից: Ամէն:

Khaghaghootyamp kov Hokeet Soorp Asdvadz jshmareed, vor ee ver eh kan zamenayn meedus yev uzkhorthoortus, mukheetarya zantseenus dzarayeets kots, untoonelov zaghachanus mer. Antso ee mench uzsaoomun badoohasee hantsanats merots parerarootyamp kov. Nerya yv loor mez, kavya yev togh uzmeghus mer, arjhanavorya kohootyamp paravoreyl uzkez unt Hor yev unt Vortvoyn Meeadznee, ayjhm yev meeshd yev haveedyanus haveedeneets. Amen.

## Review

### Memory Verse Review:

“Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant.”(1 Corinthians 13:4)

### Words of the Week:

նախանձ - nakh-ants - envy

թոյն - tooyn - poison

սէր - ser - love

## Life Application

*What are we going to do with what we have learned today?*

- **Stop and pray immediately:** “Lord, thank You for blessing them. Help me to be genuinely happy for them.”
- **Find one thing to genuinely compliment** about the person you’re tempted to envy.
- **Thank God for three blessings in your own life** that you might be taking for granted.
- **Ask God to help you see others’ success as opportunities to celebrate His goodness** rather than threats to your own worth.

## Lesson Review:

### Questions:

1. What is envy? (*Envy is resenting the blessings of others and wishing they didn't have what God gave them*)
2. Who committed the first murder because of envy? (*Cain killed his brother Abel because God accepted Abel's offering but not his own*)
3. How does envy destroy our ability to love? (*Envy makes us unable to rejoice when others are blessed and turns us into competitors instead of friends*)
4. What does the Bible mean when it says "envy rots the bones"? (*Envy destroys us from within, making us spiritually sick and unable to receive God's joy and peace*)
5. What is the opposite of envy according to St. Paul? (*Love - which "does not envy" but rejoices when others are blessed*)
6. What can we do when we feel envy starting to grow in our hearts? (*Immediately pray for the person we envy, thank God for blessing them, and ask God to help us be grateful for our own blessings*)

\* *Departing Prayer, written by St. Nersess the Grace-filled (Shnorhali).*

### Close with prayer:

Պահապան ամենայնի Քրիստոս, աջ Քո հովանի լիցի ի վերայ իմ, ի տուէ եւ ի գիշերի, ի նստիլ ի տան, ի գնալ ի ճանապարհ, ի ննջել եւ ի յառնել, զի մի երբեք սասանեցայց եւ ողորմեա՛ Քո արարածոց եւ ինձ բազմամեղիս: Ամէն

Bahaban amenayn Kreesdos, ach Ko hovanee leetsee ee vera eem; ee dveh yev ee keesher-ee, ee nsdeel ee dan, ee knal ee janabarh, ee nunchel yev ee harnel, zee mee yerpek sa-sanetsayts yev voghormya Ko araradzots yev eents pazmamyghees. Amen.

O Christ, guardian of all, let Your right hand guard and shelter me, by day and by night, at home and abroad, in sleeping and in waking, that I may never stumble. Have mercy upon Your creatures and upon me, a great sinner. Amen.