

## MAIN POINT

*Envy and unforgiveness are especially dangerous toxic thoughts that have profound effects on us and our relationships with God and others. The gospel frees us from this.*

## INTRODUCTION

Have you or someone you know ever experienced food poisoning? What physical and emotional affects did the poisoned food have?

Depending on the type of contamination, food poisoning often has fast and powerful affects on our bodies. Without going into details, there is no denying that our bodies want nothing to do with things like E. Coli or Salmonella. Our bodies treat them like the toxins they are and work hard to remove them rapidly. Just as there are physical toxins that harm us, there are mental ones. This week, we're talking about the effects that thoughts of envy and unforgiveness have on us, our relationship with the Lord, and with others.

## DISCUSSION

### > READ EXODUS 20:17.

Envy is resentful desire for what someone else has or is. Think of it as the longing and resentment we've all felt for someone else's car, health, financial stability, job, marriage, and so on. What would you say you are most prone to envy in another person?

How toxic is envy? How do you rank envy compared to other sins in terms of seriousness and potential consequences? Why?

When we are envious of another, what does that envy reveal about what we believe about God?

### > READ HEBREWS 12:14-15.

What is one of the worst things you have done to another person that required an apology? How long a period of time elapsed between the time of the grievance and the apology? How bitter were you? How bitter were they? How hard was it to apologize? What effect did forgiveness have on the relationship?

Why is the analogy of a root helpful in diagnosing how bitterness extends in our lives? What do you need to do to nurture the roots of a plant? How is bitterness nurtured in our hearts?

## APPLICATION

Who is one person you are tempted to be envious of whom you can actively pray for this week? Why might doing so guard you against envy?

In your mind's eye, envision the moment when someone sinned against you in such a way that forgiving him or her has seemed impossible. Describe what you hope it would feel like on the other side of forgiving that person. Is there someone with whom this needs to happen this week?