

### Changing the envious heart

The Apostle Peter speaks of getting rid of envy in 1 Pet. 2:1 and he does so in the context of his discussion of the New Birth. Holiness begins with a holy birth. Self-centeredness which gives rise to envy can only be overcome by a supernatural intervention. Through the provision of redemption and through the "precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect" the believer can overcome envy. All past offenses are forgiven and the enablement to live for God's glory rather than selfish goals is imparted.

It is possible that a person could attain a position of spiritual leadership without being spiritually reborn. Such a person is bound to be on a different wave-length than those who truly know the Lord, and this is bound to cause conflict. Not a few people have experienced the joy of coming to know Christ as Lord and Savior after beginning their ministry.

Peter admonishes those who have been born again to rid themselves of "all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, jealousy, and slander of every kind," (1 Pet. 2:1). As has been so ably pointed out in the writings of Dr. Jay E. Adams, the growth process in Christian experience involves putting off the old and putting on the new. Here the focus is on those sins which divide those who ought to be living in harmony.

Peter has already shown that the new life gives us a love for other believers (vs. 22, chapter 1). He encourages believers to "love one another deeply, with all your hearts. . .for you have been born again. . ." (vs. 22b, 23a). He makes clear that the love given must