

Sermon Study Guide



Issues of the Heart #2: RIVALRY

June 13, 2021 | Dr. Stephen G. Tan

In this 3-part sermon series, we look into the book of Obadiah to see how catastrophic the consequences can be when issues of the heart aren't dealt with.

Reflect

What makes people compete with one another? What makes *you* compete with others?

Read and Discuss

Scripture

Obadiah 10-14

Discussion Questions

1. A little bit of rivalry is all good and fun, but when it becomes an issue of the heart it leads to disaster. It is an attitude that says "I am better than you, I deserve to be better than you. I will always be better than you, and I will do anything to ensure that I am better than you." This is the kind of attitude that the Edomites had and so they were judged by God. How do sinful rivalries manifest themselves in our world nowadays? Why is this kind of attitude sinful and destructive to the heart?
2. Read Obadiah 10-14. What do these verses tell you of Edom's second sin against God (v. 10)? How did they treat the descendants of Jacob? In your time now, why do rivalries between family members arise?
3. This heart issue of rivalry developed into three outward wrongs which are the basis of God's condemnation against the Edomites, which should serve as a warning to you in order not to experience the same tragic consequence.
 - a. **Rivalry results in taking the wrong side (v. 11).** How did the Edomites show that they were better than the Israelites and couldn't be on the same side as them? How does rivalry cause you to take the wrong side, even though you know what is right? Could you give examples of how it happens? How should Christians handle this issue of the heart in relation to other Christians and churches (Romans 12:15-16a)? How do you

feel when God blesses you? How should you feel when God blesses other Christians?

- b. **Rivalry results in wrong attitudes (v. 12).** What did the prophet Obadiah point out to Edom regarding their attitude that they should have not done against the Israelites? Do you cheer for people who succeed or try to bring down those who try to pull ahead (i.e. crab mentality)? Give examples of how people have the crab mentality or an attitude of "if I can't have it, neither can you." As a Christian, how should you deal with this sin? How should Christians work together to influence the world for Jesus Christ?
- c. **Rivalry results in sinful actions (v. 13-14).** Because of wrong attitudes which came from a heart of rivalry, what sinful actions did Edom do against the Israelites? In the Christian life, how are sinful actions being expressed from the heart in very subtle ways? What does Luke 6:27-36 say should be your response to other Christians and even to your enemies to show Christian love instead of pushing others down?

Respond

In Walk: If you have this problem of rivalry in your heart, ask God to help you to identify and eradicate it because it may result in you taking the wrong side, which may result in you cultivating wrong attitudes, and taking sinful action. Would you examine your heart and ask God to forgive you and to eradicate those rivalries in your heart?

In Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank You for the lessons from Your Word. Lord, help me not to entertain and cultivate rivalries in my heart because it will just lead me to sinful actions. Help me focus on being a blessing to my brothers and sisters in the faith, and even to my "enemies" as well. This is how I can make an impact in the world around me. Thank You that with your help, it can be done. I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.