

Danger of Comparisons
Lesson 2– Overcoming Jealousy and Envy
June 7, 2015

Key starter questions for today's lesson:

1. Do you have hidden feelings of inferiority that originate from comparing?
2. Do you have an insatiable desire for success?
3. Do you need a lot of recognition for your achievements?
4. Do you tend to be status conscious?
5. Do you find it hard to pay compliments to others?
6. Can you truly share in the success of another successful person?
7. Do you base your self-image on your performance?

If you answered yes to some of these questions, you may be having trouble with envy, even though it is so difficult to recognize or personally accept.

Our goal in this lesson is to try and understand better what drives our envy and jealousy so that we can be better equipped spiritually to grow past this sinful behavior.

A. Scriptures for Lesson:

Galatians 5:16-21

16 So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. 17 For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. 19 The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; 20 idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions 21 and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

1 Peter 1:1-2

1 Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. 2 Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, 3 now that you have tasted that the Lord is good

Galatians 5:24-26

24 Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. 26 Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other

B. Steps to Eliminate Envy and Jealousy:

1. Recognize that we are envious or jealous

- Acknowledging our envy means looking at ourselves honestly. [Galatians 5:16-21](#) tells us that envy is a product of our sinful human nature. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you whether your ulterior motives are for selfish gain or to achieve status in other people's eyes.

2. Choose with Your Will to Get Rid of It

- Harboring envy keeps us from hungering for God's Word, and God's Word is vital for us to continue to grow spiritually. ([1 Pet. 2:1-2](#)).

- [Galatians 5:26](#) says envy will also keep us from living the Spirit-controlled life God wants for His children. It's a deadly deterrent to spiritual growth. By making a choice, then asking God to empower us, we use His power to overcome envy or jealousy. With His help, we can do it.

3. Confess It As Sin and Accept Forgiveness

- God promises to forgive and cleanse us from all sin if we agree with Him that what we are doing is sin. Only when we recognize the problem will we begin to allow God to change us.

4. Accept Yourself As You Are with gratitude

- Thank God every day that you are just the person He created you to be. Thank Him that He chose you to be His own. Thank Him for your face and figure, your health, your abilities, your family, your job, your bank account, your friends. Thank Him for the spiritual gifts that make you necessary to the body of believers. Opposite of comparing.

5. Learn the Joy of Giving to Others

- Envy is rooted in selfishness. It's only concerned with satisfying the cravings of the envious person. When we share our material possessions, praise the success of others, and encourage others in reaching their goals, serve others; we will begin to experience the joy that comes from giving.

6. Keep Earthly Achievements in Eternal Perspective

- The body we spend so much money on will return to dust. The wardrobe, the beautiful home, the bank account, the advanced degree, the recognition—all those things that we give our lives to are going to remain on Planet Earth long after we've departed.
- There is nothing wrong with possessions and desiring nice things in and of itself. The issue is one of desire, drive and purpose. Driving ourselves to be the best we can for achievement is not a sin by itself, but what we make and do with it!

7. Set Your Heart on Heavenly Things

- When we trusted Jesus Christ, we received a new nature. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.
- It's God's intention that our hearts and minds ought to be focused on new goals, and that our conduct should be controlled by new standards. Follow the Spirit's leading for our own lives and choose to be grateful for everything God does for us. This will ultimately be the way envy is routed out of our hearts.

C. Questions for Small Group Discussion:

1. In what specific ways or enlightening has God revealed to you about your envy or jealousy? Why is it so hard for us to recognize this in our own life, but so easy to see it in others?
2. Why must we make a conscious decision of will to hope to begin to limit the impact and effects of envy on our lives?
3. Do you have either personal or events with friends where the success of others was not handled well and you or others were not treated well because of envy surrounding that event?
 - a. Discuss how the situations were actually created from comparisons and envy
4. Discuss in 1 Peter 1 how envy is compared to spiritual immaturity? What does this imply about our lack of spiritual growth if we are portraying spiritual growth? Do we truly live life by this scripture and believe it?
5. Do you have any specific examples or quick testimonials of how comparisons driven by envy negatively impacted your Life?
6. Discuss how envy or jealousy creates a feeling of inferiority? How will this sin potentially lead to a problem with our self-image and mental health?