

Danger of Comparisons

Lesson 1– Dangers of Comparison Leading to Envy and Jealousy

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Key starter questions for our new series:

- Are you constantly dogged by comparisons that make you feel inadequate or inferior?
- Do others always seem to be smarter, prettier, more talented than you?
- Do we end up developing negative mindsets or self-perception from our comparisons?
- Are we consumed with competition and comparison? Do you always have the need to “win” or be better?
- Do you sometimes ask yourself “What’s wrong with me”?

Our goal in this series is to spotlight what God says about comparisons, what they are based on and how deadly this can be to our spirituality, wellbeing and overall health.

A. Scriptures for Lesson:

2 Corinthians 12:13

12 We do not dare to classify or compare ourselves with some who commend themselves. When they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are not wise. 13 We, however, will not boast beyond proper limits, but will confine our boasting to the sphere of service God himself has assigned to us, a sphere that also includes you.

Galatians 1:10

10 For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ.

Galatians 6:4

4 Let everyone be sure to do his very best, for then he will have the personal satisfaction of work done well and won't need to compare himself with someone else”.

B. Dangers of Comparisons Leading to Envy and Jealousy:

Jealousy and envy are emotions we all feel from time to time. If they are allowed to become dominant in our lives, they change our perspectives, keep us from realizing God’s purpose in our lives and possibly lead us into destructive behavior. Jealousy and envy impede or destroy our growth to spiritual maturity.

While sometimes the *jealousy* and *envy* are interchangeably used, there is a difference. Jealousy can be used in a good sense. Its root is *zelos*, the same word from which we also get *zeal*, or *zealous*. When the word is applied to God, saying He is a jealous God means He demands that we worship and love Him exclusively.

In a bad sense, jealousy is a fear of being displaced by a rival in affection or favor. To be jealous is to be anxiously suspicious or vigilant. [Proverb 27:4](#) says, "Anger is cruel and fury overwhelming, but who can stand before jealousy?" The implication of this Scripture is that jealousy is hidden. It corrupts our motives, thoughts, and actions.

While jealousy can be positive, envy, on the other hand, always has a bad meaning. Envy is defined as "a feeling of discontent and resentment aroused by another's desirable possessions or qualities, accompanied by a

strong desire to have them for oneself." Scripture reminds us, "A heart at peace gives life to the body, but envy rots the bones" ([Prov. 14:30](#))

These constant comparisons can create lingering feelings of inadequacy, insecurity and literally torment yourself with questions about yourself.

This tells me that all I have to do is concentrate on doing my personal best--in whatever work I do, or whatever role I'm in--and I can feel secure and satisfied knowing that God is pleased with me, and I don't need to compare myself with anyone else.

If we will concentrate on becoming who GOD created us to be--instead of who we think we ought to be, or who someone else wants us to be--we will experience a sense of peace and security that will enable us to resist focusing on what those around us are doing. You are unique! And God is fitting you for a purpose like no one else's.

A. Questions for Small Group Discussion:

1. Discuss how Comparisons are the basis or beginning of Envy
2. Can a person be happy and content if they are consumed or driven by envy?
3. Why is it so difficult to admit we struggle with envy?
4. What does God say in His Word about the way to change our sinful desire of envy or comparison?
5. Discuss the difference between Satisfaction/Contentment verses Comparison/Envy
6. What Spiritual items allow you to focus on your purpose instead of looking at other people?