



Liking Jesus Leader Guide Session 1: Recovering Contentment

Video Notes:

The more we compare, the less satisfied we are.

One social media, everybody else's life looks perfect. They're showing us the highlight reels, and we're comparing it with our behind-the-scenes.

More than one third of students felt significantly worse after spending time on Facebook. The number one emotion they felt was envy.

Chuck Swindoll: "Life is 10 percent what happens to you, and 90 percent how you respond." For so many of us, it is the exact opposite. It's all about what happens to us, and we forget that our response has and real value at all.

Here are three ways we can respond when we are tempted to compare and be envious:

1. *We will kill comparisons.*

"But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. Such 'wisdom' does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice."
(James 3:14-16)

2. *We will celebrate other people's blessings.*

"Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn."
(Romans 12:15)

3. *We will cultivate gratitude.*

Envy is resenting God's goodness in other people's lives and ignoring his goodness in your own.

"Enjoy what you have rather than desiring what you don't have. Just dreaming about nice things is meaningless – like chasing the wind"
(Ecclesiastes 6:9 NLT)

"I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all this through him who gives me strength" (Philippians 4:12-13)

When Christ is all you have, you'll recognize that Christ is all you need.

Group Discussion:

Take time to talk about what you just watched.

Journey CHURCH

Pastor James Greer

James@jcpineville.com

www.jcpineville.com



1. What part of the teaching had the most impact on you?

Living in a Selfie-Centered World

2. At the beginning of the video, Craig described how social media often leads us to compare our behind-the-scenes with everyone else's highlight reel. On Instagram, he saw friends attending a conference he wished he could attend, hanging out with people he wished he knew, vacationing in places he wished he could be. When he compared where his friends were with where he was – stuck in his office – he felt discontent and bad about himself.
 - Briefly describe a recent “highlight reel” you came across. How did it compare to your “behind-the-scenes”? What response did it prompt in you? For example: discontent, gratitude, envy, happiness, etc.
 - Consider your own social media highlight reels. If someone you didn't know were to look at your several posts on social media, would they be more likely to get the impression that your life is better than it really is, worse than it really is, or pretty close to how it actually is? Describe any examples that illustrate your response. (and no, you may not use your phone to illustrate your response!)
 - Aside from social media, what else tends to triggers discontent or envy in you? For example: when someone you know gets a new car/gadget/outfit, has a great marriage or romantic relationship, has more favorable life circumstances, etc. In what ways, if any, do these experiences or your response to them differ from those triggered by social media?
3. A selfie-centered world is a world that makes everything about us. But if we want to live in a way that honors Christ – who calls us to die to ourselves and follow him – we have to be different. We have to resist the distractions, habits and temptations that pull us away from loving God and loving others.
 - Consider first how you are affected when a friend or family member uses technology or social media. How does their use of these tools strengthen your relationship or demonstrate their love and care for you? How does their use of these tools weaken your relationship or become a source of tension?

- Now consider how your own use of technology and social media impact your relationships. In what ways are they tools that help you to love God and love others? In what ways are they distractions, habits, or temptations that pull you away from loving God and loving others?

Three Strategies for Battling Envy and Learning Contentment

4. Craig quoted pastor Chuck Swindoll as saying, "Life is 10 percent what happens to you, and 90 percent how you respond." Although we can't always stop the distractions and temptations that bombard us in a selfie-centered world, we can choose how we respond to them. AS time permits, discuss one or more of the three strategies for battling envy; kill comparisons, celebrate other people's blessings, and cultivate gratitude.

Kill Comparison. We need to kill the comparison that lead to envy because they're more serious than most of us realize. The apostle James puts it bluntly:

But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. Such "wisdom" does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.

James 3:14-16

- Based on James's description how would you assess the spiritual threat level envy poses? Choose a number on the scale below and share your response. 1 is envy is harmless and 10 is envy is lethal.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Envy is harmless.									Envy is lethal.
- What similarities or differences are there between how James describes envy and how you have tended to view the threat level in poses in your own life? For example, would you have chosen a smaller or larger number on the scale to describe the level of threat envy poses to you? Why?
- One way to kill comparison is to identify what triggers them and stop doing it. For example, we might hide a person's Facebook posts, unfollow them on Instagram or Twitter, turn off notifications, delete the app, or take a break from social media for a while. Beyond social media, we might throw out the catalogs, stop watching HGTV, cancel the annual trip to the boat show, or remove ourselves from whatever it is that leads to comparison and envy.

If you were to take the spiritual threat level of envy as seriously as James does, what kind of things might you have to stop doing?