

COMPARISON KILLS CONTENTMENT

DATE: SUNDAY, 8TH OF AUGUST 2021 | WINNING THE WAR IN THE MIND SERIES: PART 1

TALK
IT OVER

PHILIPPIANS 4:11-13

I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. 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.

2 CORINTHIANS 10:5

We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

NOTES FOR LEADERS:

- Angus Buchan will be online with us at 09h00 this Sunday. He will be sharing a message of hope for us, our neighbours and our nation.
- Please diarise our next prayer and leaders meeting on the 24th of August.

START TALKING

1. What stood out to you from Sunday's message?
2. If you could switch lives with someone, real or fictional, who would it be and why?

START THINKING

1. Read Philippians 4:11-13. What was Paul's secret to contentment? What do you think contentment looks like in our lives?
2. On Sunday, Jax said that comparison kills contentment. In what ways have you seen this to be true in people around you and in your own life?

START SHARING

1. On a scale of 1-10 (1=not at all, 10=completely), how content are you with your life? Why did you choose that number? What would it take to move that number up?
2. Jax spoke about three things we experience when comparing ourselves to others: pride, envy, and insecurity. What are some specific sources of pride, envy, or insecurity that are robbing you of contentment?
3. We can combat discontentment through gratefulness. What is one thing that God has blessed you with that you are grateful for today?

START PRAYING

Father God, teach us to be content with who we are, what we have, and where you are leading us. Help us notice the 'Wow God' moments every day and be thankful for all that you have blessed us with.

START DOING

One of the weapons we can use in fighting the battle against comparison is noticing the 'Wow God' factor.

Over the next week, make a daily note of where you saw the 'Wow God' factor:

1. In your life.
2. In others.
3. In yourself.

SUMMARY

OF SUNDAY'S MESSAGE

Over the next few weeks, we will be looking at what goes on in our thoughts and minds. There is so much research about how powerful our minds are and their important role in our lives. And as always, the Bible speaks right into this subject and gives us some great tools on how to win the battles that go on in our minds.

What we think about is so important because it impacts the way we live and what we do. This Sunday, Jax Wimble looked at the battle of Comparison.

How much time do we spend thinking about and comparing ourselves to others? There is not a single person who can confidently say that they don't fight the battle of comparison. Even if we don't spend a lot of time comparing ourselves to others, we still have to handle those moments when we get compared to others by other people.

Parents sometimes compare their children to each other. Sometimes children compare their parents to other parents. Social media is another great contributor to the comparison battle! People can look happier, richer and thinner depending on what they post and what we see. And if we don't struggle with comparing ourselves, what about our stuff? (Our cars, our homes, our schools....)

One of the biggest problems with comparison is that it kills contentment in our lives!

I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. 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. Philippians 4:10-11.

Have we learned the secret of being content? The levels of contentment in our lives is directly related to how we deal with comparison!

What happens when we compare ourselves to others?

1. We become proud

Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.' Luke 18:10-12

"Pride gets no pleasure out of having something, only out of having more of it than the next man... It is the comparison that makes you proud: the pleasure of being above the rest. Once the element of competition is gone, pride is gone." CS Lewis.

Pride can lead us into unhealthy competition with others, striving. Pride makes us feel better than others.

We aren't called to be like other Christ-followers; we are called to be like Christ.

2. We become envious

Looking at the lives of others and feeling it's unfair or that we deserve better. Envy gets us nowhere. We're robbed of the joy of being with people when we're envious of them.

3. We feel insecure

Comparison can leave us feeling unsure about who we are and what we are meant to be doing. It leads to an unhealthy sense of competition or striving to impress or have or be something we are not.

Comparison kills contentment, and it cripples us. It stops us from living the life that God intended for us to live. It stops us from trying new things and enjoying all the good things we have all around us.

How do we win the battle against 'comparison' in our minds?

We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. 2 Corinthians 10:5.

Martin Luther said, "You cannot keep birds from flying over your head, but you can keep them from building a nest in your hair."

The 'WOW God' factor: There are 'wow God' factors all around us, e.g. a beautiful sunrise. We need God's help to see them and appreciate them. When we remind ourselves of the wow factor, we're less inclined to lean towards pride, envy and insecurity.

1. Recognise the 'wow God' factor in our lives.
2. Recognise the 'wow God' factor in others.
3. Recognise the 'WOW God' factors in ourselves.

For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. Ephesians 2:10.

When we compare ourselves to others and try and be something other than who God created us to be, we insult our creative God who made us. Contentment is accepting who God wants us to be and not who we wish we were.

When we know who we are and we understand the 'wow God' factors of how we have been uniquely crafted and created, then we also know who we don't have to be!

The battle of comparison is one worth fighting. With God's help and revelation of Him and who he's created us to be, we can win this battle in our minds. We go from comparison to contentment when we recognize that every good thing comes from Him.