

4.28.24

PEOPLING

The Problem with Envy

“Envy is the pain we feel at the sight of another's good fortune.”

Aristotle

“Envy is one of the most potent causes of unhappiness.”

Bertrand Russell

“One reason why so many people are unhappy, not knowing why, is that they have burdened their minds with **resentments** (envy). These evil thoughts pile right on top of happier and generous ones and smother them so that they never get expression”.

George Matthew Adams

Envy a feeling of

discontent stirred by someone else's possessions, qualities or circumstances

“Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.” 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 (NIV)

Characteristics/Actions That Build Up Relationships

- Patience
- Kindness
- Trusting
- Glad when truth wins out
- Hope
- Perseverance
- Protective/Care

Characteristics/Actions That Tear Down Relationships

- Envious
- Prideful
- Boastful
- Selfish
- Short Tempered
- Resentful
- Disrespectful
- Pleased when others are put in their place

I. The Sneaky Damage Envy Does to Relationships

1. Envy stirs up **conflict** in relationships.

“What is causing the quarrels and fights among you? Don't they come from the evil desires at war within you? You want what you don't have, so you scheme and kill to get it. You are jealous of what others have, but you can't get it, so you fight and wage war to take it away from them. Yet you don't have what you want because you don't ask God for it.”

James 4:1-2 (NLT)

2. Envy kindles bitterness and hatred in relationships.

“At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another. But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy...” Titus 3:3-5 (NIV)

“For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.” James 3:16 (NIV)

3. Envy makes us miserable and unhealthy.

“A heart at peace gives life to the body, but envy rots the bones.” Proverbs 14:30 (NIV)

II. How to Get Rid of Envy

1. Stop comparing ourselves with others.

“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.” 2 Corinthians 10:12 (NIV)

2. Start seeing myself as God sees me.

***Insecurity produces envy.**

“See how very much our Father loves us, for He calls us his children, and that is what we are!” 1 John 3:1a (NLT)

3. Be content with what I have.

“...for I have learned how to be content with whatever I have. I know how to live on almost nothing or with everything. I have learned the secret of living in every situation, whether it is with a full stomach or empty, with plenty or little. For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.” Philippians 4:11-13 (NLT)

4. Focus on loving God and loving people.

“Bless those who persecute you. Don’t curse them; pray that God will bless them.

Be happy with those who are happy, and weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with each other. Don’t be too proud to enjoy the company of ordinary people. And don’t think you know it all!” Romans 12:14-16 (NLT)

Envy rejoices when other people have a bad time and weeps when other people are blessed.

“Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.” Romans 12:2 (NIV)

“Don’t let the world around you squeeze you into its own mould, but let God re-mould your minds from within, so that you may prove in practice that the plan of God for you is good, meets all His demands and moves towards the goal of true maturity.” Romans 12:2 (J.B. Phillips NT)

Keep the Conversation Going...

1. Have you ever been envious of a friend? How did that affect your relationship?
2. What things have made you envious of others? Example: Social media, conversations, etc.
3. Read 1 John 3:1, John 3:16, and Romans 5:8. How should we view our envy of others considering how God feels about us?