

# ***MONSTERS***

**Study Guide**

**Comparison**

You turn on social media and with a few seconds of scrolling you see so much. Other people putting pictures of their life out there for everyone to see. First are wedding photos. The Bride and groom look so happy. They look like they're such a good match for each other as they smile with unmatched joy at the camera. They look into each others eyes and you see the stuff movies are made of right in front of you. The dress, the suit, the venue, the moment. It's so beautiful. You wish your wedding pictures came out that well. You wish you and your spouse still looked at each other that way.. you see that photo and you wish. The caption reminds you #blessed #happilyeverafter.

The next few pictures and you see an old friend. They've lost a lot of weight lately from spending so much time at the gym. You're happy for them. They look so much better. So much healthier. You admire them in a way. The discipline it must have taken and the effort they must have put in for that kind of transformation. It's pretty admirable. You've watched the transformation over the last few months too, so you know this is the real deal. They worked for it and made it happen. You've tried. You've gotten the plans, joined the gym, ran on a treadmill, but you've never been able to do it. Your goals always seem to fall flat in the face of a plate of cookies brought into work by a coworker with a clearly higher metabolism than yourself. You see their progress, you see their victory, you see their transformation and have to think what's wrong with you. Why can't you have that kind of resolve? Why can't you be that determined? Why did God have to bless you with such a crappy metabolism that simply looks at Little Debbie Christmas cake and gains 2 pounds. You scroll their photos and again that hashtag to rub it in #nocheatdays #goals. #youcantoo

Before you give up on your social media break and move on you scroll one more time only to stop on that one friend. You like them and they're a good person, but you see their lifestyle and it's pretty lavish. You are still sitting at work, trying your best to get ahead they are on a beach somewhere or a boat someplace where it's warm enough to swim and relax. You went on a brief camping trip for vacation last year because it was more fiscally responsible and you can see that they have again taken the kids and the dog and went across the world to stay in a hotel that cost more than your mortgage. And as you wonder what career change you could have made and didn't your mind begins wondering why you don't get those things. You don't need stupid elaborate wealth but even a little tick up the preverbal ladder would help a lot. You want those vacations, you want the new phones, you want the nice cars or the fancy house but you can't afford any of those let alone all of them. As you wonder why you don't have it and how come they get it you're haunted by the hashtag #blessed #thegoodlife #gotitflauntit

We've all fallen victim to the comparison trap. We see someone else's life, someone else's marriage, stuff, or selfies and wonder why we don't feel like we measure up. This week we're going to look at what happens when we begin comparing ourselves. We're going to look at how it not only can make us envy and hurt because of what we don't have, but can cause us to lose appreciation for everything we DO have.

**“The cure for the sin of envy and jealousy is to find our contentment in God.”**

**Jerry Bridges**

Proverbs 23:17-18

**Don't compare yourself to others.**

**“Let not your heart envy sinners,”**

Your perception and their reality are not the same.

Robin Williams, Chester Binnington, Anthony Bourdain.

Galatians 6:4-5 “test his own works...bear his own load”

**Stick with the path God has for you**

***“But continue in the fear of the Lord all the day.”***

The American Dream or Path of God?

Galatians 1:10 “seeking the approval of God or man.”

Psalms 37:5 “Commit your way to the Lord”

**Live like you believe it**

***“Surely there is a future, and your hope will not be cut off.”***

How different would your life, your decisions, and your choices be if you believed this?

Romans 8:31 - If our God is for us, who can stand against us?

You're not missing out, you're exactly where you need to be.

**May you be excited about God's plan for YOU.**

## Reading Plan

Date	Verse	Gospel text	Psalms
Monday	2 Corinthians 10:12	John 7:1-24	Psalms 22
Tuesday	Galatians 1:10	John 7:25-31	Psalms 23
Wednesday	Philippians 2:3	John 7:32-36	Psalms 24
Thursday	Proverbs 14:30	John 7:37-39	Psalms 25
Friday	Galatians 5:26	John 7:40-52	Psalms 26
Saturday	Proverbs 24:19	John 8:1-11	Psalms 27
Sunday	Proverbs 37:7	John 8:12-30	Psalms 28

## Community Group Questions

Read Proverbs 23:17-18

Comparison is a very ugly thing. It makes us hold our life up to the lives of other people. What negative effects can come when we compare ourselves to other people?

What is the “fear of the Lord”?

How can the fear of the Lord help us in our temptation to compare ourselves to others?

Read Psalm 37:5. Why do you think it’s relevant here that we commit our ways to the Lord?

How could God’s promise to have a hope and future for you encourage you to live in his ways and in a comparison to others?

Do you believe that God has a plan for you? Why? And what is part of that plan?

Write your thoughts and reflections on the passage below in the space provided.

1 Corinthians 3:3

Philippians 2:3-4

Galatians 6:4

Ecclesiastes 4:4

Job 5:2

Psalms 73:3

