



Proverbs 27:4

BIG IDEA

Imagine saying 'Yes' to Christ's invitation to walk the journey from envy to gratitude.

ICE BREAKER

When other people are thriving have you ever noticed something inside of you is not thrilled or excited for them? Think of someone's son or daughter getting an award or someone you know getting a new job or a great promotion. Or, think of someone having something you don't: wealth, respect, health, good relationships etc. What helps you celebrate with them and what tends to hinder you from celebrating?

NEXT STEP

When in our life have we been like the older brother in the prodigal son story in Luke 15 and missed out on joy because of our envy?

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When we are envying someone our envy reveals our longing. Typically with envy we are believing a lie much like Adam and Eve when they reached for the fruit from the forbidden tree. They were deceived to believe that they were missing out on satisfaction and they lost contentment. As a group and try to identify some of the lies we can be deceived by in our struggle with envy.
2. Reflect together on how both trusting God and practicing gratitude are the antidote to envy. How can we, as a group, cultivate both in our lives? Consider having the group write down these ideas and then invite each group member to choose an area for the next week as an action step. The next time your group meets check back in to see how each is doing. Consider asking someone in the group to email everyone to both remind members of their action step and to foster

dialogue during the week about progress. Awareness opens the door for the Spirits' work.

3. Spend some time in quiet reflection as a group on Rembrandt's painting of the prodigal son. After taking some time to reflect, share what stirs as you ponder both the beauty of the father with his lost son as well as the brokenness between the older son and his family. Consider praying together coming just as you are into His presence and allowing the Spirit to cultivate the groups' hearts with repentance and gratitude for His acceptance and love.

NOTES AND QUOTES

Proverbs 27:4 "Anger is cruel and fury overwhelming, but who can stand before jealousy? Think of a time you were overwhelmed by someone's anger. Envy has more power. It's relentless. It's driving us.

Eccl 4:4 "...all toil and all skill in work come from a man's envy of his neighbor."

All envy has roots in Gen 3, 4 and the fall. Eve thinks God ripped her off.

Cain kills Abel out of envy.

Matthew 20:20-25 The mother of the sons of Zebedee can't imagine trusting God for her kids' future.

Envy never creates what we think it creates. It always creates more envy.

When we envy those around us they become our competitors.

Jesus replies in Matthew 20, "It shall not be so among you.whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave. ...even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many."

Pride leads to resentment--I diminish you--it's false power, resentment leads to envy/coveting.

Private and public manifestations of envy:

Private: anxiety, disdain, contempt, fantasy revenge, secret delight, suspicion.

Public: gossip, flattery--we complement but it's not sincere, withhold--we won't give someone the satisfaction so we withhold complement, avoid, achievement,--we drive ourselves to achieve out of envy, self-promotion.