

# THE COMPARISON TRAP

## SERMON NOTES

Week 1 February 23, 2025

**"The Land of ER"**

Matthew 27:18, Proverbs 14:30, Ecclesiastes 4:4-8

### I. The Comparison Trap

- A. We tend to live in the land of \_\_\_\_\_. (we want to be funnier, smarter, skinnier, happier, taller, richer etc.)
- B. Sometimes comparison makes us feel like we will never be as good as \_\_\_\_\_.
- C. Sometimes comparison makes us feel \_\_\_\_\_ to others.
- D. There is no \_\_\_\_\_ in comparison.

### II. The Comparison Trap – Wisdom of Solomon

- A. Solomon says that people determine how they are doing based upon what \_\_\_\_\_ else is doing. (Ecclesiastes 4:4)
- B. Solomon says it's better to have \_\_\_\_\_ handful with tranquility. (Ecclesiastes 4:6)
- C. Solomon says that there are people who are never \_\_\_\_\_ with what they have. (Ecclesiastes 4:8).

### III. Moving Forward

- A. What or who am I going to use as my \_\_\_\_\_ point to tell me that I'm doing okay?
- B. If you want to know how you're doing with the \_\_\_\_\_ trap, you should answer the following questions:
  - 1. Are you exhausted trying to keep up with \_\_\_\_\_?
  - 2. Are you broke trying to keep up with \_\_\_\_\_?
  - 3. Are you allowing what others have to keep you from enjoying what you have?
  - 4. Are you allowing what you don't have to keep you from enjoying what you do have?
  - 5. Do you enjoy your kids, or are you driving them crazy because of what everybody else's kids are accomplishing?
  - 6. Is it possible that your husband or wife feels like you're dissatisfied with him or her because of your propensity to compare to other husbands and wives?
  - 7. Who would you secretly enjoy seeing fail?
- C. If you're a Christian, the 'comparison trap' is a profoundly \_\_\_\_\_ issue.

***Things I Would Like to Remember About This Message***



# ASBURY DAILY STUDY GUIDE *Feb. 24 - Mar. 1, 2025*

## INTRODUCTION

We've all heard of a win-win outcome. But we are daily engaging in a lose-lose activity and we may not even realize how destructive it is. Being rich-**er** or smart-**er** or funny-**er** may feel like a short-term win, but for ourselves, our families, and our marriages, comparison is a game with no winners.

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### Monday: Ecclesiastes 4:4-8

How are you doing with the comparison trap? Flip back to the sermon notes and answer questions listed in part IIIB for a quick evaluation. What is one thing you can do this week to allow the thought of tranquility – contentment - to help you pause in the midst of the comparison trap?

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### Tuesday: Psalm 73:1-26

For this psalmist, it was “the prosperity of the wicked” that nearly caused him to give up faith in God. But envy can also strike when we look at other believers (see Mark 10:35- 41). Whose position, possessions or prospects do you envy? When you examine the thoughts behind the envy, do you think they are accurate?

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### Wednesday: 1 Corinthians 12:12-27

Being content with serving as the “body part” you truly are in the body of Christ is the best way to find joy and effectiveness. Usually we do okay in the body of Christ at living out “If one part suffers, every part suffers with it.” We pray for each other and show caring in various ways. What have you experienced as far as “if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it”? How do you feel when someone else is honored, especially if your role feels unseen?

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### Thursday: Psalm 23:1-6

Verse 1 is traditionally translated “I shall not want.” Modern versions say, “I have all I need,” or “I lack nothing.” Since this psalm seems to reflect David’s days as a shepherd, rather than as King of Israel, how do you believe it defines “need”? How often can you honestly say you feel that you have all you need?

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### Friday: 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

Love does not envy, Paul writes. How could it? Love does not delight in evil—but one of envy’s worst qualities is the hidden delight we feel when something bad happens to a person we envy. In which of your day-to-day relationships are you able to live out most of the qualities of love that Paul lists readily and easily? In which relationships is it a struggle to show these qualities, even with gritted teeth? How can God’s love help us to grow in our capacity to love more naturally?

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## MOVING FORWARD

Maybe you’ve racked up debt trying to keep up with your neighbors. Maybe your high expectations drive your spouse or kids crazy. Maybe you have relatives you don’t get along with because you envy what they have and rejoice in their failures. You can’t genuinely love someone whom you secretly hope will fail. You can’t genuinely love someone whom you’re pushing to meet a standard so you can feel better about yourself. There’s no win in comparison. There’s never a finish line or sense of satisfaction.

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*Answers to the sermon notes: IA) ER, B) them, C) superior, D) win. IIA) everyone, B) one, C) content. IIIA) reference, B) comparison, C) spiritual.*