

Evict Envy From Your Life

Sermon by Todd Lester June 15, 2015

Recall: Ephesians 1:4-5, Ephesians 2:10

Exodus 20:17 You must not covet your neighbour's house. You must not covet your neighbour's wife, male or female servant, ox or donkey, or anything else that belongs to your neighbour.

Envy: D_____ others, D_____ relationships, D_____ happiness,
D_____ you from God's purposes for your life

HOW ENVY CAUSES ME TO MISS MY LIFE'S CALLING

1. IT _____ MY UNIQUENESS

Psalms 139:13-16

2. IT _____ MY ATTENTION

Matthew 6:24, Luke 9:62

3. IT _____ MY TIME AND ENERGY

Ecclesiastes 4:4

4. IT _____ EVERY OTHER SIN

James 3:16

HOW TO EVICT ENVY

Jesus' Story of the Vineyard Workers (Matthew 20:1-16)

1. NEVER _____ TO OTHERS

Matthew 20:9-10a, Proverbs 14:30

2. CELEBRATE _____ TO OTHERS

Matthew 20:10-11, 15b, Romans 12:15, 1 Corinthians 13:4 (NKJV)

3. BE GRATEFUL FOR _____ AND _____

1 Corinthians 4:7, Ecclesiastes 6:9

4. TRUST GOD WHEN _____

Matthew 20:12, Matthew 20:13-14, Matthew 20:16

WITTY principle: "W____ I____ T____ T____ Y____?"

My ABC's

You have many interesting qualities and your group would like to know about them! How about 26 ways to describe yourself? Using the entire alphabet or the letters of your name, choose words that describe yourself. You even have some examples! Then go around the group and take turns sharing your answers.

- A is for _____ (active, adventurous, affirming, accountable ...)
B is for _____ (bashful, busy, bored, beautiful, bodacious ...)
C is for _____ (cautious, calm, courageous, conventional ...)
D is for _____ (daring, defiant, devoted, desperate, dizzy ...)
E is for _____ (elegant, enthusiastic, effervescent, envious ...)
F is for _____ (fun, futuristic, food-loving, fast, ferocious ...)
G is for _____ (giddy, gracious, gentle, growing, genuine ...)
H is for _____ (happy, hopeful, hectic, hot-tempered, hip ...)
I is for _____ (inventive, intelligent, industrious, ingenious ...)
J is for _____ (jolly, joyful, jazzy, junk-loving, jumpy ...)
K is for _____ (knowledgeable, keen, keyed-up, kind, kinetic ...)
L is for _____ (loyal, lonely, lovable, loving, lighthearted ...)
M is for _____ (mischievous, mad, musical, mall-loving ...)
N is for _____ (normal, nifty, nocturnal, nappy, nurturing ...)
O is for _____ (optimistic, open, outspoken, odd, opulent ...)
P is for _____ (persistent, passionate, peaceful, patient ...)
Q is for _____ (quiet, quick, quizzical, quintessential ...)
R is for _____ (rambunctious, romantic, real, reflective ...)
S is for _____ (sad, spiritual, super-duper, shy, sensitive ...)
T is for _____ (tall, tough, tender, trendy, tacky, thoughtful ...)
U is for _____ (unstoppable, unhinged, upbeat, uptight ...)
V is for _____ (visionary, vulnerable, vibrant, vintage ...)
W is for _____ (warm, whimsical, wise, weary, worried ...)
X is for _____ (xylophonist, x-ray vision, xenophobic, x-citing ...)
Y is for _____ (young-at-heart, yuppie, yackety, yielding ...)
Z is for _____ (zany, zealous, zestful, zoned-out, zonked ...)

EVICTING ENVY FROM YOUR LIFE

Sermon by Todd Lester June 15, 2015

Icebreaker/Introduction

The 'My ABC's' activity was inspired by Todd's statement that the root of all envy is really insecurity. This exercise will hopefully allow people to focus on many of their positive qualities. Suggestions: rather than concentrating on the list provided on the page, perhaps instruct participants to first just think of words that describe themselves and then they can fill these in on appropriate letter blanks. People will take different amounts of time to complete this so be flexible and don't be afraid to stop and share before every blank is filled. Participants can share a few or all of their describing words.

Recall: Ephesians 1:4-5 (God made you to love you), Ephesians 2:10 (you are God's masterpiece)

Read Exodus 20:17

Ask if there was anything from this week's message that stood out – either a point that was made that really resonated with them, or perhaps a question or difficulty that came up for them.

Do you think that envy is as big an issue with people as Todd asserted? Do you think it's different for Christ-followers?

Todd pointed out that envy is an insidious sin. Why do you think he used that word? Do you think it fits?

What are some things that people envy in others?

Todd said that envy is a universal virus that infects all cultures and age groups. How does it manifest in the different age groups (eg. toddlers, teens, parents, seniors)?

Before discussing 4 'D' words that show how envy causes us to miss our calling, Todd mentioned 4 others. How many can you remember or figure out?

Envy: Devalues others, Damages relationships, Destroys happiness, Distracts you from God's purposes for your life

HOW ENVY CAUSES ME TO MISS MY LIFE'S CALLING

1. IT DENIES MY UNIQUENESS

Focuses on Psalms 139:13-16

Todd pointed out that most of us too often focus on the negative and say to ourselves "I have this disability" but that God can use these for good. Can you share an example of a time when God has used a difficulty in your life for good?

2. IT DIVIDES MY ATTENTION

Focuses on Matthew 6:24, Luke 9:62

Todd emphasized that the scripture in Matthew can be expanded to include more than money – that "you cannot serve God and ____."

How can we balance that idea with Colossians 3:23 (that we can serve God through serving others)?

Todd said that every advertisement uses envy as a marketing tool. Can you think of any that don't?

3. IT DEPLETES MY TIME AND ENERGY

Focuses on Ecclesiastes 4:4

Todd said that every minute you waste focused on someone else's life (eg. Kardashians) is a moment wasted of your own. Why are we so fascinated by the rich and famous?

4. IT DRIVES EVERY OTHER SIN

Focuses on James 3:16

What are some examples from the Bible (Todd mentioned some – Cain & Abel [murder], Joseph & brothers [lying]) or from the news where envy causes people to sin in other ways?

HOW TO EVICT ENVY

Jesus' Story of the Vineyard Workers (read Matthew 20:1-16)

1. NEVER COMPARE MYSELF TO OTHERS

Focuses on Matthew 20:9-10a, Proverbs 14:30

Todd said that Jesus' point in this parable is that we don't all get the same thing, that life is not fair. Do you think that our reaction to this statement (or to this parable) is a gauge of our problem with envy?

2. CELEBRATE GOD'S GOODNESS TO OTHERS

Focuses on Matthew 20:10-11,15b, Romans 12:15, 1 Corinthians 13:4 (NKJV)

Todd said that envy is mean-spirited. Is this always true or can it develop into that? If so, how does that development happen?

3. BE GRATEFUL FOR WHO I AM AND WHAT I HAVE

Focuses on 1 Corinthians 4:7, Ecclesiastes 6:9

Todd pointed out that envy is based on the myth that I must have more in order to be happy, but that 'if you're not happy now, you won't be with more'. Do you agree with that?

Todd stated that envy is not the same as desire or ambition (which are positive qualities). What is the difference? What part does motivation play in these? Can ambition lead to selfishness or envy?

4. TRUST GOD WHEN LIFE SEEMS UNFAIR

Focuses on Matthew 20:12, Matthew 20:13-14, Matthew 20:16

How is envy actually a symptom of doubt? (Todd said that when we envy others we aren't trusting God, not believing that He knows what's best for us, and forgetting that He loves us)

Is it helpful to compare this concept (that life isn't fair but that God loves us) to parenting – ie. that you love all of your children equally but don't/can't treat them exactly the same.

WITTY principle: "What Is That To You?" (basically what Jesus said to those who complained)

Evict Envy From Your Life

Sermon by Todd Lester

June 15, 2015

Ephesians 1:4-5 Even before He made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in His eyes. God decided in advance to adopt us into His own family by bringing us to Himself through Jesus Christ. This is what He wanted to do, and it gave Him great pleasure.

Ephesians 2:10 For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things He planned for us long ago.

Exodus 20:17 You must not covet your neighbour's house. You must not covet your neighbour's wife, male or female servant, ox or donkey, or anything else that belongs to your neighbour.

Envy: Devalues others, Damages relationships, Destroys happiness,
Distracts you from God's purposes for your life

HOW ENVY CAUSES ME TO MISS MY LIFE'S CALLING

1. IT DENIES MY UNIQUENESS

Psalm 139:13-16 You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb... You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed.

2. IT DIVIDES MY ATTENTION

Matthew 6:24 No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.

Luke 9:62 But Jesus told him, "Anyone who puts a hand to the plow and then looks back is not fit for the Kingdom of God."

3. IT DEPLETES MY TIME AND ENERGY

Ecclesiastes 4:4 Then I observed that most people are motivated to success because they envy their neighbours. But this, too, is meaningless—like chasing the wind.

4. IT DRIVES EVERY OTHER SIN

James 3:16 For wherever there is jealousy and selfish ambition, there you will find disorder and evil of every kind.

HOW TO EVICT ENVY

Jesus' Story of the Vineyard Workers (Matthew 20:1-16)

1. NEVER COMPARE MYSELF TO OTHERS

Matthew 20:9-10a When those hired at five o'clock were paid, each received a full day's wage. When those hired first came to get their pay, they assumed they would receive more...

Proverbs 14:30 A peaceful heart leads to a healthy body; jealousy is like cancer in the bones.

2. CELEBRATE GOD'S GOODNESS TO OTHERS

Matthew 20:10-11,15b When those hired first came to get their pay, they assumed they would receive more. But they, too, were paid a day's wage. When they received their pay, they protested to the owner ... He answered ... "Should you be jealous because I am kind to others?"

Romans 12:15 Be happy with those who are happy, and weep with those who weep.

1 Corinthians 13:4 (NKJV) Love does not envy.

3. BE GRATEFUL FOR WHO I AM AND WHAT I HAVE

1 Corinthians 4:7 What do you have that God hasn't given you? And if everything you have is from God, why boast as though it were not a gift?

Ecclesiastes 6:9 Enjoy what you have rather than desiring what you don't have. Just dreaming about nice things is meaningless—like chasing the wind.

4. TRUST GOD WHEN LIFE SEEMS UNFAIR

Matthew 20:12 Those people worked only one hour, and yet you've paid them just as much as you paid us who worked all day in the scorching heat.

Matthew 20:13-14 He answered one of them, "Friend, I haven't been unfair! Didn't you agree to work all day for the usual wage? Take your money and go. I wanted to pay this last worker the same as you."

Matthew 20:16 So those who are last now will be first then, and those who are first will be last.

WITTY principle: "What Is That To You?"