

From Pastor Ed: The 21 Day Wesley Challenge

This is day 15! The beginning of the last week of the challenge...stay with it!

Did you attend OT following worship? How did it go?

Next Sunday will be the LAST OT for this process...Our hope is that there will be the formation of some small groups that will keep going!

Day Fifteen Question Fifteen

Do I thank God that I am not like others?

Colossians 3:12, Luke 18:9-14

We can draw many insights from Jesus' story in Luke 18. Chief among them is this: we are not to compare ourselves to others. Comparing our situation to others' is not healthy. Whether thanking God for not being like others, or wishing God would give us what others have, we are discrediting God. We need to come before God in a similar spirit as the tax collector in Jesus' story.

- To whom do you most often compare yourself? Is there one particular person, or group of people, that most often draw this tendency out in you? Why is that the case? When you compare yourself to others, are you more likely to find yourself lacking in some way, or do you tend more to feel superior and grateful that you are not like them?
- Identify the "triggers" for the times you compare yourself to others. Perhaps certain contacts' Facebook posts leave you feeling somewhat self-satisfied, or conversely feeling inferior to them. Perhaps a club you're involved in causes you to feel "less than" others in some way. Remove these triggers from your life for a period of time, and assess the result. Does not comparing yourself to others impoverish your life, or make it better?

Prayer: God, teach me to see others as you see them—through a lens of love, compassion and mercy. I pray that I might always remember that we are all lost without you. Amen.

Day 15 devotional 15: (Thanks to Pastor Rick Warren)

"Let everyone be sure to do his very best, for then he will have the personal satisfaction of work done well and won't need to compare himself with someone else." (Galatians 6:4 LB)

Truth be told, you cannot be happy and envious at the same time. In fact, one of the greatest secrets of having happiness in your life is learning how to eliminate envy. Just acknowledging that you struggle with envy can be painful, but it is the first step toward a change of values and a more mature spiritual life.

God says the way you change envy is by changing your perspective. While you may not be able to completely change the feelings that cause envy, you *can* change the way you look at things, and that will eliminate envy from your life.

To change your perspective, the first thing you have to do is stop comparing yourself to others. The Bible says satisfaction comes from doing your best, not comparing yourself to others: “Let everyone be sure to do his very best, for then he will have the personal satisfaction of work done well and won’t need to compare himself with someone else” (Galatians 6:4 LB).

Take an envy self-examination. Do you compare your life, your home, your husband, your kids — even your lawn — to other people’s? This exam may reveal some surprises and show you that there are more important things to do than compare yourself or what you have to others.

When you strive to be the person God made you to be, you’ll find real meaning, purpose, fulfillment, and satisfaction. You can’t focus on *your* purpose while looking at other people.