



High school students constantly compare themselves to others.

And if they don't do it themselves, someone else is happy to point out how they are different, better, or not as good as their peers.

It's overwhelming for students who feel like the world is pointing out their flaws or comparing them to everyone else – it can make them feel like they never measure up.

Students need to know they can find peace and contentment in how God views them – He loves them just the way they are!

Use this youth group lesson to remind students – don't compare yourself to others, instead choose to be content.

– *Nick Dilberto, Ministry to Youth*

YOUTH GROUP LESSON ON COMPARISON

Bible: Philippians 4:10-13

Bottom line: Don't compare yourself to others, instead choose to be content.

SUPPLIES

- 2 Large bags of wrapped candy
- Blindfolds (one per student)

OPENING ACTIVITY: CANDY STEAL

GAME PREP

Play this game in a large room or gym.

Divide the space into two halves and the students into two teams of equal size.

Empty the bags of wrapped candy and place the contents of each bag on opposite ends of the dividing line or opposite walls.

Have teams stand near the candy on opposite walls.

Make sure all the students are wearing a blindfold.

Option: Instead of using blindfolds, have the students walk on their knees.

HOW TO PLAY THE GAME

Say: When I say GO, I want you to go to the opposing team's side, try to steal their wrapped candy, and bring it back to your team's side.

You can only grab one piece of candy at a time.

After 4 minutes we will stop and whichever team has the most candy wins the game.

There is no running allowed and be sure to have your hands out in front of you, so you don't run into anyone or a wall.

Repeat if time allows.

Let the winning team keep their candy – even if that means some students on the other team didn't win any candy.

TEACH

Written by Eric Mendoza

Say: I really wish all of you were able to enjoy the candy right now, but some of you might not have won in any the game.

That might not seem fair and you may be comparing what you don't have to what the person beside you is enjoying.

There are times when we find ourselves comparing what we have to what other people have – we call that *comparison*.

The reason we do this is that we desire what someone else has.

Whether it is physical appearance, possessions, or personality characteristics... what we are doing is playing the comparison game.

Nobody ever wins in the comparison game, because there is no end to it.

In fact, sometimes people chase after something that is temporary and unfulfilling.

In the game we just played, you played to win candy.

But once you had that candy, it only brought momentary satisfaction – it doesn't last forever.

Those who didn't receive candy might feel bummed because they don't have what you got.

Both of these feelings lead to unfulfillment and a desire for something you can't obtain.

What we should do is strive for contentment.

God has given every person exactly what they need.

His ultimate desire is not for you to find blessings in the possessions you own, but instead what we have in Christ.

Paul is an excellent example of this, let's look at what he has to say.

Read Philippians 4:10-13.

I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me.

You were indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity.

Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content.

I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need.

I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

In this passage, we see the apostle Paul speaking to the Philippian church.

Earlier in this letter, Paul expresses the value in knowing Christ, the joy of imitating Christ, and then we come to this part where Paul reminds us to be content in Christ.

Paul doesn't talk about the things he has, and he doesn't talk about the things he doesn't have.

Instead, he tells us that in every circumstance he has learned to be content.

There are going to be times in your life where you have more than you need, and there may be times when you don't have the things that you need.

Regardless of your situation, you should find contentment in Christ.

You might be tempted to compare what you have to others.

When you find yourself comparing something you have to what someone else has, you are no longer content with the blessings God has given to you.

In fact, you are essentially saying, "God, why didn't you give me this. I need it."

In essence what you are saying is "God, I think you got it wrong, I need these things."

So how do you fight off the temptation to not compare yourself to others?

Ask God to give you the strength to overcome the desire to compare yourself to others.

Verse 13 is a very popular verse, "*I can do all things through him who strengthens me.*"

You might see people using this as a slogan in the sports world, like from an athlete looking for the strength he needs during a big moment.

Or maybe you have heard it from somebody who is about to face a difficult task, like a math test.

However, this verse is talking about contentment.

Being satisfied with the things you have or don't have.

Christ is enough, and you don't need anything else.

Are you living with this attitude?

Is Jesus enough, or do you tell yourself, "if I just had this, I would be happy"?

The cold hard truth is that because of our sinful nature, we will never have enough when we compare ourselves to others.

Be content that you have Jesus.

If you don't have a relationship with God, then comparison might be a big struggle in your life.

Jesus wants you to know that He can fill the void of what is missing from your life.

You don't have to live your life always trying to measure up to other people.

God loves you and He thinks you're really great.

Ask Him to help you find peace, joy, and contentment in knowing and trusting in Him.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are some things that you often desire that others have?
2. When was the last time you gave something away that you wanted but knew that you didn't need?
3. Do you ever stress out because you don't have the same personality that others have? Why do you think that is?
4. When you compare yourself to others, do you find yourself imitating who they are? What do you do?
5. What are some things in your life that you compare with others?
6. Is it entirely wrong to want to have what someone else has? Why or why not?
7. What do we do if we are struggling with contentment?
8. Why do we struggle with contentment?
9. Often, we are not content in what we have, relationships, and social statuses. What are some other areas we are dissatisfied with in our lives?
10. How can Jesus help us not to compare ourselves to others?