

THE VICE OF ENVY

The Christian Teachings of Virtue (Series 4, Part 2, Teaching #26)

Instructions: Watch video, read aloud, underline what stands out to you most, discuss

Leader Guide...

See the back page for detailed facilitator instructions.

Out of the self-centered perspective of the prideful comes the poison of envy. When pride places you at the center of your universe, envy emerges as the sorrowful reaction to someone else shining brighter than you. It is the quiet pain you feel when another succeeds, the subtle delight you feel when they fall.

The vice of envy is a disposition of sorrow toward another's good or joy at another's misfortune.

Scripture warns, "Peace of mind makes the body healthy, but jealousy is like a cancer" (Proverbs 14:30). Envy is a slow poison. It eats away at your joy, corrodes your peace, and spreads like a sickness through your soul. Just as the devil rejoices in your sorrow and sorrows in your joy, so too does the envious heart become twisted—incapable of celebrating what is good in others.

Envy never announces itself loudly. It hides behind humor, criticism, gossip, comparison. It whispers, "Why them and not me?" It grumbles at another's blessing and silently hopes they don't succeed again. Left unchallenged, it breeds resentment. And resentment, once rooted, grows into bitterness, dissatisfaction, discontent, and despair.

Ask yourself—what do you gain from your neighbors' loss or setback? Nothing. Should there be a sole possessor of all things, talents, opportunities, friendships? There shall not. The truth is, envy gains nothing, and costs everything. It makes you blind to your own gifts, deaf to the goodness of others, and numb to the joy of the present moment. But there is a better way. Envy is overcome not by force, but by virtue.

Combat envy with the virtues of kindness, contentment, gratitude, and hope.

Be kind. When envy rises in your heart, speak well of the one you envy. Pray for them. Bless them. Celebrate them. In doing so, you break envy's grip.

Be content. Remember—God has not forgotten you. He has given you unique gifts for a unique purpose. God distributes gifts differently. You will not be judged by what others did with their gifts, but by what you did with yours.

Be grateful. You have already received the greatest gift—a soul made in the image of God, redeemed by Christ, and invited into eternal glory. What more do you need? "It is madness for a Christian to be envious. In Christ we have all received infinitely great blessings" (St. John of Kronstadt).

Be hopeful. Fix your eyes not on worldly gains, but on spiritual ones. Set your heart on the crown that never fades—the joy of Heaven, the eternal union with God. No one can take that prize from you but yourself.

(continues on next page...)

7 Chief Vices

Pride

Envy

Anger

Sloth

Greed

Gluttony

Lust



Watch Video: Scan the QR code to access the video for this teaching as well as additional resources such as related Scripture, quotes, and more.
Or, visit horseandchariot.com/the-vice-of-envy

We all wrestle with envy. The slightest twinge of discomfort at someone else's rise, or hidden gladness at their fall, reveals its presence. Do not ignore it. Do not excuse it. Bring it into the light.

So reject envy. Confess it. Uproot it. Do not let it distort your heart or steal your peace. Rejoice in the good of others. Celebrate the successes of your neighbor. For when you do, you loosen the chains of envy and walk freely in love.

Let your soul be lifted, not when you rise above others, but when you lift others up in Christ. That is true freedom. That is victory over envy. That is the way of virtue.

Envy flows from pride and turns the soul inward. When self sits at the center, another’s blessing feels like your loss. Envy is sorrow at another’s good or secret joy at their misfortune. Left unchecked, it corrodes peace and steals joy. But through kindness, contentment, gratitude, and hope, its poison can be uprooted.

1. Envy resents another’s good. It grieves when others rise. → When someone succeeds, does your heart celebrate—or quietly compare?

2. Envy hides behind subtle masks. Humor, criticism, gossip, and comparison often conceal it. → How does envy most often disguise itself in you?

3. Envy breeds resentment. What begins as comparison grows into bitterness. → Is there someone whose blessing still unsettles your peace?

4. Envy blinds you to your gifts. It fixates on what you lack instead of what you’ve been given. → Are you overlooking the unique gifts God has entrusted to you?

5. Kindness breaks envy’s grip. Blessing the one you envy loosens its chains. → Have you prayed for and spoken well of the person you struggle to celebrate?

6. Hope restores perspective. Eternal rewards outweigh earthly comparisons. → Are your eyes fixed on fleeting success—or on union with God?

CHARACTERISTICS OF A CONTENT AND GRATEFUL SOUL

Those who reject envy and cultivate virtue exhibit these traits:

1. Kindness. They rejoice in the good of others and speak well of them.

2. Contentment. They trust that God’s gifts are distributed with wisdom and purpose.

3. Gratitude. They give thanks for what they have instead of obsessing over what they lack.

4. Hopefulness. They fix their gaze on eternal glory rather than temporary gain.

5. Peace. Their joy is not shaken by another’s success.

6. Charity. They lift others up instead of measuring themselves against them.

Signs of Envy Taking Root...

- You compare yourself constantly to others.
- You feel irritated by another’s success or recognition.
- You downplay or criticize others’ accomplishments.
- You secretly feel satisfaction when someone you envy fails.
- You struggle to give genuine compliments.
- You fixate on what you lack rather than what you’re given.
- You feel restless or dissatisfied despite God’s blessings.

Think: Envy gains nothing and costs everything. It steals my joy, clouds my gratitude, and distances me from love. God has not forgotten me. He has given me gifts for a purpose and called me to faithfulness—not comparison. When I rejoice in the good of others, my heart is freed from envy’s chains and filled with peace.

Pray: Lord, expose the envy within me. Where I compare, teach me gratitude. Where I resent, teach me kindness. Where I fixate on what I lack, remind me of the abundant grace You have already given. Help me to rejoice in the blessings of others and trust in Your perfect wisdom for my life. Purify my heart, that I may love freely and walk in contentment and hope. Amen.

SELF-EVALUATION & ACTION STEP																					
<p>Of the areas you underlined throughout this teaching, which stood out to you most and why? (Reflect, write down, discuss)</p>																					
<p>Rate yourself from 1-10 1 = Envy often clouds my thoughts and reactions 10 = I consistently rejoice in the good of others</p>	<table border="1" style="text-align: center; width: 100%;"> <tr> <td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="5">←</td> <td>(avoid 5)</td> <td colspan="4">→</td> </tr> </table>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	←					(avoid 5)	→			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10												
←					(avoid 5)	→															
<p>Why did you give yourself this rating?</p>																					
<p>What lie is envy whispering to you about your worth, gifts, or calling?</p>																					
<p>What concrete act of kindness can you take this week toward someone you envy (encouragement, prayer, public praise, private blessing)?</p>																					
<p>How will you cultivate gratitude daily to uproot envy at its source?</p>																					
<p>Daily Affirmation: Today, I will reject envy. By God’s grace, I will rejoice in the good of others, give thanks for the gifts I have received, and fix my eyes on the eternal crown that cannot be taken from me.</p>																					

FACILITATOR INSTRUCTIONS

Courageous Facilitator,

Your willingness to step forward and lead is a gift of grace to your community and a brave act of faith. God bless you for answering the call to inspire others to grow in virtue and pursue the character of Christ.

The Holy Spirit thrives in fellowship and community, working powerfully through the connections and shared experiences of small groups. That's why these lesson plans are designed to cultivate genuine relationships, inspire meaningful conversations, and foster a spirit of transformation through shared wisdom and grace.

Facilitating these lessons is both simple and impactful. While many forms of teaching rely on one-way communication, where one person speaks and others listen, true transformation happens through two-way communication. In this format, ideas aren't merely taught—they're explored together. You'll guide, but everyone will share and learn from one another, creating a rich environment where the Holy Spirit can move and grow each mind, heart, and soul.

These lesson plans succeed because they:

- **Encourage connection** in a collaborative small group setting that fosters action and accountability
- **Empower every voice** with opportunities for each participant to share and contribute
- **Inspire growth** through educational, inspirational, and transformational teachings

Your role as a facilitator is to:

- **Follow the instructions and trust the process**—the wheel is already built, you're here to guide it.
- **Honor the schedule** by being punctual and respecting the time of your group.
- **Lead with love** and rely on God's grace to inspire, guide, and uplift everyone in the group.

Your courage to create a space for growth and fellowship will not only bless others but will deepen your own journey of faith and virtue. Together, with God's help, lives will be transformed.

To God be the glory!

FACILITATOR CHECKLIST

1. Getting Started (5-10 mins)

- Give everyone a few minutes to join before getting started. Be friendly and greet people as they arrive. Get them talking! Come prepared with some good ice-breaker questions you can ask during this time.
- 3-5 minutes in, do quick introductions for anyone new to the group. What brought them to the group? Spend a moment getting to know them.
- Open with a short prayer (facilitator or volunteer).

2. Watch & Read the Teaching (5-10 mins)

- Watch the video of the teaching as a group.
- Have a volunteer read all of page 1. Have others follow along and underline what stands out to them most.

3. How it Applies (5-10 mins)

- Have a volunteer read all of page 2. Have others follow along and underline what stands out to them most.

4. Reflection & Discussion (20-30 mins)

- Have everyone quietly take 5 minutes to complete the "Self-Evaluation & Action Step" on page 3.
- Then, going around the group, have each person take a minute to share what stood out to them most about the teaching and why.
- If time allows, continue the discussion using the remaining self-evaluation questions as a guide.

5. Wrap Up (5 mins)

- Remind everyone to do the daily affirmation until you meet again next time.
- Ask for any prayer requests from the group.
- Close with a short prayer (facilitator or volunteer).