



Lila Overcomes the Sting of Envy

Lila was a girl who used to begin each day with a thankful heart. She would whisper a short prayer before school, thanking God for her family and for the gift of being able to draw. Back then, she understood something simple but true. She knew that every talent she had was a gift from God's grace.

At school, Lila loved art class more than anything. She was quick to compliment her friends' paintings and always clapped when someone shared their work. She celebrated their creativity with a smile. But when the annual art contest was announced, something inside her began to change. She wanted to win more than she wanted to simply enjoy drawing.

Slowly, she began to believe a quiet lie. When her classmate Ava won first place, Lila felt a sting in her heart. She told herself it didn't matter, but it did. Without realizing it, Lila was letting the **vice of envy** take root in her heart. Envy is a sneaky thing that feels sad when someone else shines.



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

For Lila, envy sounded like a whisper that said, "Why her and not you?" She started pointing out small flaws in Ava's painting. At recess, she shrugged when others praised it. At home, she scrolled through pictures of the winning artwork online, feeling a tightness in her chest. She had a deep desire to be the one everyone admired.

She even began to feel strangely happy when she heard Ava was nervous about the next competition. Lila didn't realize that even small moments of secret satisfaction come from envy. She was comparing herself constantly. Soon, her heart began to change. Instead of feeling joyful, she felt restless and irritated.

She started to pull away from Ava, believing it was unfair that Ava received so much attention. She was consumed with comparison. But Scripture warns that jealousy is like a sickness to the soul. The more Lila focused on what Ava had, the less she could see the gifts God had given her.

By the end of the week, Lila felt miserable. Her sketchbook stayed closed on her desk, and she didn't feel like drawing at all. Envy had made Ava's success seem big, but it made Lila's joy shrink. She felt frustrated and alone.

One evening, Lila sat quietly on her bed. She had just heard that Ava's painting would be displayed at the town library. Her heart felt heavy instead of excited. She looked at her own drawings and realized they no longer brought her comfort. She missed the peace she used to feel when she simply loved creating.

Lila realized that by wishing she had what Ava had, she had forgotten to be thankful for what God had already given her. She knelt beside her bed, feeling small but honest for the first time in days. She reached for her strongest weapons: the **virtues of kindness, gratitude, and hope**.

She whispered, "God, I'm sorry. I've been sad about someone else's good. Thank You for the gifts You've given Ava, and thank You for the gifts You've given me. Help me to be kind and content." She asked God to clean her heart and fill it with joy again.

The next day at school, Lila walked up to Ava and said, "Your painting really is beautiful. I'm proud of you." She meant it. Later, when others talked about the contest, Lila spoke kindly instead of critically. With each good word, the tightness in her chest began to loosen.

Choosing kindness didn't make Lila less talented; it made her freer. She started drawing again, not to compete, but to create. She felt grateful for her own ideas and hopeful about growing in her skills. When she lifted Ava up, her heart was lifted too.

Lila learned that envy makes a heart heavy, but kindness, gratitude, and hope make a soul light. When she rejoiced in the good of others, she found her joy again. And that joy reflected the love of Christ shining within her.

Simple Reflection Questions (5 Minutes)

Ask the kids these three questions to get them thinking:

- 1. The "Feeling" Question:** How did Lila's heart feel when she kept comparing herself to Ava? *(Answers: Heavy, tight, restless, frustrated, lonely)*
- 2. The "Warning" Question:** What were the warning signs that envy was growing in Lila's heart? *(Answers: Comparing, pointing out flaws, secretly happy at mistakes)*
- 3. The "Grace" Question:** What changed inside Lila when she chose kindness and gratitude instead of envy?

The "Heavy Heart vs. Light Heart" Exercise (4 Minutes)

This is a physical way to show the difference between Envy and Kindness.

Step 1 (The Heavy Heart): Have everyone cross their arms tightly over their chest and look down. Tell them: "This is what envy does. It makes our heart tight. We stare at what someone else has, and we forget the gifts God gave us."

Step 2 (The Light Heart): Now have everyone open their arms wide and take a deep breath. Tell them: "This is what kindness and gratitude feel like. When we celebrate others and thank God for our own gifts, our heart feels light and free."

The "Rejoicing Heart" Prayer (2 Minutes)

Have the kids close their eyes and repeat after you:

Dear God,

- Thank You for the gifts You give me.
- Help me not to compare myself to others.
- When someone else shines,
- teach me to celebrate them.
- Fill my heart with kindness and joy.

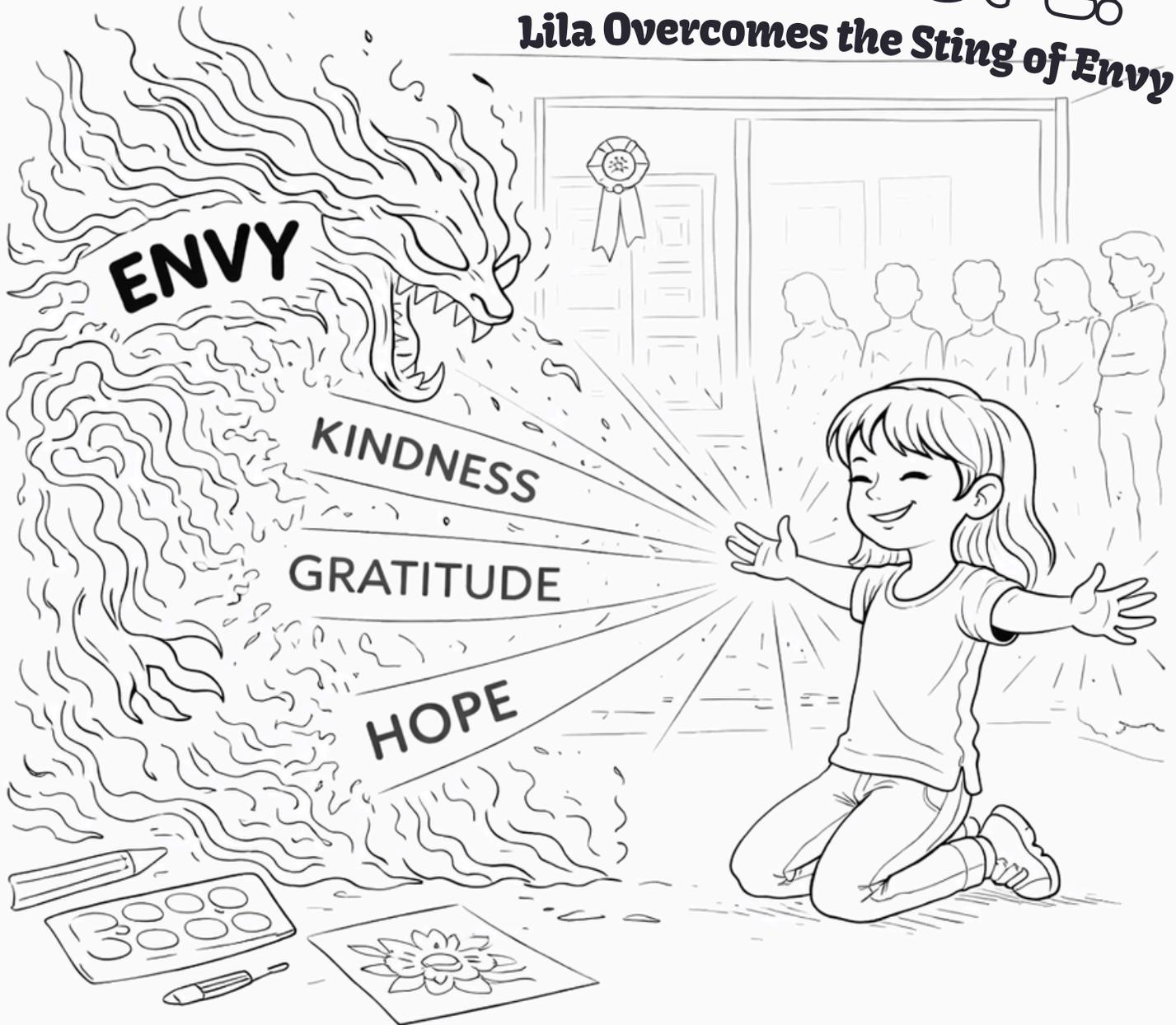
Amen.

Fun Extras:

- **Coloring Page:** Give the kids time to color and fill in the page on the back
- **Virtue over Envy:** Talk through the examples at the bottom of the coloring page. Try to relate them to real-life situations you've encountered recently. This is a great way to connect the lesson to everyday life and gently challenge growth.

CHOOSE KINDNESS, GRATITUDE AND HOPE!

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Circle what it looks like to choose virtue over envy.

Thinking, "I wish they weren't so good." — or — Thinking, "I'm happy for them!"

Complaining, "It's not fair! They always win!" — or — Saying, "I'll keep practicing and do my best."

Congratulating a classmate with a smile — or — Ignoring a classmate who got an award

Being grumpy when someone does good — or — Saying, "You worked really hard for that!"

Thanking God for the gifts He has given you — or — Thinking only about what you don't have

Feeling like you'll never be good enough — or — Trusting that God has a good plan for you