

MON 8/2

- ✓ READ Psalm 46:1
- ✓ THOUGHT Envy grows out of our sense of scarcity or not-enough-ness. Let's examine the many ways God loves and provides in generosity and abundance. Think of three things you are thankful for today and give thanks to God.
- ✓ PRAYER God, I want to recognize that you meet me where I am right now. In your great mercy, open my heart and mind today. Amen.

NOTES: _____

TUES 8/3

- ✓ READ Matthew 19:26
- ✓ THOUGHT Notice God's power. "Jesus looked at them and said, 'With people this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.'" Your emotional response of envy may come from anxious places that you don't even recognize. What do you sense is missing? Trust God. With God, all things are possible.
- ✓ PRAYER God, I don't even know what is causing this feeling of anxiety that has me tied up in knots. Breathe into me your calm spirit of possibility. Amen.

NOTES: _____

WED 8/4

- ✓ READ Exodus 33:14
- ✓ THOUGHT Notice God's presence. Even Moses didn't feel like he had enough. God reassured him, "I will personally go with you, Moses, and I will give you rest--everything will be fine for you." God reassures you today that you are enough, there will be enough, and everything will be fine. Breathe in the enough-ness of God's presence.
- ✓ PRAYER God, you're always at the ready. You're ready to love, guide, and hold me when I feel worried. Thank you for being with me. Amen.

NOTES: _____

THURS 8/5

- ✓ READ James 1:17
- ✓ THOUGHT Notice God's blessings. "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows." Shine the light of awareness onto your shadows. In your dark places of fear, God is there blessing you with his presence.
- ✓ PRAYER God, when I take little bits of time to notice you, I feel less afraid of the known and the unknown. Thank you for your comforting Spirit. Amen.

NOTES: _____

FRI 8/6

- ✓ READ John 3:16
- ✓ THOUGHT Notice God's generosity. "For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life." Set aside your feelings of scarcity. Practice this breathe prayer as you inhale, "God of love" and exhale, "I believe." Again, "God of love...I believe."
- ✓ PRAYER Christ, I believe in your generous love. I rest here in your loving arms. Amen.

NOTES: _____

SAT 8/7

- ✓ READ 1 Peter 4:10-11
- ✓ THOUGHT Notice your unique gifts. "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ." Climb out of those traps of envy with God's help and notice where God is calling *you*.
- ✓ PRAYER God, I'm exhausted with the futility of envy. I long to know more of those gifts you have written on my heart through your great love. Amen.

NOTES: _____



GROUP GUIDE – ENVY

HOUSTON, WE HAVE A PROBLEM...

- ✓ **PRAYER** **God, we acknowledge that you are already here. May our hearts be open to your presence and direction. Amen.**

- ✓ **BIG IDEA** **When our go-to emotion is envy, we need to take a closer look at our ideas of scarcity and the reality of God's abundant love. The wisdom of Ecclesiastes and Paul will lead us into that examination.**

- ✓ **READ** **Ecclesiastes 4:4-8, Titus 3:4-6**

- ✓ **DISCUSS**
 - "Then I observed all the work and ambition motivated by envy. What a waste! Smoke. And spitting into the wind." (Eccl 4:4 The Message) We want more because we don't feel we have enough _____. You fill in the blank. What is in your blank today? Share a time when your effort or ambition was motivated by envy and how you feel about it as you look back on that time in your life.
 - Throughout the book of Ecclesiastes, the wisdom writer reminds us of the futility of trying to fill our empty places with *more* and *better*. Instead, the reminder is that: "Better one handful with tranquility than two handfuls with toil and chasing after the wind." (Eccl 4:6) If we are going to live out the gifts God has given to each of us in order to serve all of God's children, we need to start from a place of "tranquility." Name one thing that helps you find quiet time with God in your busy day. How does that time of quiet focus on God impact your feelings of peace and contentment?
 - Now turn to Paul's words in the New Testament. "When God our Savior revealed his kindness and love, he saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit." (Titus 3:4-5) God has already provided a way out of our sense of scarcity through abundant love. It's not about doing more. Instead, it's about becoming, in God's image: just, merciful, gracious, kind, loving, and giving. How do these attributes come under attack with envy in your life?
 - So then, Paul underscores God's generosity again in verse 6: "He generously poured out the Spirit upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior." (Titus 3:6) You are God's beloved, so you have been given exactly what you need. You do not need more power or control, more security, or more approval. You are enough. Describe in a sentence or two the effect these words have on you. "I am God's beloved." If you believe that, does it change how you feel about envying others?

- ✓ **Pray** **God help us to remember that there is no need for feelings of envy in your kingdom of love. Thank you that you are faithful to generously provide for your children. Amen.**