



One thing I've noticed during the days of isolation due to Covid-19 is the extra amount of time I've spent on social media. In fact, my smartphone likes to ~~gently~~ glaringly remind me of this little detail in my life. While it's good to stay in touch with family and friends, social media can have its downside. Not only can it be a time-waster, but I've also discovered that social media can lead me right into the snare of the comparison trap.

Ah, the snare of comparison. During "normal" times, you can't help but notice what everyone else is doing and what you're not. I can remember when I first started comparing myself to others - when I was in elementary school and my best friend moved to the bigger house. In junior high listening to the friend share that she "bought her whole fall wardrobe" from a popular but expensive store. I remember looking at the friend in high school with the prettier hair and marvelous personality as I examined my wavy, hard to style hair and shy, introverted self.

The comparison trap can start when we're young and even though we like to think it ends as we mature - not always! Unfortunately, social media sites like Facebook and Instagram exacerbate the matter. As we scroll, it's hard not to notice other's success. We gaze upon pictures and text extolling someone's perfect husband, their honor roll student, their "Southern Living" lawn and beautiful flowers in the garden, their adventures in travel (while I sit at home) and the beautiful sunset on the beach that they seem to witness every day (even when it's 20 degrees!)

Unfortunately, the comparison trap can lead us to be consumed with others and cause us to doubt our own self-worth and self-esteem. If we're not careful, the comparison trap can lead us to sins of jealousy and envy. So how do we escape when we get our feet tangled in the comparison trap?

First, remember God created you for what He created you for! Let's remember that we are each (Psalm 139:14) "remarkably (or fearfully) and wondrously (wonderfully) made". God made you exactly like you are and has a special purpose and plan for your life. He has placed you where you are and given you the gifts, talents, and abilities to carry out His special purposes and plans. That alone gives us good reason not to compare ourselves to others or to be jealous of someone else's life. To compare yourself with someone else is to disregard or show ingratitude for how God has made you. You are uniquely made and unlike



anyone else.

Secondly, we need to confess our sin of jealousy and envy. As Barney Fife would say, "Nip it! Nip it! Nip it in the bud!" Don't let the sin go any further and allow the enemy to gain control. Recognize, confess, and repent of your sin. Turn to God for mercy and forgiveness. Then depend on His strength to obey his commands. We can be thankful for God's promise that "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9)

Finally, be consumed with Christ rather than others. How can we be consumed with Jesus? If you are a believer, remember where you started - a sinner destined to die. Then remember where you are now - saved by Jesus' blood - his life sacrificed for you. You who were once dead, now through Jesus, are alive. (Colossians 2:13) It is by grace you have been saved so wash in it, be overwhelmed by it. Be overwhelmed with the "Grace-giver". Remind yourself you are loved unconditionally by Christ. When we remember these truths, our hearts will be filled to the brim with love and gratitude towards Jesus and there will be no room for the consumption of other people or things. Embrace the love and grace of Christ and all else in life will pale in comparison.

"Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I could gain Christ." Philippians 3:8 (NLT)

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(This post is an excerpt from my message "I've Got Gifts, You've Got Gifts, All God's



Caught In The Snare Of Comparison

Children Got Gifts!". I'd love the opportunity to share at your next Ladies' conference, luncheon, or retreat! Please contact me for information.)

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