**Smoke Signals**

**Hey Envy- You’re Not the Boss of Me- Week 3**

**Small Group Notes**

**October 24 and 27**

**Main Point:** Last week we dug into understanding the impact of envy in our lives through our relationships with others and with Christ. For this week we are going to discuss practical steps that we can take to guard against becoming envious and to help us move from spiritual immaturity to growth.

**Introduction: Share about a time in your life when something messed up because something else when unchecked. For example, has there been a car issue before because we forgot to put in oil or coolant? Has there been a house issue before because we didn’t check the smell or leaks?**

In our discussion last week, we looked at how easy envy can slip into our lives. There are some moments in our lives that can fuel envy: not getting a promotion we think we deserve, seeing someone have success that we wish was ours, seeing people’s experiences on social media and wondering why we don’t get to do those things.

We can see that the smoke signal that is revealed is an emotional spiritual immaturity that can drive us to darker places if we leave it unchecked.

So how do we try to overcome these areas of envy in our lives and move towards spiritual growth? That is the basis of our discussion today.

**Discuss:**

1. Read Romans 12:15

How is this verse the picture of being on a team? Family? Church?

What does it look like in your life to celebrate with others in their success? How does it move beyond just liking a photo on their social media?

How is this verse counter to envy?

How does this verse encourage you to be a more committed church member and member of your group?

2. Read Hebrews 5:12-14 and 1 Corinthians 3:1-3.

What are some similarities between these two passages?

What impact can occur in your life by being “unskilled in the word of righteousness”? Read 2 Timothy 2:15 and James 1:22, how do these verses call us to grow spiritually?

How are these two statements different? Jesus forgives me (milk); I am to forgive others as Christ has forgiven me (meat).

How do these verses challenge you to grow?

If you looked at your life over the past year, can you say that you have grown in consuming meat or have you been at a milk stage? Who is someone that can help you to take the next step?

3. Read Hebrews 12:1-3

How can envy entangle our lives?

How can focusing on Jesus help us to overcome envy?

Three times in these verses the word “endurance” or a variation is used, how can remembering the call to endure help us in moments when we want to become envious?

How could you encourage or correct someone right now that struggles with making comparisons?

Read Romans 12:1-2. How do these verses encourage you to live out your call to serve as a believer?

**Dig Deeper:**

***Romans 12:15 (NIV)***

***Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.***

* Learn to celebrate the success of others.
* We are on the same team.

**Which do you think is more difficult: to celebrate with other believers who are rejoicing or to weep with those who are hurting? Why?**

**Of all the commands listed in this passage (Romans 12:8-15), which is the easiest for you to keep? Which is the most difficult?**

Paul called us to join others in the church both in moments of joy and sorrow. We are to take on the burdens of others in such a way that their joy becomes our joy and their moments of sorrow bring us great sorrow. This type of relating to one another is only possible through deep love and unity through the Holy Spirit. It’s hard to be envious of those that we have a love for.

***Hebrews 5:12-14 (ESV)***

***For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, 13for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. 14But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.***

* Milk is what’s give to us while meat is what we learn to gather for ourselves. 2 Timothy 2:15
* Milk teaches us about our justification while meat deals with our sanctification. Ephesians 4:32
* Meat is more challenging than confusing. James 1:22
* The meat of the Word will free you from envy! John 8:32
* Becoming a carnivore (meat consumer) takes: persistence, perseverance, and obedience!

What does the write of Hebrews expect believers to do with the knowledge of the truth of God’s Word?

What is hindering you from growing spiritually?

How is spiritual growth connected to obedience in this passage? How is it connected to wisdom?

***Hebrews 12:1-3 (NIV)***

***12 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, 2fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.3Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.***

* You will never be who God you to be if you are constantly trying to run someone else’s race
* Daily spiritual nourishment. Romans 12:2
* Family care.
* Play your part in the body. 1 Corinthians 12:27; Ephesians 2:10
* Work with the right focus and attitude. Colossians 3:23-24.

**What are the problems with focusing on anyone or anything other than Jesus? How do we balance making Jesus our main priority with the daily responsibilities and demands of life?**

**How can a believer make sure his or her focus is on Christ? What does a life focused on Jesus look like?**

**Do:**

**Identify your weaknesses in the areas in your life where temptation to be envious always seems to be lurking. What steps do you need to take to safeguard yourself against falling into temptation?**

**When you look back on your life, what do you want to be known for? Starting today, how can you make sure you finish the spiritual legacy that you started before you go to be with the Lord?**

**How would you rate the degree to which you are focused on Christ? What practical spiritual disciplines do you need to implement in your life to increase your focus on Christ?**