



Egos and Insecurity
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Preview

Have you ever wished you could be the kid with the brand-name clothes, the cool car, and the attractive boyfriend or girlfriend? Or maybe you feel you *are* that kid. Either way, comparing yourself to others can indicate problems with pride and a lack of awareness of your own worth in God's eyes.

Have everyone write three things: a person they feel is a great role model, something they'd like to learn how to do, and something they're already good at. Mix up the lists. Read them aloud guessing who each list belongs to.

Praise

Listen to Israel Houghton's song "Not Forgotten" and think about the lyrics. Remember them for discussion later.

Parable

There's a quote attributed to Albert Einstein that says, "Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid."

All of us have different God-given strengths and weaknesses. Your best friend may thrive in front of an audience, while you cower under your seat in speech class. Or you may be great at being tactful and diplomatic in awkward situations, while your friend always seems to stick his foot in his mouth.

It's impossible to be great at *everything*, and that's not a bad thing. Think about this for a minute: What if all sports used the same ball? Could you play baseball with a football? How about football with a golf ball? Or golf with a bowling ball?

Thankfully, there's not one uniform ball; balls differ drastically from sport to sport. In the same way, every human is unique, yet crafted perfectly and intentionally by an all-knowing, loving God.



Present

Read **I Samuel 18:6-9**.

Can you imagine the president or prime minister of a great nation being jealous of you? King Saul's disdain for David, a mere shepherd boy with a deep-rooted love for God, was not much different. Saul and David were on the same side, fighting battles for their God and their nation. Then Saul heard the women comparing him to David, and cold fingers of jealousy closed around his heart. For the rest of their lives, Saul and David, who should have been working as a team, were bitter enemies. Why? Because Saul had a problem with comparing himself to others. Measuring yourself against everyone else can never have a good outcome. It will either cause ungodly pride (**Luke 18:9-14**) or unwarranted insecurity (**Romans 9:20-21**). God is more pleased with people who know they are imperfect but have humble, honest, repentant spirits than He is with those who look good on the outside, but have egos the size of Texas.

On the other end of the spectrum, we have no right to question or blame God if we don't like the way He made us. You were made in the image of God for a specific purpose. He loves you more than you can imagine. There will always be someone better looking or smarter or more talented than you. That doesn't matter. You have skills and purpose that were given uniquely to you.

Practice

1. Think back to "Not Forgotten," the song we heard at the beginning of the lesson. How does it make you feel to realize the mighty God of the universe knows your name?
2. Will a person who truly believes he is fearfully and wonderfully made compare himself to others?
3. Having gratitude is one the best ways to combat envy. How can you nurture an attitude of gratitude in your life?
4. Sometimes comparing ourselves to others fosters pride. How can you nurture a spirit of humility in yourself?

Pray

God, thank You for crafting me in Your image. Forgive me for the times I've compared myself to others. I never want to feel inferior *or* superior to anyone else. I pray that I don't place as much emphasis on feeling good about myself as I do on how You feels about me. I just want to put my heart into being what you've called me to be.



Plus

Memorize **John 15:5**. Quote it aloud when you feel you're struggling with pride. At times when you're tempted to feel envious, make a habit of listing your blessings and thanking God for them rather than wallowing in self-pity.