

OBSERVATION -- As a group, talk through and summarize the passage. Think through *Who, What, Where, When, How, and Why* questions together.

INTERPRETATION -- Answer these questions together:

1) What does this passage teach us about us?

- a) Read Proverbs 13:20. Pst. Mark said, "Envy is all around us because it lurks inside us." In what (minute) ways have you experienced envy in your life?
- b) Pst. Mark identified that envy is wanting others' possessions others have and resenting them for having those possessions. Together, analyze Psalm 73:1-6, 16. What characteristics of envy do you find in that passage? How have you experienced those similar attributes of an envious heart?
- c) Pst Mark charges that envy is not a behavioral or emotional posture that we should toy with; it has dangerous effects (Read Pro 14:30). What physical, emotional, and psychological dangers are evident when we linger in envy? Share how you have experienced some of these dangers.

2) What does this passage teach us about God (Read Prov. 23:17; Rom. 11:28-36)?

- a) In summary, Paul argues here that God, in His infinite wisdom and riches, designs salvation according to His sovereignty. Even in His sovereignty, God's wisdom is only *in and from* Himself alone. Although this wisdom is beyond human limited intellect, this wisdom is pure, faithful, and fruitful to the glory of Him alone. Therefore, we reverence God because He alone is content and complete in Himself and lacking nothing.
- b) How does this knowledge transform or elevate your "continual" worship and reverence of God (both before, during, and after temptations towards envy)? As you answer this question, discuss through Pst Mark's point that *envy makes us question the goodness of God, where we feel we can do a better job than God.*
- c) How does this knowledge transform your love for God and people, especially when tempted to be envious?

3) What does this passage teach us about grace/salvation? How does it point to Christ? (READ Titus 3:3-7)

- a) Before our salvation, we hated and were hated, and we envied and were envied. On the contrary, Christ shared his goodness, loving-kindness, mercy, and Spirit with us, even when we were his enemies. In this salvation, we now have a hope (*that does not put us to shame*) for a life eternal with God through Christ and with the Spirit (Romans 5:5).
- b) How does this knowledge transform your love for God and people, especially when tempted to be envious?
- c) How does this knowledge of your hope in Christ transform how you worship God, especially when tempted to be envious?

APPLICATION

- a) As you think through the following application, discuss among yourselves how any of the applications resonate with you.
 - **Be aware:** Don't be ignorant of how you *are or can be* envious of others.
 - **Admit:** Bring to light the exact situation and people you are envious of. Share this envy with your community. Also, locate and share the inward desires and wants that may have led to envy.
 - **Flee:** Envy does not end with envy but leads to more damaging sins such as greed, division, bitterness, wrath, evil desires, and pride. Therefore, consider a plan not to linger in envious imaginations.
 - **Continue in the fear of the Lord through gratitude and contentment:** Have an intentional daily plan to show gratitude and contentment in the Lord before, during, and after the temptations towards envy.

PRAYER

- Praise God for His perfection.
- Confess how you have made yourself deserving than others and wiser than God.
- Thank God for the sacrifice of Christ that continually gives us hope. Remember all you had and have, and thank God for them. Thank God because everything works according to God's plan and for your good.
- Ask God to give you the strength to be content and flee from envy.