

CAST OFFS | THE SIN OF COMPARISON

Mmmm... that food in there smells good! I've decided to preach my longest message ever tonight to put you through torture.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

First before I get started I want to make you aware that next Sunday we will be discussing something very important to the future of our church.

- As you know we are a brand new church and this is our 11th service ever.
- We've experienced God's grace and his hand in provision and we are extremely grateful.
 - I really believe as the leader of this church that I bring you transparency and updates in regards to our financial situation.
 - Church isn't only about finances, but it plays a role in our resource management in building capacity to minister to more people.
- The #1 question I get asked from all of you and from those of you who have attended Press Start is "How long are we going to be in the community center?"
 - That's a valid question and one that I cannot put an exact timeframe to right now, but we do have an exciting plan to roll out to you in regards to where we are heading over the next weeks and months.
- I know it's a busy holiday weekend, but you won't want to miss this service as we discuss our future.
 - I'm going to lay out how the next few weeks and months will look and how you can be a part of that process.
 - All I can tell you for now is that I am beyond excited about what God is doing.
 - There are things you can't measure with numbers and currency and that's the work he's doing in each of your lives.
 - I hear your stories, I see your transformation, and it changes me more than you'll ever know.
 - I personally, want that to happen for as many people as God will allow us to reach, and I believe that all of you feel the same way.

SERIES INTRO

That's enough about next week... let's talk this week.

- We are in a series right now called Cast-Offs.
- We are looking at situations and people in the Bible that feel like cast-offs... that to the world they aren't usable, but God uses them to do amazing things.

Last week we focused in on Simon Peter... a bold, arrogant, narcissistic, reckless personality that became the very first pastor of Jesus' church.

- Today I want to talk about... well Simon Peter.
- He just gives us way too much good material to cover.

I actually want to start where we left off last week in John 21.

- Simon Peter teaches us something through his actions that will serve to help us very well through this Thanksgiving season.
- For those of you who were able to join us or had an opportunity to check out the podcast... you'll notice this transpires right after Jesus reinstates Peter into ministry after his major failure.

John 21:18-23 NIV

18 Very truly I tell you, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go." 19 Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, "Follow me!"

20 Peter turned and saw that the disciple whom Jesus loved was following them. (This was the one who had leaned back against Jesus at the supper and had said, "Lord, who is going to betray you?") 21 When Peter saw him, he asked, "Lord, what about him?"

22 Jesus answered, "If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You must follow me."

COMPARISON TRAP

Jesus is having this powerful mano-e-mano conversation with Simon Peter.

- It's so serious that it's uncomfortable.
 - Jesus is telling Peter that you are a spry young feller that can do anything you want, but when you get old someone else will put your clothes on and will lead you to place you don't want to go.
 - We aren't talking the bad nursing home in town.
 - Jesus isn't talking about Peter becoming feeble and not being able to dress himself.
 - No one day, you will stretch out your hands – an indication of his death on a cross
 - You won't be independent anymore, but completely at their will
 - Please you don't want to go –
 - We are talking beatings, lashings, and torture because you follow me.

Peter's reaction is childish, but is one that we often employ in our own lives.

- He looks at John.
 - John the beloved they call him.
 - He's always over there with his head on Jesus' shoulder.
 - He's always over there saying the right things and being a good disciple.
 - What about him?! Is someone gonna drag him away to die when he gets old?

PETER IS GUILTY... OF THE SIN OF COMPARISON

Peter compares himself with John.

- Peter wasn't ready to accept who God made him to be and what his plan for him was.
- He wanted to know what Jesus was going to do with John the beloved
 - Are you going to make him die to follow you too, or is he your favorite, so he gets off scott free?
 - Are you going to make people lead him to places he doesn't want to go, or does he get off easy?
 - Why does John always get off easy?

Peter fell into a trap that we often do ourselves

- It's the trap that will steal your joy.
- It's the trap that will rob you of your contentment.
- It's the trap that will starve you of being able to truly be thankful.

COMPARISON IS NOT JUST A BAD HABIT

Scripture shows us that comparing ourselves with people in such a way that it develops an identity of inferiority is not just a bad habit, but is actually sin, and Scripture even calls it demonic.

The root cause of comparison is found in one of the 7 deadly sins called envy. **(CAN YOU SHOW COMPARISON AS A CHILD OBJECT TO ENVY. BASICALLY WORD ENVY WITH AN ARROW POINTING DOWN TO COMPARISON.)**

ENVY: is a feeling of discontented or resentful longing aroused by someone else's possessions, qualities, or luck.

- Notice the key phrase: Someone else's
- To compare yourself
 - Your wealth
 - Your status
 - Your looks
 - Your success
 - Your skills and talents
- With someone else in such a way that it makes you feel discontent, inferior, angry or resentful of them is envy

James 1:14-16 NIV

14 But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. 15 Such "wisdom" does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. 16 For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.

When you compare yourself or you envy someone else it does three things to your life:

1. IT POSTURES YOU TO WORSHIP PEOPLE

Romans 1:25 NIV

25 They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.

When you compare and envy, you are saying... I love what you did for them more than you did for me.

- I want a refund on the life you gave me.
- I want a refund on the gifts you've given me.
- I want a refund on the blessings you've show me.
- You got it wrong God.

Envy and comparison are birthed from pride. **(BRING BACK EARLIER SLIDE WITH ENVY AND COMPARISON, THIS TIME ADD PRIDE AS THE SOURCE OF ALL THREE.)**

- Pride doesn't always occur from the high pedestal looking down
- But often occurs from the low pedestal looking up
 - God I deserve to have what they have
 - I deserve to be what they are
 - I'm entitled to what they are or have.

2. IT ROBBS YOUR JOY AND DESTROYS RELATIONSHIPS

No matter who you compare yourself to... there will always be:

- Someone smarter
- Someone taller
- Someone better looking
- Someone faster
- Someone with more money
- Someone that seems to have it easier

Living in a constant state of comparison means you will never win.

Living in a constant state of mind where you are paying more attention to others than yourself... will take your eyes off the blessings right in front of your face.

- Table illustration

You're missing what's right in front of you.

- You say... well I don't have much.
- You don't have much because you're too busy looking at someone else's stuff

Don't spend your life wishing you were someone else, because I guarantee you will get to the end of you life having wished you spent more time being you.

3. IT WILL POSITION YOU TO NOT ACTIVATE THE POTENTIAL ON THE INSIDE OF YOU

2 Corinthians 10:12 NIV

We do not dare to classify or compare ourselves with some who commend themselves. When they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are not wise.

You want a guaranteed path to unhappiness and failure... live in a constant state of comparison.

- Everytime you do something right look at someone who did it righter. 😊
- Everytime you succeed look at someone who has more success.
- Everytime you mess up look at someone who messed up badder. 😊

CLOSING

Jesus is saying to us the same things he said to Peter... what about them?

- What if I want to give them more money?
- What if I want to give them more success?
- What if I want their life to be easier than yours?
- What's that to you?

You... focus on you. You just be you... and everything will be fine.

You want the recipe for thankfulness in your life during this holiday season?

- Look around you.
- God's given you an awesome church. 😊
- God's given you family.
 - Maybe some of you your family sucks.
 - God gave you spiritual family.
- God's given you friends.
- God's given you a warm meal in a warm room on a cool night.
 - That's a lot more than most have.

So... love it. Love every minute of it. Be present here in the moment and not trying to mentally transport yourself to someone else's life.

Be thankful. You are not inferior because of your circumstances in comparison to others... you are who God made you to be. Start looking at yourself that way.