

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO



— JOHN —



JOHN 21:18-23

SCRIPTURE READING

Did I get a bad deal?



Did I get more than my share of bad stuff?
Did I get less than my share of good stuff?

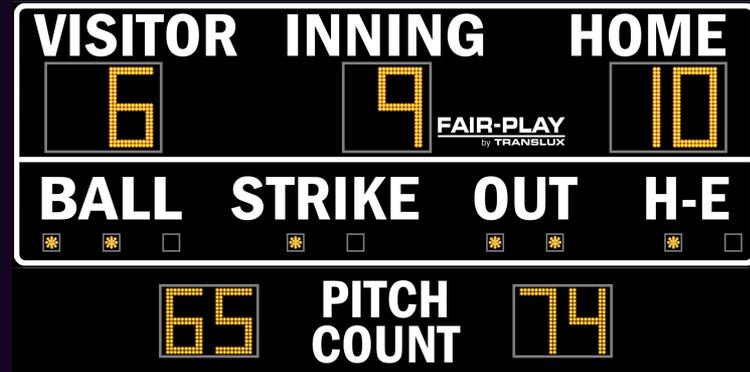
POINT 1

Comparison is natural and necessary

Comparison is the mental ability through which we understand much of the world. It's a good faculty.

Comparison and understanding

Comparison can motivate us, evoke thankfulness, mark improvement, encourage imitation, reveal trouble—it helps us learn and strive and grow.



Good Comparison:

Comparison can be clarifying and productive

NOT Genesis 4 – He doesn't compare Cain and Abel

Does:

Job 28/Prov 3:15: Wisdom

Prov 31: Godliness

Isa 40: God Himself

2 Corinthians 8: Generosity

Philippians 4: Nobility and imitation



POINT 2

Comparison is easily distorted

Without faith and humility, the flesh distorts
our perspective and our priorities.

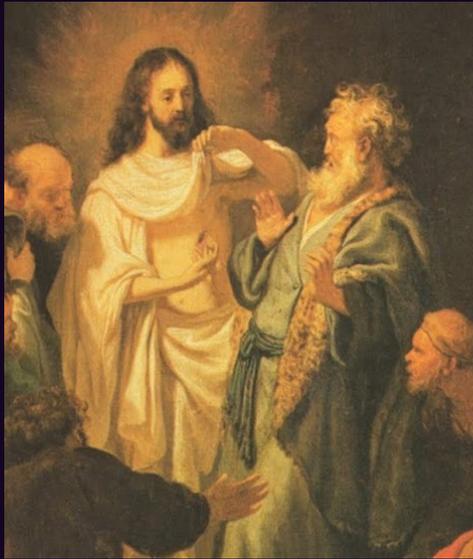


Comparison requires maturity and virtue

1. "I want to be like that." **Inspiration to imitate**
 2. "I'm off. I can improve." **Ambitious humility**
 3. "I don't care." **Rejection of principle**
 4. "I'm getting a bad deal." **Reaction against equation**
 5. "I have to win, always." **Definition of self**
 6. "I'm awesome." **Vanity, pride and entitlement**
 7. "I'm on my track with Jesus." **Humility and faith**
 8. "I should help from my good portion." **Responsibility**
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Distortion can happen to the best

Thomas and Peter had displayed the *most* faith



The Slide: distortion

From "is this good?" to "Am I getting a good deal?"

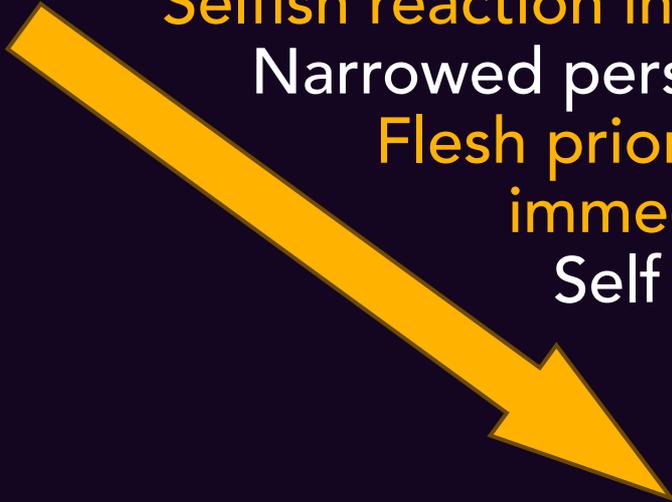
Selfish reaction instead of humility and faith

Narrowed perspective and selfish priority

Flesh prioritizes reaction, instinctual and immediate

Self protection, justification, gratification

Utilizes anger, shame, fear and pride to justify rebellion, dejection, cowardice and indulgence





POINT 3

**Distorted
comparison robs
us of spiritual life**

Peace, joy and love are blocked
with anger and dejection

The "Life" of the disciples



"Peace be with you"
"Were overjoyed"

"Do you love
me...take care of my
sheep"

John 15: abide in Jesus, and receive the Father's pruning



Identification exercise:

What is a beneficial comparison in my life?

Or one that should be, without my self pity, vanity, and resentment?

Inspires imitation or productive action

What is an unproductive comparison in my life?

Or one that should be, without my self pity, vanity, and resentment?

Inspires anger or resentment or dejection



Identification exercise:

What is a beneficial comparison in my life?

2 Cor 8: Generosity
Job 28/prov 3:15:
Wisdom
Prov 31: Godliness
Isa 40: God Himself

Inspires imitation or productive action

What is an unproductive comparison in my life?

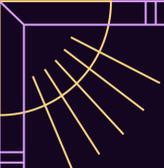
Cain- approval
Thomas- experience
Peter- hardship

Inspires anger or resentment or dejection

POINT 4

Jesus confronts distorted comparison

Kind humiliation is necessary when we
feel entitled and justified.

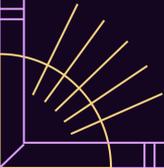


Jesus and distortion

Practicing kind humiliation

"Come over here and put your hand
in..."

"If I make him live till my return, what
is that to you?"



Jesus and distortion

Practicing kind humiliation

“Aren't real people more important than abstract principles!?!?!?!”

Fallacy: “people” vs. “principles” instead of 2 selves in conflict

Sensate and reactive self

Desire is master

Selfish ambition and conceited vanity drive decision

Produces rebellion, dejection, cowardice, and indulgence

Fruit: anxiety, misery, isolation

Spiritual and moral self

Spirit and truth rule

Humility and faith drive decisions

Produces obedience, courage, hope, and self-discipline

Fruit: Peace, Joy and Love

POINT 5

Jesus restores through humility and trust

Experiencing peace, joy and the exchange of love
(abiding) with Jesus requires our deflation and devotion



Humility and Trust

We must learn not only that Jesus is right (trust), and his portion for us is good (humility).

We also must learn how distortions motivated by comparisons will dam up our life in God and our fruitfulness under his pruning.



Distorted comparisons are the beavers of your spiritual life



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