

Games We Play: The Comparison Game

Getting started

When you played games or sports as a child, were you a good loser? How did you handle winning? Why do you think it is so easy to get pulled into the comparison game in our culture? What fuels it?

Getting stuck in

This week we are considering the cost of comparison

Pick from the questions below to encourage conversation with your group. You don't need to use them all...

- Which part of the message did you find most impactful and why?

Read again John 21:18-23

- How do you see the comparison game popping up in this passage?
- How do you feel about Peter's question and Jesus' response?
- What do you think Jesus is trying to teach Peter here and how might this help with our own struggles with comparison?
- What impact does comparison have on your relationship with God and others?
- In what ways do you find yourself asking "What about them?" in your own life? Where do you most feel the pressure to measure up? Is it with parenting, your appearance, your belongings, spiritually or something else?
- Which comparison are you most tempted to fall into: upward comparison (focusing on someone we see as better than us) or downward comparison (focusing on someone we see as worse than us)?
- When you compare yourself to others, what do you think you are really seeking? (answers could be around approval, validation, identity, security)

Getting personal

- How could you focus more on running your race this week? Where are you keeping pace rather than keeping peace? What are some practical steps you could start to take? (E.g. limit your social media time, practice gratitude, celebrate someone else's success)
- Think about the reasons you may be comparing yourself to others...how could you shift that reason to finding it in God?
- Practice gratitude. Name three things you are grateful for.

Prayer

Is there an area of your life where you know you are tempted to struggle with comparison? Let's remember that we are on level ground with God and surrender that area to him. Ask for help to keep our focus on Jesus no matter what others are doing.

Pray for the season coming up and the opportunities for invitation. Christmas can be a big comparison season for many – being tempted to overspend etc to keep up with what we see around us. Those who may be feeling loss....