**28-10-12**

**THE CURSE OF COMPARISON & COMPETITION**

**Text: Luke 18:9-14**

* Luke 18:9 Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:
* Luke 18:10 "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector
* Luke 18:11 "The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank You that I am not like other men--extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector.
* Luke 18:12 'I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.'
* Luke 18:13 "And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise [his] eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!'
* Luke 18:14 "I tell you, this man went down to his house justified [rather] than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

**INTRO:**

* Curse-an appeal or prayer for evil or misfortune to befall someone or something.
* the evil or misfortune that comes in or as if in response to such an appeal
* Driving in Autobahn
* There is no speed limit
* A man was driving on 115 mi/hr
* He felt as if others should have given him priority
* Suddenly, a car overtake him at 150 mi/hr
* He felt embarrassed
* The car he was driving was with a maximum speed of 180 mi/hr
* If he had compared his driving to the car’s maximum speed, he would not boast of 115 mi/hr

**AIM:**

* **FOR US NOT TO COMPARE AND COMPETE WITH OTHERS**

**I. THE ADMONITION NOT TO COMPARE OURSELVES TO OTHERS**

* Galatians 6:3 If you think you are too important to help someone, you are only fooling yourself. You are not that important.
* Galatians 6:4 Pay careful attention to your own work, for then you will get the satisfaction of a job well done, and you won't need to compare yourself to anyone else.
* Gal 6:5 For we are each responsible for our own conduct. (NLT).
* Jesus was telling us in this parable not to compare with others-v 11-12
* John 21:18 I tell you the truth, 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."
* John 21:19 Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, "Follow me!"
* John 21:20 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?")
* John 21:21 When Peter saw him, he asked, "Lord, what about him?"
* John 21:22 Jesus answered, "If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You must follow me."

**II. THE EVIL/MISFORTUNE THAT COME WITH COMPARISON & COMPETITION**

**1. WE BECOME SELF RIGHTEOUS**

* We see the faults of others not our own.
* We see ourselves deserving
* When we see others doing well, we find ourselves unworthy.
* The Pharisee said, “God, I thank you that I am not like other men-extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even this tax collector.
* He boasted of his deeds without seeing what he hasn’t done.
* I fast twice a week
* I give tithes of all I possess.

**2. WE WOULD NOT BE LIVING ON OUR POTENTIALS**

* Like the man who was happy with 115 mi/Hr despite the capacity of 180 mi/hr.
* We tend to live on mediocrity (below our true potentials) as majority of the world’s population are living sub-standards or ordinary.
* True success is what you have done compared to what you could have done.
* True success is not measured by how much you have done or accomplished compared to others.
* We should compare ourselves to our potentials.
* What is behind us and what is ahead of us are nothing compared to what is inside us.
* 2Cr 10:12 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.
* 2Cr 10:18 For it is not the one who commends himself who is approved, but the one whom the Lord commends.

**3. WE WOULD HAVE FALSE SENSE OF SATISFACTION**

* When you’re ahead or better than others, you feel satisfied.
* We perform to one audience only-Our Creator
* He is our manufacturer who created us with full potentials.
* He is neither happy nor satisfied with our performance if it’s below our potentials.
* Upon seeing others exceed us, we feel dissatisfied.
* The truth is there will always be someone who is better than you.

**4. COMPARING WITH OTHERS COULD MAKE YOU DISCOURAGED**

* Ex. Peter who saw John- John 21:18-22

**5. WE MAKE OURSELVES WISER THAN GOD**

* His ways are not our ways-Isa 55:8
* We insist our own as if God doesn’t know and doesn’t understand what He is doing.
* Rom 9:20 But who are you, O man, to talk back to God? "Shall what is formed say to him who formed it, 'Why did you make me like this?
* Rom 9:21 Does not the potter have the right to make out of the same lump of clay some pottery for noble purposes and some for common use?
* 6. WE WOULD HAVE ILL FEELING TOWARDS OTHERS
* Luke 15:26 "So he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant.
* Luke 15:27 "And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and because he has received him safe and sound, your father has killed the fatted calf.'
* Luke 15:28 "But he was angry and would not go in. Therefore his father came out and pleaded with him.
* Luke 15:29 "So he answered and said to [his] father, 'Lo, these many years I have been serving you;
* I never transgressed your commandment at any time; and yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might make merry with my friends.
* Luke 15:30 'But as soon as this son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood with harlots, you killed the fatted calf for him.'
* Luke 15:31 "And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me,
* Luke 15:32 'It was right that we should make merry and be glad, for your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found.' “

**7. WE WILL FORGET THAT OUR SUFFICIENCY IS FROM GOD**

* 2Cr 3:5 Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as [being] from ourselves, but our sufficiency [is] from God,
* 2Cr 3:6 who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.
* Pro 16:18 Pride [goes] before destruction, And a haughty spirit before a fall.
* James 4:6 But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble."

**8. WE WILL NEGLECT OUR PURPOSE**

* Genesis 1:28
* To be fruitful
* To be productive
* To replenish the earth
* To rule over the earth
* We spend most of our time competing with others, and comparing our achievements with theirs
* The result is devastating when we live on others’ expectation and standards of acceptance
* If we compete with ourselves, it doesn’t matter who is behind us or who is ahead of us
* Our goal is to become and achieve all we are capable of doing, and this becomes the measure of our satisfaction.
* Our principal goal in life should be to discover God’s will and purpose for our lives and to complete our assignment with excellence.
* All things are possible to those who believe-Mark 9:23
* We should be dissatisfied with mediocrity, ordinary, and average.
* Do not settle for little and abandon your dreams and purpose.
* We should not be complacent (self-satisfied) with our present measure of success.
* We would not long or yearn for more if we are willing to tolerate what we are.
* We cannot become what we were born to be by remaining what we are.
* Don’t be a pigeon if you were born to be an eagle.
* Experience altitude for your life.
* Ex. Eagles taught their little ones to fly by removing the comfort on their nest.
* The greatest gift God can offer you is to push you into a crisis of temporary discomfort that requires you to try your wings.

**9. YOU WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO FOLLOW GOD AND HIS WILL IF YOU KEEP COMPARING YOURSELF TO OTHERS.**

* Just like Peter, the older brother of the prodigal son
* Israelites in I Samuel 8:1-12
* Hebrews 12:2- FIX YOUR EYES UNTO JESUS

**CHALLENGE:**

* How often do we keep ourselves competing with others?
* Does it make us any better with our relationship with God?
* How many times you felt satisfied with your achievements because you’re ahead with others while God is still unsatisfied with you?

**CONCLUSION:**

* **Luke 18:14 "I tell you, this man went down to his house justified [rather] than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."**