

CREW Bible Study

Youth XP3 Message Series – LIKE ME – Week 2

- **BOTTOM LINE:** The more I celebrate others, the more I like me.
- **GOAL:** To help students understand that celebrating others is an effective way to combat jealousy.
- **SCRIPTURE:** *Whatever mission Saul sent him on, David was so successful that Saul gave him a high rank in the army. This pleased all the troops, and Saul's officers as well. When the men were returning home after David had killed the Philistine, the women came out from all the towns of Israel to meet King Saul with singing and dancing, with joyful songs and with timbrels and lyres. As they danced, they sang: "Saul has slain his thousands, and David his tens of thousands." Saul was very angry; this refrain displeased him greatly. "They have credited David with tens of thousands," he thought, "but me with only thousands. What more can he get but the kingdom?" And from that time on Saul kept a close eye on David. The next day an evil spirit from God came forcefully on Saul. He was prophesying in his house, while David was playing the lyre, as he usually did. Saul had a spear in his hand and he hurled it, saying to himself, "I'll pin David to the wall." But David eluded him twice. Saul was afraid of David, because the Lord was with David but had departed from Saul. So he sent David away from him and gave him command over a thousand men, and David led the troops in their campaigns. In everything he did he had great success, because the Lord was with him. When Saul saw how successful he was, he was afraid of him. – 1 Samuel 18:5-15*

MESSAGE

Have you ever tried to retrain yourself out of a habit? Here's one - with school starting soon, you might need to retrain yourself to go to bed earlier. Are you used to staying up late because you know you can sleep in? You'll probably need to rethink that and retrain yourself to get to sleep so that you can actually function clearly for class in the morning. Or maybe it's a Starbucks habit. Do you need to retrain yourself to choose more water over more coffee?

Retraining our behavior, like what time we go to sleep or the food and drinks we choose, isn't easy. But do you know what's even harder? Retraining ourselves in the way we *think*. Those thoughts we have about ourselves and about other people that are harsh, judgmental and simply rude are hard to eliminate from our brains. And that's what we're talking about today as we continue this message series called, "Like Me." Specifically, we're talking about times when those harsh, judgmental and rude thoughts are rooted in jealousy.

Sometimes jealousy can lead us to be slightly irritated at someone. And sometimes it can drive us straight to hating them. He or she may be super nice, and maybe they've never done anything truly mean to you. But once jealousy creeps into our hearts and our minds, we view that person in a different way.

Think about it. There are some people you don't like because they *are* mean to you. They ignore you, they act like they're better than you, they talk down to you, they criticize your clothes or your hair or your overall "look", maybe they spread rumors about you. And if that's the case, it makes sense *not* to like them.

But then sometimes there are people you dislike who have never done anything harmful towards you. And a reasonable explanation for you not liking them is that you're jealous of them. And that jealousy could be for a million different reasons.....

- Their ridiculous good looks
- The car they drive
- Who they're dating
- Who they're friends with
- The grades they get
- The school they got into
- The position they have on the team or in the group
- The attention they get – from everyone
- The house and the neighborhood they live in

Or maybe it's something deeper, like

- How they seem to have the perfect, unbroken family
- How their parents show up to all of their events and always have time for them
- How they are never sick, but you have a ton of health issues
- How it seems like they are so confident talking to everyone, yet talking to people makes you so nervous you'd rather crawl under a rock

Whether jealousy is over something small or runs deep, here's some truth you and I need to remember: **Jealousy changes the way you see others and it changes the way you see yourself.**

When you see things that other people have that you don't – but wish you did - jealousy can lead you to feel unhappy about your life and insecure about who you are. Looking at them makes you feel worse about you. And that's when anger enters the scene, because anger almost always follows jealousy. That person becomes the source of your unhappy feelings, and eventually the target of your anger. All of a sudden, you're not good with them and you're not good with yourself either.

So, what are we supposed to do about it?

There's a story in the Bible that deals with this exact thing. It's about a man named Saul, who was the first king of Israel. Saul was initially known as a good and generous king, courageous in battle, and respected by everyone in the kingdom. Sounds like he's got it all, right? Well, not exactly. At one point during his rule, Saul's kingdom found themselves in a battle against a fairly powerful group of people known as the Philistines. And the Philistines had a secret weapon – a giant and a champion known as Goliath. He was a big dude. He crushed people. And the people of Israel didn't think anyone would be able to stand up to him. And that's when a guy named David stepped in, saying he was ready and willing to fight Goliath. King Saul heard about him and sent for him.

Saul thought David was crazy for thinking he could take Goliath on, and Saul pushed against it. But eventually David talked Saul into it, and this is what happened. Listen to this from 1 Samuel, chapter 17, beginning with verse 48:

As the Philistine Goliath moved closer to attack him, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet him. Reaching into his bag and taking out a stone, he slung it and struck the Philistine on the forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell facedown on the ground. So David triumphed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone; without a sword in his hand he struck down the Philistine and killed him.

David became an instant hero. All of the Israelite people were amazed. And King Saul promoted David because of it. David went on to have great success. All of the people loved him. In 1 Samuel chapter 18, verse 7, we hear this about how the people were celebrating:

As they danced, they sang: "Saul has slain his thousands, and David his tens of thousands."

As the people continued to praise David for being a hero, they began to view him as being *greater* than Saul. It's not that the people turned against Saul, it's just that they really liked David. And what do you think that meant for Saul? Yep – that comparison made him jealous.

In chapter 18, verse 15 we hear this:

When Saul saw how successful David was, he was afraid of him.

Saul could have been happy for David. He could have applauded him and celebrated his continued success. He could have celebrated the fact that David helped his nation succeed. But instead, Saul saw David as a threat and himself as a failure. It says here that Saul was "afraid" of him. Remember what we said earlier? *Jealousy changes the way you see others and it changes the way you see yourself.* Saul's jealousy ruined his relationship with David and it ruined the way he saw himself. He eventually plotted to kill David and spent the majority of the rest of his life chasing after him in the hopes of taking David out.

I think we all get it – jealousy is bad. But what can we do about it? It's really hard to decide *not* to feel something you feel, right? Well, it goes back to the idea of retraining ourselves out of a habit. And it's based on this phrase: *The more I celebrate others, the more I like me.* If you want to retrain yourself away from jealousy, refocus that energy toward something good. Here's two ways to do this:

1. **Start with yourself.** Look at your own life and determine what's worth celebrating. What are you good at? What do you have to be thankful for? What's good in your life right now? These might seem like really cheesy questions, but trust me. Write these things down. Maybe even challenge yourself to write down one thing every day, no matter how small of a thing you think it is. Try it.
2. **Celebrate Them.** When you feel that tug towards jealousy, ask yourself what you can celebrate about that person. What is good about them? Create another path of thinking that can override the one you currently have. Again, it may sound cheesy, but fill in the blank for this: "Good for them that they have _____. That's them. My time will come."

Look, it's really important to realize that jealousy is a habit we all struggle with. It can hurt us and hurt our relationships. But God wants to help you be free from it. He created you to be you, not to wish you were someone else. Spend more time celebrating others and then celebrate yourself. Cheer them on and it'll help you like yourself more too.

FAMILY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Who is one person, real or even fictional, you are jealous of? What do they have that you wish you had?
2. How have you seen jealousy affect the way people treat others?
3. Have you ever recognized that someone was jealous of you? How did that make you feel? What happened?
4. In which of these areas are you more likely to feel jealous of someone?
 - a. Their looks (hair, skin, body)
 - b. Their possessions (clothes, car, stuff)
 - c. Who they're friends with or who they're dating
 - d. Their grades, GPA, school or program acceptance
 - e. Their rank on the team, chair in choir or band, part in the play
 - f. Their family
5. How do you think it makes God feel when you're jealous over other people and the things they have? Do you think it makes Him feel like you're not thankful for who He created you to be and for the things He has blessed you with?
6. Think of someone you are jealous of right now and complete this phrase: "Good for them that they have _____. That's them. My time will

come.” How can celebrating them in this way help to change your perspective of them and of yourself?

7. Read Proverbs 14:30. Does this verse make you think differently about jealousy?
8. Challenge yourself this week to do two things:
 - a. Write down one thing every day this week that you are thankful for and can celebrate.
 - b. Talk to God about who and what fuels your jealousy. Ask Him to help you retrain your thinking to celebrate others and like yourself more.