



THE COMPARISON TRAP Part 1: The Land of Er

INTRODUCTION

We've all heard of a win-win outcome. But as Andy Stanley points out in this message, we are daily engaging in a lose-lose activity and we may not even realize how destructive it is. Being rich-er or smart-er or funny-er may feel like a short-term win, but for ourselves, our families, and our marriages, comparison is a game with no winners.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When you played games or sports as a child, were you a good loser? How did you handle winning?
2. Have you ever had to work hard to meet someone else's expectations? How did it affect your relationship with that person?
3. What is your greatest ambition in life right now? What are you doing to pursue it? Is that ambition motivated at all by comparing yourself to others?
4. Are you exhausted or broke from trying to keep up with friends or neighbors? If so, explain.
5. Is there anyone you secretly enjoy seeing fail? What can you do to extend that person grace?
6. What is one thing you can do this week to allow the thought of tranquility—contentment—to help you pause in the midst of the comparison trap?

MOVING FORWARD

Maybe you've racked up debt trying to keep up with your neighbors. Maybe your high expectations drive your spouse or kids crazy. Maybe you have relatives you don't get along with because you envy what they have and rejoice in their failures.

You can't genuinely love someone whom you secretly hope will fail. You can't genuinely love someone whom you're pushing to meet a standard so you can feel better about yourself. There's no win in comparison. There's never a finish line or sense of satisfaction.

CHANGING YOUR MIND

Better one handful with tranquility than two handfuls with toil and chasing after the wind.

Ecclesiastes 4:6