

ESSENTIALS FOR A NEW YEAR

Definition of Essential: Absolutely Necessary; extremely important

...love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.' The second is equally important: 'Love your neighbor as yourself'... Mark 12:30-31 (NLT)

- Love **God** completely and love **others** intentionally.
- **Love** Is essential.

...no matter what I say, what I believe, and what I do, I'm bankrupt without love. 1 Corinthians 13:3 (MSG)
Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 (NIV)
Once we, too, were foolish and disobedient. We were misled and became slaves to many lusts and pleasures. Our lives were full of evil and envy, and we hated each other. But— When God our Savior revealed his kindness and love, he saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit. Titus 3:3-5 (NLT)

Biblical definition of envy:

■ **Resenting** God's goodness in other's lives.

I **deserve** what God has given you, more than you.

How envy prevents us from loving others:

- We look at other's through a lens of **selfishness**.

Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Romans 12:15 (ESV)

- We look at others through a lens of **competition**.

When you do things, do not let selfishness or pride be your guide. Instead, be humble and give more honor to others than to yourselves. Philippians 2:3 (NCV)

- We look at others through a lens of **bitterness**.

■ **Ignoring** God's goodness in our own lives.

But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. Such "wisdom" does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. James 3:14-15 (NIV)

What God has blessed me with is **not enough**.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever. Psalm 23:6 (ESV)

Let all that I am praise the Lord; may I never forget the good things he does for me. He forgives all my sins and heals all my diseases. He redeems me from death and crowns me with love and tender mercies. He fills my life with good things. Psalm 103:2-5 (NLT)

- Envy degrades **others** and dismisses God's **goodness**.

- **Pride** is present when love is absent.

Don't let selfishness and prideful agendas take over. Embrace true humility, and lift your heads to extend love to others. Philippians 2:3

Envy is a **heart** problem.

When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, the results are very clear: sexual immorality, impurity, lustful pleasures, idolatry, sorcery, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissension, division, envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other sins like these. Galatians 5:19-20 (NLT)

... I've learned to be content in whatever situation I'm in. I know how to live in poverty or prosperity. No matter what the situation, I've learned the secret of how to live when I'm full or when I'm hungry, when I have too much or when I have too little. Philippians 4:11-12 (GWT)

Content: The ability to see our current condition as sufficient or enough. To be satisfied in life.

God will always provide **enough**.

He cares for them when times are hard; even in famine, they will have enough. Psalm 37:19 (TLB)

Enough means:

- It's not about how much we have but the **satisfaction** with what we have.

For he satisfies the longing soul, and the hungry soul he fills with good things. Psalm 107:9 (ESV)

- It's not about getting what we want but trusting that God knows what we **need**.

And don't be concerned about what to eat and what to drink. Don't worry about such things. These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers all over the world, but your Father already knows your needs. Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and he will give you everything you need. Luke 12:29-31 (NLT)

- It's not about what we don't have, it's accepting that what God provides is **sufficient**.

4 ...The Lord is the provider for my life. Psalm 54:4 (GWT)

God will generously provide all you need... 2 Corinthians 9:8 (NLT)

The secret to being content:

- Don't focus on the **people** around you; focus on God within you.

I have the strength to face all conditions by the power that Christ gives me. Philippians 4:13 (GNT)

Whatever I have, wherever I am, I can make it through anything in the One who makes me who I am.

Philippians 4:13 (MSG)

- Trust that God, who **cares** for you, will **provide** for you.

You can be sure that God will take care of everything you need, his generosity exceeding even yours in the glory that pours from Jesus. Philippians 4:19 (MSG)

Gods blessings may not be **complete** in the moment, but we trust him, knowing He is good and he is not **finished**.



TO CREATIVELY LOVE AND LEAD PEOPLE IN A GROWING RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS.

Questions for Connection Groups:

These questions also work well for personal time with God.

- What scripture and/or point spoke most to you from the Talk on Sunday? Explain why?
- In your own words, How does envy prevent us from loving others? Do you think we are a people that struggles with envy? Explain why you feel that way.
- Talk through the points about the Biblical definition of envy.
- Do you think we tend to dismiss God's goodness? How?
- Talk through the points under "Enough means".
- How does focusing on God keep us from envying others?
- Do you trust that God cares and will provide for you?
- Why is it important to remember that God is not finished with our current condition?

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