



Helping Kids Overcome Envy God's Way

When Someone Else Gets What I Want

Raising Christ-Centered Kids | Feelings | Envy

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"A tranquil heart gives life to the flesh, but envy makes the bones rot." (Proverbs 14:30, ESV)

Key Takeaway

We can let envy go because God's blessings never run out.

The Biblical Meaning of Envy

Envy is that "it's not fair!" feeling we get when someone else receives the good thing we wanted. Maybe your child sees a friend get picked first, a sibling receives a bigger slice, or another classmate earns praise. Instead of feeling happy, their heart feels tight and upset. The Bible calls this envy, and it warns us that it always steals peace.

It helps to know that jealousy and envy are like cousins—closely related but not the same. Jealousy says, "Don't take what's mine." Envy says, "I want what you have." Both turn our eyes away from God's gifts and toward what someone else has.

Envy can feel like quiet anger toward another person's success. It slips out in small ways through complaining, gossiping, or putting others down. When we chase selfish goals or compare ourselves to others, life starts to feel messy and unsettled inside (James 3:16). God gives peace when our hearts are rightly ordered in loving Him first and above all our other desires and trusting His plan for us not our plan. His Kingdom is built on grace, not on comparison or rivalry. When our hearts rest in God's love, we find joy again. We can celebrate others' blessings because we trust that God hasn't forgotten ours. His goodness never runs out.

Understanding Envy: When Someone Else Gets What I Want

Kids often feel envy when a sibling gets more attention, a teammate scores the winning goal, or a friend gets the new toy. Their instinct is to cry out, "That's not fair!" Envy is a normal feeling, but if we let it grow, it can hurt friendships and hearts.



Parent Guide | Envy

Even Jesus' disciples struggled with envy. After He told them He came to love and serve, they argued about who was most important (Mark 9). Jesus didn't scold them. He placed a child beside Him and showed that real greatness in God's Kingdom comes from humility and trust. That moment turned the world's idea of greatness upside down. God doesn't measure our worth by our wins, but by our willingness to love.

When your child feels left out or overlooked, remind them: God sees them. Every blessing someone else receives is proof that God's hand is generous, not limited. The more we trust His heart, the freer we become. Envy shrinks when gratitude grows.

Practical Steps: Helping Kids Overcome Envy God's Way

1. **Name It** — When your child says, "That's not fair," gently say, "It sounds like you're feeling envy." Help them see it's a feeling they can bring to God, not hide.
2. **Celebrate Others** — When a sibling or friend succeeds, guide your child to say one kind thing: "I'm happy for you." Celebrating others weakens envy's grip.
3. **Practice Gratitude** — At bedtime, share one good thing God gave today—a meal, a laugh, a hug. Gratitude softens the heart and reminds us of His daily care.
4. **Stay Present** — Encourage your child to enjoy the moment they're in. Say, "Right now, what can we thank God for together?" Comparison loses power when joy fills the present.
5. **Follow Jesus' Way** — Jesus chose humility over competition and service over status. Invite your child to think of one simple way to serve someone this week—a note, a chore, a kind word.

Scripture for Parents and Kids

- *"Where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice."* (James 3:16, ESV)
- *"Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another."* (Galatians 5:26)
- *"Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep."* (Romans 12:15)

Encouragement for Parents

Envy can show up in every home—it's part of learning to love the way Jesus loves. Don't be discouraged when you notice it; see it as a moment for grace. God is shaping your child's heart to trust His goodness more deeply. Your own example is the best teacher: when you celebrate others, express gratitude out loud, or let go of what you didn't get, your child will notice. God's love never runs out, and His Spirit gives you both the desire and strength to turn envy into joy.

CTMP Corner: Kingdom Kids in Action

- **Connect:** Listen when your child says, "That's not fair," and help them name the feeling.
- **Teach:** Share Proverbs 14:30 in your own words: "Peace makes you strong inside, but envy hurts your heart."
- **Model:** Rejoice out loud when someone else succeeds.
- **Pray:** "Lord, help us to find joy in what You give and celebrate others with thankful hearts."