

# The Snare of Comparison

## I. The Lesson

It's been accurately observed that artistic and musical people are the worst, or the most susceptible, when it comes to battling with pride and insecurity. Due to the nature of worship ministry, what we do is usually the object of public scrutiny as well as praise. The audience may not be holding up score cards, but it often feels like it. The snare of comparison is never far from the worship stage, while the enemies of pride and discouragement are usually lurking in the parking lot after the meeting. **Living above the snare of comparison** requires maturity and knowing who we are in Christ.

**2 Cor. 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."

When we compare our church with other churches, compare our talent with the talent of others, or compare our effectiveness with the effectiveness of another person or ministry we are **setting ourselves up for failure**.

*A Brief Story from Dave...*

"I remember the summer I finally got to go the Hillsong Worship Conference in Sydney Australia. There were over 25,000 people in attendance in the greatest display of local church talent, creativity, and production that I have ever witnessed! I remember being blown away, inspired, and challenged by what I experienced. But that didn't last long. Soon, I began to sink into mild depression right in the middle of the conference as I begin to compare our worship ministry with theirs. I realized that we would *never* reach the levels they had achieved."

Here are the basic flaws and traps of comparison:

1. If I compare myself with someone who is less talented or does not have as much experience (and they are usually all around), it becomes apparent that they have a ways to go or may never reach the level of proficiency that I am operating in. This opens the door for \_\_\_\_\_.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. We see these traps surface when: someone close to us gets promoted and we do not, someone writes a song that everyone loves to sing while our song gets ignored, someone is hired for the position or recognized by people we wanted to be recognized by. There is a devastating, demonic force that is released when we give place to jealousy and envy. It actually causes church leaders and ministries to secretly hope for the demise of "competing churches" and ministries. Comparison is the root.

3. If I compare myself with someone who is more talented and has more experience than myself (and they are usually not far away), it becomes apparent that I will probably never reach their level of proficiency, gifting, or anointing. This can open the door to \_\_\_\_\_.

Ways we can deal with comparison and its related issues:

1. Comparison is best dealt with by discovering who we are in Christ and realizing that each of us has been given \_\_\_\_\_ gifts and talents that represent the wisdom of God. He knew what He could entrust to each of us, and in that we can find contentment.

**Phil. 4:12-13** "I have learned **the secret of being content** in any and every situation...I can do everything through him who gives me strength."

2. The snare of comparison is dealt a death blow when we learn to prepare, minister, play, and worship for an \_\_\_\_\_ !
3. In order to avoid this snare and the resulting pride, jealousy or discouragement, it is important to have someone, or a couple people, around you! These need to be people who love you, are mature in the Lord, have your best interest in mind, and will speak the truth as they \_\_\_\_\_ what you do. This will give you an objective look at your gifting, potential, and current effectiveness.

## II. Discussion

1. What are some subtle ways that we succumb to the snare of comparison with other churches and worship teams?
2. How has someone else's amazing gift and talent caused you to become discouraged?
3. What are some practical and effective tools that we can implement to know who we are in Christ?
4. What can we do to prepare our hearts to successfully attend a conference or another church's service without experiencing discouragement, pride, or jealousy?
5. How does pride manifest itself in our lives and our worship team?
6. How can we guard against this snare as our worship team grows in the future?

## III. Prayer Points

1. Pray and repent of any spirit of pride or comparison. Ask for a spirit of humility to rest upon every team-member's heart.
2. Pray that discouragement would be broken off every member who feels inadequate or unworthy to serve.
3. Pray for the discernment to quickly identify jealousy and envy and then to deal with them quickly!
4. Pray that the Holy Spirit would help us to live, play, sing, and worship to an audience of One; to learn how to be complete and fulfilled as sons and daughters and not performers.
5. Ask for the ability to see the "snare" of comparison long before you step into it.
6. Pray for contentment and fulfillment for every team member as they grow into their unique calling and gifting.