

middle school



Lesson 10 / February 5, 2023

The Greener Grass Syndrome

By RLD Editorial Team

for use as
STEP 1



Lesson 10

Focus:

Comparison can lead to discontent.

Lesson 10

Bible Basis:

Matthew 20:1–16

Lesson 10

Memory Verse:

And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus. —Philippians 4:19

Students will watch a video about amazing kids' rooms and begin to see how comparison can steal their joy.

Materials:

- ☐ Internet access
- ☐ Whiteboard and marker (or screenshared document)

Welcome your students as they enter. As everyone settles in, ask the students to share their favorite thing about their bedroom. Maybe they love that they don't have to share with a sibling or that they just got a new comforter. They could like the paint color or the new gaming system they got for Christmas. Make sure each of your students shares something they like about it—even if it is limited to "it's cozy" or "it's nice to have someplace to go when I am tired." As your students respond, write their answers about what makes their bedroom great on the whiteboard (or screenshared document).

We all have a lot to be thankful for. It can be easy to feel a little jealous of what someone else has if it seems better than ours though, can't it? Let's watch a video of some of the coolest kids' bedrooms out there.

Share the following video [3:52]:

Cool Kids' Bedrooms Ideas in 2022

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QsnwDKS6NxQ>

➤ **What were some of your favorite rooms, design ideas, or features from the video we just watched?** (Answers will vary.)

➤ **What would your ideal bedroom be like?** (Answers will vary. Encourage creative discussion.)

➤ **How does seeing these amazing rooms or hearing about friends' rooms that might be cooler than yours change how you feel about your own?** (While some may insist they like their room best, most will probably say, "Yes, it makes me wish I had a different room.")

➤ **Do these amazing bedrooms change anything about what yours is like?** (No. Our rooms are still exactly the same.)

It's funny how comparing what we have to what others have can change how we feel about the blessings God's given us. We started by discussing what we love about our rooms, and we ended dreaming about things we don't have. Somehow, what we have can seem a little bit worse when we compare it to what someone else has. Let's take a look at a story Jesus told warning us against doing just that.

(Continue on to Steps 2 and 3 in your teacher's guide; your Step 4 appears below.)

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STEP 4 **Lesson 10****Focus:**

Comparison can lead to discontent.

Lesson 10**Bible Basis:**

Matthew 20:1–16

Lesson 10**Memory Verse:**

And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus. —Philippians 4:19

Materials:

- ☐ Whiteboard and markers (or screenshared document)
- ☐ Index cards (6 per student)
- ☐ Pens/pencils
- ☐ Envelopes (1 per student)

If your class is meeting online, invite your students to bring index cards, envelopes, and pens/pencils with them to class.

Many of us can often find ourselves in the position of the day laborers from today's story. It's so easy to get sucked into thinking about what we don't have instead of being thankful for what we do have. What does our memory verse remind us?

Ask one student volunteer to read the memory verse (Philippians 4:19).

God promises to meet all our needs, although this may not always be in the ways we expect or in the ways we want. God's promise of provision is great news! Think about how much peace we can have when we focus on all the good God's given us and all the good He's promised us. It's easy to forget that in our daily lives though, isn't it? Thankfully, there's a way to combat our discontentment: gratitude. Remembering what we're thankful for is the perfect antidote to dissatisfaction and jealousy. Let's start practicing gratitude now.

Ask for a volunteer or two to be the scribes and stand at the whiteboard. Give the students two minutes to write down all the things they're thankful for. When you're finished, have everyone look at the list. (If your class is meeting online, invite students to share items they're thankful for as you record them on the screenshared document.)

➤ **How does it feel to think about all the things you're thankful for?** (I feel happy, I realize that my life is pretty good, etc.)

➤ **How does it feel when you think about all the things you don't have instead?** (I feel jealous, annoyed, angry, discontent, etc.)

Hand out one envelope per student plus index cards and pens/pencils. (If your class is meeting online, invite students to have supplies ready at home.) Ask each student to write the word “Gratitude” on their envelope. Make sure each student has six index cards. Have them write each day of the week (one per index card) from Monday to Saturday across the top of the cards. Under the day of the week on each card, have students write numbers 1–5 in list format so they can add items they’re thankful for.

Challenge them to keep track of things they’re thankful for each day. They should try to write down at least five things every day without duplicating anything. Once they have filled out their card for the day, they should put it in their envelope. Every night before they go to bed, urge them to set aside some time to pray thanking God for all of those blessings. **At the end of the week, look over all your daily lists of gratitude. See if your attitude changes during the week when you’re focused on gratitude instead of comparison.**

End by praying together. During the prayer, ask each student to thank God for one thing. End the prayer by asking for the strength to stop the comparison game and live in gratitude.

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