Compare, Copy, Increase

Introduction

- Modern culture encourages unhealthy comparison
- Paul teaches there are both wrong and right ways to compare
- Understanding biblical comparison helps us grow spiritually and support others

Point 1 - The Wrong Way to Compare (2 Corinthians 10:12-18)

- Measuring ourselves by worldly standards
  - Comparing based on external appearances or possessions
  - Self-commendation and boasting
  - Focusing on personal achievements
- Paul warns this is "not wise" (2 Cor 10:12) and can lead to envy, jealousy, and discouragement

Point 2 - The Right Way to Compare

- Compare to imitate faith (Hebrews 13:7)
  - Consider the outcome of godly leaders' lives
  - Focus on their faith, not their failures
  - Learn from their example while honouring them and giving them no judgment
- Compare to glorify God (2 Cor 10:17)
  - "He who glories, let him glory in the Lord"
  - Boast about what God is doing in others
  - Celebrate others' spiritual growth

Point 3 - Biblical Example - Corinth and Philippi

- Paul's approach to comparison (2 Corinthians 8:1-11, 9:1-5)
  - Told Corinthians about Philippians' generosity
  - Shared Corinthians' willingness with Philippians
  - Used comparison to encourage greater faithfulness
- Principles of Giving (2 Cor 9:6-8)
  - Sow bountifully to reap bountifully
  - Give cheerfully, not grudgingly
  - Trust God's provision
- Partnership in Ministry (Philippians 4:14-19)
  - Shared rewards in gospel work
  - Mutual encouragement and support
  - God's promise to supply all needs

Other verses used: Mat 10:40-42, Judg 11:30 - 40, Jer 19:5, 2Co 9:6-15, Phl 1:3-7

Conclusion -

- Compare correctly - imitate others' faith, encourage and celebrate what God is doing in others.
- Partner with fellow believers in ministry
- Trust God's provision and give generously
- Interpret scripture properly: Bear in mind three levels of truth:
  1. Clear statements of truth in Bible
  2. Biblical stories interpreted through these truths
  3. Modern testimonies that need to be evaluated by Scripture