

Who are you living to please?

INTRODUCTION

1. Whose approval is important to you? Who do you want to please or get approval from?

Some answers:

- a) Myself
- b) Parent's / teachers
- c) Teen Leaders
- d) Older Disciples
- e) Friends

2. Why?

- a) to be accepted , liked, popular
- b) to feel good about myself
- c) because it feels good to be praised.

The goal of the study is to help you to see the importance of pleasing God and seeking praise and approval from him

1. John 5:41-44

*41 "I do not accept praise from men,
42 but I know you. I know that you do not have the love of God in your hearts.
43 I have come in my Father's name, and you do not accept me; but if someone else comes in his own name, you will accept him.
44 How can you believe if you accept praise from one another, yet make no effort to obtain the praise that comes from the only God ?*

What is Jesus teaching in these scriptures?

- a) We need to follow his example by focusing on getting praise from God, not from people.
- b) We will please whom we love.

Bottom line: These people knew the truth but did not follow it because of peer pressure. They cared more about their reputation with people than they cared about doing what was right before God.

2. Galatians 1:10

Am I now trying to win the approval of men, or of God? Or am I trying to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a servant of Christ.

What does Paul tell us about the difference between pleasing people and pleasing God?

They are opposites!

When are you tempted to do the God-pleasing thing but with people-pleasing motives?

- a) going to church
- b) obeying parents just because they said so, not because we want to please God.
- c) serving but want recognition for all you do by peers or leaders

Bottom line: when we strive to please God, we may not be popular with the world, but keep in mind that man's approval is temporary, while God's approval is eternal!

3. Mark 12:14

They came to him and said, "Teacher, we know you are a man of integrity. You aren't swayed by men, because you pay no attention to who they are; but you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not?"

What does it mean to be "swayed by men"? Who are you most likely to be swayed by?

What does "integrity" mean?

- a) sticking to your convictions no matter what
- b) doing what you said you would do and doing it on time

Bottom line: Jesus was not swayed by men because he saw them from a spiritual perspective. We need to imitate this quality in him

4. 2 Corinthians 5:9-10

9 So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it.

10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

Why should we care about trying to please God?

- a) It doesn't just happen - it has to be a set goal.
- b) We all (every single person, whether we believe in God or not) will be accountable for our lives.
- c) Jesus died for us and we need to live to please him.

PERSONAL HEART - CHECK QUESTIONS

1. Can you relate to the people-pleasing Pharisees in any way?
2. Have you counted the cost of studying the Bible? Becoming a Christian will affect your reputation with your non-Christian friends.
3. What do your lifestyle and your priorities say about how much faith you have in God?

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

Make three columns on a page.

In the first column, list all the activities you are involved in everything, including studying the Bible, school activities, free time, etc.

In the next column, write the reason you think you participate in it. Ask others who know you well to tell you why they think you are involved. Allow them to point out the areas where they see you "loving praise from men rather than from God"

Write their insights in the third column.

Be honest and encourage honesty bring the list to your next study and review it with your teen leader. This will help you to see whom you are living to please and decide to please God instead.

Write out a one-page essay about why you really want to study the Bible.

To the leaders of the study

People pleasing is predominant among teens. As they develop a strong sense of their own identity, they seek approval and acceptance from others. Christian parented teens are commonly motivated by people pleasing to study the Bible, they feel great deal of pressure to study the Bible to please the Christian parents sibling and friends. They can strive to give the "right" responses to questions not necessarily their own true hard felt responses.