



### Approval of Other People

Daily Devotional Guide/Notes: May 19-25, 2024

The Metaphorical Carrot ... *that we never quite catch, but always chase*  
Our cultural carrots?

**1. Fame/Success** (be more important than, have power over others)

- it works for a season, until your "success" isn't successful enough.  
Then you need more.

- do we measure our "success" by God's definition of it?

**2. Perfection** (longings for what doesn't exist: "if only" this, then...)

- perfect regarding other people (Jesus calls it judging)  
- perfect regarding our circumstances (is there such a thing?)

**THE REAL PROBLEM?**

Mt 5:48, "*you* are to be perfect... spiritually perfect

- Jesus is concerned with your SOUL, not circumstances

**3. Money and Stuff** (items, wealth, treasures)

- key is glorifying God with your money via contentment, self-control, patience, faithfulness, and generosity

**4. Approval of Other People**

**5. Comfort (life without suffering or sacrifice)**

CARROTS = IDOLS that our culture considers "solutions"

= Bread that does not satisfy, but we think it will

**If Satan is going to ruin your life, how is he going to do it?**

Gen 3 - Adam and Eve in paradise, but no longer content. By shifting Adam and Eve's focus from current blessings to the proverbial carrot, Satan set in motion the Fall of humanity ...

**SATAN SAYS: Keep "chasing the dream/carrot," and eventually it will satisfy and work for you, even though (in the past) it always leaves you hungry for more and hasn't satisfied "yet".**

\*Did God really say, "don't eat that apple"? A: Yes, indeed He did.

**The Great Reversal (yet again):**

**You have heard it said..... but I say to you.....**

Biblical Images of Culture/Satan's path to "satisfaction"

- Mt 7:13-14 "The **WIDE PATH** leads to destruction...

- John 1:1-5, "the people live in **DARKNESS**..."

John 6:26, "Stop working so hard for food that doesn't satisfy..."

**Today's Topic: APPROVAL OF OTHER PEOPLE**

\*Why does approval satisfy "today," but tomorrow you are hungry again?

**A: Because:**

**1) YOU are not Bread of Life for other people; and,**

**2) THEY are not Bread of Life for you**

a. others will inevitably get frustrated with you over time

b. and you will inevitably get frustrated with them over time too

\*it is the human tendency to dwell on imperfection and be a critic; while

we also prioritize criticism/imperfection over praise and compliments

Ex. 100 positive comments, but 1 negative, which gets your attention?

**B. If we allow the approval AND disapproval (criticisms, complaints, anger, conflict, etc) of other people to determine our identity, self-esteem, and contentment in life, when will that ever happen?**

... when does EVERYONE approve of you? A: never

**C. Even more, the more faithful your walk with Christ, the more you are going to upset certain other people.**

**Faithfulness to Jesus = CONFLICT/disapproval from Others**

**\*\*\*In the same context as John 15:1-17, I AM the Vine**

- and, "if you stay connected to me, you will bear much good fruit"

- **Jesus then goes on to say, John 15:18-22,** "If the world hates you, know that it hated me first. <sup>19</sup> If you belonged to the world, the world would love you as its own. However, I have chosen you out of the world, and you don't belong to the world. This is why the world hates you.<sup>20</sup> Remember what I told you, '**Servants aren't greater than their master.**' **If the world harassed me, it will harass you too**"

Which leads to dozens of Bible verses warning us about this:

**John 12:43,** "they loved human praise more than God's glory."

**Gal 1:10,** "Am I trying to win over human beings or God? Or am I trying to please people or God?"

**John 5:44,** "I don't accept praise from people, <sup>42</sup> but I know you, that you don't have God's love in you. <sup>43</sup> I have come in my Father's name, and you don't receive me. If others come in their own name, you receive them. <sup>44</sup> How can you believe, when you receive praise from each other but don't seek the praise that comes from the only God?"

**Acts 5:29,** "Peter replied, "We must obey God rather than people!"

**Jesus was NOT a "PEOPLE PLEASER"**

5 Examples (from hundreds) from the early chapters of Mark's Gospel

Mark 1:13 - Satan tried to Control Jesus via the Temptations

Response: NO! For the Word of God says, "...

Mark 1:32-34 - The Multitudes Were Pressuring Jesus to Heal Them

- Response: No! Jesus Left the Crowds to Spend Time Alone
- Mk 2:18 - John's Disciples and Pharisees Pressured Him to Conform
- Response: No! For "New Wine is put in New Wineskins"
- Mk 3:22 - Legal Experts Pressured Him to Stop Casting Out Demons
- Response: No! For, "A house divided cannot stand"
- Mk 3:31 - His own Family Pressured Him to Give Them More Attention
- Response: No! For, "Who is My family?"

**POINT: Jesus' goal was never to please people. Rather, He helped people as He sought to please and do the WILL OF HIS FATHER. Jesus said "yes" many times, but only when his "yes" was in alignment with the Father's will. Jesus was NEVER pressured into any decision, even when it cost Him His life on the cross. And, Jesus certainly NEVER FOUND HIS IDENTITY or self-esteem in the praise OR criticism of others.**

- John 6:38, "I have come to do the will of the Father who sent Me"
- John 4:34, "My food is to do the will of the One who sent Me"
- You NEVER SEE JESUS yielding to the pressure of others' will
- You ALWAYS SEE JESUS giving his "locus of control" to God

### **Your Locus of Control - Who or What is controlling you?**

Locus of Control = that FOCAL POINT within you THAT HAS POWER/MASTERY over you

- who or what controls your emotions?
- who or what controls your peace?
- who or what controls your schedule?
- who or what controls your finances?
- who or what controls your Sabbath?
- who or what controls your daily walk with Christ?

MAJOR POINT! You ALWAYS lose yourself, to whoever or whatever it is that controls you.

- this can actually be YOURSELF (in selfishness/narcissism)
- this can be OTHER PEOPLE'S OPINIONS
- this can be WORK, ACTIVITIES, WEALTH, etc
- this can be MONEY
- this can be a LONGING FOR COMFORT/SECURITY
- OR this can be God

The Problem when God is NOT in control of you? (then who/what is?)

- you DETACH from the Vine, seeking nourishment from NOT-VINE
- Your soul becomes malnourished, because BAD SOURCES
- Rather than God's Will, now it's YOUR/THEIR will "be done" on earth

**NOTE: God is NOT in control, unless you willingly GIVE it to Him**

- God does not manipulate/coerce human free will

- if you want God's opinion or "approval," then you must do God's Will, not the will of yourself or other people

- God only takes the reigns/the yoke, if we ASK Him to

To some solutions (the takeaway):

### **I. THE LORD'S PRAYER and Mt 6:10**

- Thy Will BE Done
  - you take BACK your LoC and give it to God
- Give us This Day, Our Daily Bread
  - you recognize, True Bread only comes from God

**II. THE GREAT COMMANDMENT and Mark 12:30-31, "you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your being, with all your mind, and with all your strength. <sup>31</sup> The second is this, You will love your neighbor as yourself. No other commandment is greater than these."**

\*Reject Idolatry:

Idolatry = giving your LoC, ie loving, to someone/thing other than God

I.D.O.L.S (Rom 1:25, "served the creation, rather than the Creator)

- Items: You give your LoC to possessions, money, house, wealth
  - Lk 12:15, "Your life is not defined by possessions, money, wealth"
- Duties: You give your LoC to work, worldly responsibilities
  - we are supposed to work, but work is not supposed to define us.
  - "WHO YOU ARE" defines you, not "what you do"
- Others: You give your LoC over to People-pleasing and/or codependency which leads to smothering, neediness, resentment and/or emotional instability
  - Only Jesus is VINE or Bread of Life
    - your spouse, kids, friends, family are NOT
- Longings for a PERFECT future circumstances:

You give your LoC to a future "fix," rather than what exists - Covid anxiety was a good example: We can't live our lives, we can't move forward until covid is gone. Really? Now that covid is gone, is the world happier, more at peace, joyful place?

- COMFORT/relief from Sufferings is the Goal, not faithfulness

For Reflection: Often the most critical, abusive, or selfish people have the most control over you (who holds your attention more, the critic or the compliment?); Often the most

unhealthy THINGS have most control (what holds your attention or drives your emotions more, what you have, or what you don't have, that you want?)

- a. Do you really want the most toxic people in your life possessing your Locus of Control?
- b. Who owns your Locus of Control today? You, others, or God?
- c. Where in your life do you long for "approval of others" even if it means you dismiss God's will and way?
- d. What would it take for you to 100% live into "Thy will be Done, on earth as it is in heaven"?

#### Items of Note:

**Contemplate and Create...a Thoughtful Look into the Parables JUNE 2 after church** - Join artist, Sherri Jones, for a simple, slow and sweet gathering for anyone wanting to bring the parable of "The Sower" to life. June 2, 12:30PM-2:00PM. Experience the beauty of scripture, stillness and silence followed by playful watercolor painting. Supplies provided. Lunch will be provided! Sign up online

**May Men's Hangout THIS TUES-** Hey Guys, come out to Portillo's in Presidio on Tuesday, May 21st at 6:30PM to get some grub and hangout together. See Shawn Finney for questions

**Missions Focus for April/May** - These months, we're collecting toiletry items for the Presbyterian Night Shelter. Find a list of needed items at the Mission kiosk

**Can we join in prayer with or for you?** Drop your prayer off in the offering box or email: Mary Anne at corriendo01@gmail.com

**Counseling scholarships available** pastor@lifepointfellowship.com

### DAILY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

**HABIT 1 of Faithful Discipleship: Have a daily devotional. How? 3 Steps:**

#### I. Work through the 5 Prayer Forms

##### **1 - Begin w/Centering Prayer**

- Mt 11:28-30, Name and Release your burdens/distractions to Christ
- Psalm 46:10, Consciously seek to clear your mind and "Be Still"

##### **2 - Intentionally Glorify (worship) the Lord**

- involves your participation by glorifying God, adoration, praise and worship
- Name the "Good" within you (the specific "fruit" you are experiencing today, like peace, or love, or joy, or hope, faithfulness, goodness, etc.)
- Name the "Good" around you (Gen 1:31, "And God saw that it was good.")
  - a. What do you see that God has made that is good today in the creation?
- Participate: Lift Up the "Good in You" with the "Good In Creation" in worship

##### **3 - Confess Your Sins**

- a. What have you done that is wrong? (From works to 7 Deadly sins)
- b. What have you left undone that would have been right?

##### **4 - Give Thanks to God for your Blessings** (name them)

##### **5 - Make Your Requests to God**

- a. for other people who are on your heart
  - include your church leadership and family
  - include people you know who need to accept Christ/get right with Him
- b. Make requests to God for yourself

#### 2. Time of Listening to God through His Words

Read through the daily scripture passages, with the goal to "hear from God" on any point you feel relates to you. Stop and reflect on those truths.

**May 20 - Mon** - Mark 12    **May 21 Tues** - Mt 5    **May 22 Wed** - Gal 1

**May 23 Thur** - John 12    **May 24 Fri** - Acts 5    **May 25 Sat** - John 5

#### 3. Closing Prayer + The Lord's Prayer