

# Living From God's Approval

## The People Pleasing Trap - Part 2

January 11, 2026

**Jesus lived from the Father's approval, not the crowd's applause.**

**People-pleasing is a trap!**

- Endless pursuit of an impossible goal: pleasing everyone
- Designed to keep you from what matters most
- At the root, it's spiritual warfare

**Consequences of people-pleasing:**

- The weight, pressure, anxiety
- Exhaustion from always performing
- Loss of identity
- Impotent and ineffective faith - The greatest risk isn't failure—it's standing before God knowing you buried what He entrusted to you. (Matthew 25:14-30)
- Outright miss Jesus

*“<sup>42</sup>Many people did believe in Him, however, including some of the Jewish leaders. But they wouldn’t admit it for fear that the Pharisees would expel them from the synagogue. <sup>43</sup>For they loved human praise more than the praise of God.” John 12:42-43 (NLT)*

- Spiritual epidemic with massive fallout

**What is at the root of people-pleasing?**

- Pride, ego, worshipping self above God
- Insecurity and lack of identity

**What is the solution?**

- **Gospel** - “*This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!*” 2 Corinthians 5:17 (NLT)
- **Identity in Christ**
- **Know which voice you're listening to** - “Who told you that you were naked?” the Lord God asked. Genesis 3:11 (NLT)
- **Turn down the wrong voices and turn up God's**
- **Quit caring what the wrong people think**
  - **A holy: “I don't care!”**
  - **“For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.”** 2 Timothy 1:7 (NLT)
- **Release control**
  - **“They're gonna \_\_\_\_\_.” Let them!**

**The outcome and invitation**

- **A new identity**

*“So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus.” Romans 8:1 (NLT)*

*“For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things He planned for us long ago.” Ephesians 2:10 (NLT)*

*“For you died to this life, and your real life is hidden with Christ in God.” Colossians 3:3 (NLT)*

- **Freedom** - Nothing to prove. Nothing to lose.
- **Security**
- **Purpose and impact**
- **Hard but worth it**

*“<sup>13</sup>But others in the crowd ridiculed them, saying, ‘They’re just drunk, that’s all!’ <sup>14</sup>Then Peter stepped forward ... ” Acts 2:13-14 (NLT)*

Following Jesus requires being misunderstood.

*“<sup>1</sup>Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. <sup>2</sup>We do this by **keeping our eyes on Jesus**, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Because of the joy awaiting Him, He endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now He is seated in the place of honor beside God’s throne. <sup>3</sup>Think of all the hostility He endured from sinful people; then you won’t become weary and give up.” Hebrews 12:1-3 (NLT)*

#### **Call to action:**

- **Get right with God first**
- **Find your identity in Him**
- **Quit caring what the wrong people think**
- **Be bold for God**
- **Live free in His approval and security**