

Seeking Approval

Whoever is led by the Spirit are the sons of God, and we all need to be led by the Spirit. When we see two people like these [*our guests, Stan and Lisa, who were both baptized within a few weeks*] walking down the street, the sons of God will do everything they can to bring them home. We need to take advantage of every opportunity, being led by the Spirit to do whatever we do. I am thankful that we saw both of you that day, and I know that our Father is speaking to both of your hearts.

I just wanted to read a section from this teaching, *David's Heart*.

We do many things to gain the approval of men. We come from an age where people are starving for approval. They long for the approval of others, because they have always had a conscience that didn't approve of them. Some people will do anything to feel approved. But the approval that we are looking for is Jms 1:12. If we walk in the light, we will find ourselves having greater and greater fellowship with others, who do the same. This is our healing and our restoration. Man-pleasers are those who confess their sins because they think they are expected to. Don't ever confess sin just to gain the approval of your parents, teachers, or friends. This kind of "repentance" does nothing to truly restore your conscience. And don't cause others to defile themselves either by saying, "I forgive you" when it may not be true. You can't sense your forgiveness when you're not truly sorry. Let's be true to one another.

It would be better to not even open your mouth than to confess in vain. If you're only sorry that you did something "wrong," or if you're trying to be "safe" — judge yourself. It's confessing our sins by principle that leads to the "domino effect." This is a chain reaction of people saying they're sorry, some sincere along with some by principle. We see this in our training group sometimes. A legal conscience keeps us in bondage. There are some people who "hold on" to their sin until right before communion on Saturday evening... and then they go around making it right with others right before they squeak across the finish line — legal conscience strikes again!

Walking in the light will certainly bring out our sins — it is supposed to. Our goal is not a perfect performance (sinless perfection). Our desire is to abide in His fellowship. This is our Tree of Life! Without this fellowship we cannot be satisfied and our hearts cannot find rest. This is a sign of His ownership of us.

Is our sin so light a matter?

Spiritual death is being cut off from our Father's fellowship. Our Master's greatest anguish was when He took the penalty of being cut off for our sin. "Father,

Father, why have you forsaken Me?” This was His greatest suffering, much worse to Him than physical death. He tasted of both deaths so that we would not suffer the penalty of our sin. This must become our motive to hate sin — that our precious and all-important fellowship with our Father would not be lost.

Consider the wise and foolish virgins (Mt 25:1). All were virgins, but the wise virgins showed self-judgment. Never confuse self-judgment with introspection. Introspection is having ingrown eyeballs, turning things over and over in your mind. Self-judgment starts from the foundation of a good conscience. Self-judgment doesn't look for sin in every nook and cranny of the heart, but it does bring the sword to those things that truly disturb our peace and our fellowship.

If we find ourselves trapped in a sin or confused, even if we don't feel as if we're really sorry, then we can hold out our “withered hand.” We can be open and ask for help, and the Body of Messiah will minister healing to us. Openness of life leads to health. The Church isn't trying to culture you into confessing your sins. We confess our sins because we are learning to love the light.

“A broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.”

Of course, our Father won't despise us when we repent — He will restore you through your one act of obedience.

You have all made good progress in self-judgment. I can especially see this in those I have taught before. Our Father loves you all with a great jealousy, like the apples of His eye. He is bringing you along. There is much in you that is pleasing to those who guard your lives. Let these words edify you and equip you with greater and greater self-judgment.

That is part of a letter I wrote years ago about David's heart. Some people can perform greatly as long as they can hear the applause, as long as people are approving them. People say, “Wow, you are so great!” (clap, clap... yeah, yeah... just as for every athlete). There are athletes who go on mainly for self-glory, and that is what people do who need that applause all the time. That is the only reason they work hard. They faint when they don't have applause and they are not sensing our Father's approval for some reason. If they were getting it from our Father, they would go on.

They are just man-pleasers, always seeking approval, and when they don't feel as if they are being approved of, they sink down. Where is the Holy Spirit? We don't need the approval of men if we have the approval of our Father. Certainly, your brother is

going to appreciate you, we are going to appreciate one another, but that is not what we live for. We live for His approval, and we get that from our fellowship with Him.

Zerubbabel — Our Master said in Mt 18:3 that you have to be like a little child to enter the kingdom. A little child is unself-conscious. They naturally want to please their parents, who stand in the place of our Father. And when their father approves of them, they glow. They have a clean response from the approval. But it doesn't make them self-conscious. It doesn't make them man-pleasers. That must have been something that our Master saw in a little child — that clean response to approval that doesn't become an addiction.

Ps 68:27 says how little Benjamin, humble Benjamin, will be in the lead. This is an urgent need for the day that we are in right now, that the last tribe would come forth by judging all of those ways... complicated, grudge-holding, self-conscious, approval-seeking, man-pleasing kinds of ways.

How many think that they have that man-pleasing syndrome, or they have the approval-seeking syndrome, or they feel as if they are not doing well if someone is not approving of them? Explain why you raised your hand.

Netsak — I was really thankful in Boston a couple of days ago, when I got washed there. It was because I was seeing how that man-pleasing spirit was keeping me from having grace and confidence and approval from our Father. And I was really grateful to be able to take a stand against it and get washed. I am starting to see what keeps me from having fellowship with our Father and living from my heart. I have hope that I can be different now. I can live every day to please our Father, but also live from my heart and not try to impress anyone with a good performance. You read how so many of us are just so desperate for approval, and they just seek approval in any way they can. I can really relate to that, but I am also seeing that there has to be a point in all of our lives where we learn how to walk with our Father, where we are doing His will and have confidence. That is what I want to do from this point forward.

Amen!

ha-êmeq — I think Martin Luther had that syndrome. Like you said, the reason you need approval is because you are fighting against a bad conscience that keeps disapproving you, and so you want people to just tell you you're fine, "Just tell me I'm good... Okay, good, tell me again... Keep

telling me!” They say that Martin Luther would go to confession so many times a day when he was a Catholic. He would confess his sins to the priest and he would walk away, and before he would even get out the door, he would walk back and do it again because he could never get free of it.

We can be like that. “Forgive me, forgive me...” “Good, you’re confessing your sins, good!” “Oh, thank you...” But you never actually put yourself before our Father. We look to our Father through our brothers, yes, but it is not as though we look to our brothers. We look to our Father through our brothers. We are in this very open, honest relationship with Him to where He knows what is going on, and you know He knows what is going on, and you want Him to know what is going on. You want Him to help you, and yet you want to be open with your friends.

Some people get in a “log jam” because they say, “I don’t want to be a man-pleaser, so I am just going to do what I want to do, because I am not going to be so worried that I would please someone...” But that is totally wrong. We want to please one another, because Yahshua lives in one another and we love to be pleasing. But that is not where it stops for us. We are totally connected to our Father.

It is not enough just to get a smile from your brother while at the same time knowing that he doesn’t really know the whole story. But it has to be that once you know that our Father knows and you have that relationship with Him, both in the sight of your brothers and apart from your brothers, then your conscience can actually get soothed enough from confession that you can walk away and know that you have been forgiven for your sins.

It should not be that only when the very real expectation of imminent death looms before you, you just go into this agonizing, tormenting fear that makes you confess your sins. It should be that you have been talking with Him all along about your life. It is not just that all of a sudden, your life is laid bare, but your life was just as bare an hour before the danger suddenly came upon you, when you were sitting quietly under the banyan tree.

That is the way we live. We live an open life. I am so thankful for what we heard about our conscience. That is where we get our confidence from — our conscience — and then our brothers know us and our Father knows us, and our brothers don’t know a different person from the one our Father knows. They both know the same person. Our Father and Hannah both know me, and I am the same person to both of them. I want to please Him and I want to please her. And I am not a man-pleaser. She wants to

please Him and I want to please Him, and that is different from me just wanting to make sure she is good with me. I am thankful that our Father put light on it. It is liberating.

Sarah — I am really grateful for what we heard tonight, I am so thankful actually, because I even went to someone today and asked him, “Am I okay?” And he said, “Sarah, what is wrong?” And I didn’t even know what it was. But I can really see it is exactly what Yônêq said, just looking for man’s approval. It is liberating to understand that. I am so thankful, because I thought about how when Nun was here, he said it is not going to be worthless Benyamin that will lead, but it is going to be humble Benyamin. Maybe we need more discipline than others. But I am just so grateful that it could be that way, that we could just need our Father. And then our Father will put us where we need to be. I am just so grateful for what I heard, because sometimes you pray and you don’t see, but then you hear exactly what you don’t see and you are set free. It is amazing. I am just really grateful for that.

I have been thinking a lot about Mary Magdalene and how our Father rescued her from death, and I thought about how she was just consumed with Yahshua. That is all she cared about, because of course she didn’t have the approval of men. All that mattered was that she had known and found the mercy of Yahshua, and she lived for Him from that day forward, always putting Him first as the precious treasure of her heart. I am so thankful that I can be here and come to see our Father’s heart towards us.

Yadel shel Zahav — I am thankful, too, and I was thinking about how the way that we can know that our Father is approving of us is if the authority that He set over us is pleased with us. Sometimes, it is easier to go to someone your age, but there is something to knowing that the authority that is over you is pleased, and that there is nothing blocking that clear connection.

As long as you have confidence that you are being pleasing to our Father, you have nothing to fear. I am thankful that we don’t have to settle for less, and we can militate against anything that would hinder that connection. I just want so badly that I would be pleasing to our Father and be a disciple that could serve Him. I am so thankful that our Father sets good authority over us. I can know that if I am pleasing to Zahav, I am pleasing to our Father, and if I am not pleasing to him, I can’t be pleasing our Father. I am so thankful for that.

If Our Hearts Condemn Us

1 Jn 3:19-22 — John said when our hearts condemn us, our Father is greater than our hearts. He knows what condemns us; He knows that our heart is condemned. He is greater than our heart. He knows everything; He knows all things. But if our hearts do not condemn us, then we have confidence before Him, and whatever we ask we receive from Him because we keep His commandments and do what is pleasing to Him. We do what is pleasing in His sight.

In Christianity we thought, “Well, God is greater than your heart, so it doesn’t matter whether your heart is condemning you or not, because you’re automatically forgiven.” But it is not talking about that whatsoever. The next verse right below it tells why your heart is condemning you. It’s because you are not doing what is pleasing in His sight. So if we are not doing what is pleasing in His sight our hearts will condemn us. That is wonderful. I am glad my heart condemns me.

If our heart didn’t condemn us, we’d be lost, and then we would go to the judgment seat and say, “Well, I didn’t know...” But it condemns, so we know whether we need to go to Him and say, “Father, forgive me. I know I wasn’t loving my brother today...” or whatever it was that cut us off.

So that is how we get our prayers answered, by obeying His commandments and doing what is pleasing in His sight, and then when we ask we know He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, that means our hearts are not condemning us. If we know He hears us, then He will give us what we ask for.

We Have Not Because We Ask Not

But then the problem is that we don’t ask. “You have not because you ask not.” It doesn’t matter how many houses you give up, you are not going to get anything unless you pray for it. You say, “Well, I gave up three farms; I ought to get three hundred farms.” But you won’t get anything because you are not praying for it. You are not

bringing it about through prayer. It is a promise. Our Master said it. It's not as if we didn't need those farms or whatever it says in Mk 10:29-30, so that is why we have to appeal to Him. We can't just automatically assume He is going to do it, because He says, "You have not, you don't have a farm (even though you have given one up) because you haven't been praying for it."

Do you think His kingdom is going to come if you are not praying for it? No. Someone has to be praying for it. There has to be a whole nation praying for it. Do you think His name will be great on earth if we are not praying for it? No. Do you think His will will ever be done on earth? No, not unless we are praying for it.

Praying is begging, beseeching Him, because we *want* it to happen, we *desire* it. Something has to happen to get people to wake up here in this dead town. They don't even care where they are going to spend eternity. They could care less. They have to know that their immortal soul and spirit are going to spend eternity somewhere.

I am thankful that we have eternal life. And we can give thanks to our Father.

Havah bat Zerubbabel — What Sarah said really encouraged me, when she talked about being set free. I know that feeling of always being disappointed with myself, when I do the same thing over and over again. It is not like some huge, enormous sin that I commit over and over, but it is just these little things that take away something that I should have. But I am thankful that now I know why I didn't get that approval from my conscience.

It is like a huge mountain for me to somehow just find peace knowing that I am being pleasing to my parents. My imma always told me, because I would have this overwhelming fear of what my friends think of me, that if she and my abba are pleased with me then that is the best thing that I could have, that my parents would be pleased with me. And I want to run to them because I know that is where my grace is. I am thankful I have my parents, and I want to seek for their approval and not the shallow approval my friends can falsely justify my sin with. I want to be pleasing.

Yadah bat Ne'eman — I am really thankful, too. I was thinking about how I have found security in my peers that I know will justify my sins, or take identity with me in my sin. I have thought that my parents didn't

understand, but it was because I have been talking first to my friends, but I know what my parents have is what I need to hear. I want to take on what they say and not think they don't understand, because I know that they really do understand. I want to be honest with them and tell them what I really feel like, because I know that it is what will save me from death.

Zahav — What we heard tonight made me see the importance of receiving others when they come to us. It is easy to want to have that approval and have that man-pleasing spirit and just confess things on a shallow level. Of course, it is a good desire to want to be pleasing; it is not an evil desire to want to please the authority over you. But you can say you want to be pleasing, and then when your brother comes to you, you say you don't understand what he is talking about, and you resist it with everything in you, when you know inside that he is telling the truth. Then it shows where you are really at, that you were just looking good on the surface while you were just guarding your life.

When one of my brothers loves me enough to come and tell me a way that I could be more pleasing to our Father, it just turns my world upside down and I can't see where he is coming from. How could he be saying what he is saying? And this is right after I pray to our Father to show me how I can be pleasing to Him. So then He answers my prayers directly and I get offended about it, because really it came from a man-pleasing spirit.

Whether I am receiving my brothers is the litmus test of whether or not the desire to please is from our Father and a good conscience, or the desire for approval is stemming from a bad conscience and wanting to hear that I am doing well because I know that I am not.

Yonadab ben Haggai — It is so good what we are hearing. I know I have done it before, seeking my peers, but one thing I remember from my older sisters and brothers. They all say the same thing, that my parents are always going to be there for my approval and I should always go to seek them. No matter what circumstances they are in, they will drop everything and come to hear what I have to say. If I am going through something I shouldn't go to my peers. I have seen enough times what fruit it bears, and I want to hate that way in me. I want to seek my covering first.