

PEOPLE-PLEASING

PEOPLE-PLEASING IS DESIRING TO PLEASE OTHERS MORE THAN GOD. FEAR OF MAN IS REGARDING ANOTHER PERSON'S RESPONSE (OR POTENTIAL RESPONSE) MORE THAN FOLLOWING GOD'S WILL.

Someone who struggles with people-pleasing is overly focused on making others happy. Though Philippians 2 tells Christians to love, sacrificially serve, and consider others as "more significant" than ourselves, a people-pleaser's motives are often rooted in things other than God's love. Desires for affirmation and acceptance are common motivators. People-pleasers will conceal their personal beliefs or desires or join in sin just to make others happy.

Fear of man is a form of people-pleasing in which a person's actions are not determined by God's will, but by how another might respond. Someone struggling with fear of man may act one way to gain a positive response from one person and act another way to avoid a negative response from another. Root causes may include unhealed trauma, cultural pressures, fears (like fears of rejection, failure, conflict, etc.), and a weak sense of self.

Being more concerned about another's happiness and response to you than you are with God's will can lead to sin, anger, exhaustion, and weak relationships. God wants you to love and care about others, but not at the expense of your health, your relationship with him, or his purpose for your life. He made you uniquely for a distinct purpose. Knowing God and living in his will is what will provide the significance and happiness you were created to experience- even when others hate you for it.

BIBLICAL INSIGHTS

PEOPLE-PLEASING IS ROOTED IN IDOLATRY.

Holding someone or something in higher regard than God and his will for your life will not bring peace.

- "Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings, or of God? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a servant of Christ." (Galatians 1:10)

PEOPLE-PLEASING ASSESSMENT

Honestly answer the following questions to discover if you struggle with people-pleasing:

1. Do you feel the need to please others?
2. Do you avoid bringing up things that bother you or with which you disagree because you don't want to get into a conflict?
3. Do you worry about hurting other people's feelings?
4. Would you rather be dishonest with certain individuals than face rejection from them?
5. Is how you think someone will respond to you the most influential factor in deciding your next course of action?
6. Is how you feel about yourself strongly affected by the praise and appreciation that you receive from others?
7. Do you feel guilty when you say no?
8. Do you agree with others without really considering what you believe?
9. Do you try to anticipate what will make others happy and give it to them?
10. Do you apologize often - even for things for which you are not responsible?

- "...don't you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God." (James 4:4)

HUMAN PRAISE, ADORATION, AND ACCOLADES ARE TESTS OF FAITH. How you respond to them can either weaken or strengthen your relationship with God, and reveal who or what you are living for.

- “The crucible for silver and the furnace for gold, but people are tested by their praise.” (Proverbs 27:21)
- “On the contrary, we speak as those approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. We are not trying to please people but God, who tests our hearts.” (1 Thessalonians 2:4)

PEOPLE-PLEASING AND FEAR OF MAN PULLS US AWAY FROM GOD TOWARD SIN.

- “Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.” (Romans 1:24-25)
- “Therefore do not be partners with them. For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light... and find out what pleases the Lord.” (Ephesians 5:7-8; 10)
- “Like a muddied spring or a polluted well are the righteous who give way to the wicked.” (Proverbs 25:26)

GOD ALWAYS HAS YOUR BEST INTEREST IN MIND; OTHERS OFTEN DON'T. You can trust God's will even if it doesn't yield the results you want. God is in control of outcomes. He knows what is best for you.

- “Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.” (Romans 12:2)
- “The Lord is with me; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me? The Lord is with me; he is my helper. I look in triumph on my enemies.” (Psalm 118:6-7)
- “...If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?” (Romans 8:31-32)

USING YOUR PERSONALITY AND GIFTS TO GLORIFY GOD (RATHER THAN YOURSELF OR ANYONE ELSE) IS WHAT BRINGS ETERNAL SIGNIFICANCE AND PLEASURE TO LIFE. God gifted you to reflect his glory.

- “So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.” (1 Corinthians 10:31)
- “Who, then, are those who fear the Lord? He will instruct them in the ways they should choose. They will spend their days in prosperity, and their descendants will inherit the land.” (Psalm 25:12-13)

NEXT STEPS

- People-pleasing and fear of man are often symptoms of deeper idolatry or fear struggles. Ask God to reveal what is ruling your heart and mind. (Psalm 139:23-24)
- Pray. Ask God to show you that he is in control, he is good, and he cares about you. (Proverbs 3:5-6; Romans 8:31-39)
- Spend time reading the Bible (God's Word) to know God and his will for your life. The book of Proverbs has great wisdom and direction for life and fellowship with God.
- Memorize some verses in this issue sheet that can help when you are concerned about what others think or how they will respond to you.
- Find a Bible-teaching church, like **1st Free Will Baptist Church**, and begin to establish relationships with healthy Christians who can help you find healing, freedom, and security through a relationship with Jesus.
- Find a safe place that is Christ-centered, like **Restoration Pointe**, to address your struggle with people-pleasing and identify the underlying issues. (Galatians 6:2)
- God loves you. If you haven't experienced freedom in Christ, please visit **rprecovery.org/the-gospel**.