

Chasing Carrots 4 - Approval

Chasing Carrots: Approval Bumper Vid

Hello Redemption Church! Hello to everyone tuning in online. God bless you. My name is Chris Fluit and I am glad to be sharing the Word of God with you today.

Chasing Carrots

We are in week 4 of our Chasing Carrots series. Life manipulates us with an endless pursuit for more. So many people are chasing something they will never catch.

We have talked about the carrots of Fame, Money & Things, and Perfection. Today I want to talk to you about Approval.

Approval

How many of you might care too much about what others think? It is possible that even while raising your hand your worried what others thought...

Approval seeking is a manipulative carrot. Chasing the approval of others is an endless pursuit. See if you relate to this thought.. "Although I have spent a great amount of time obsessing over someone's approval, I have rarely felt approved by them." There is something about chasing the carrot of approval. The more we chase approval, the less we actually feel approved.

The Disease to Please

Author Harriet Braiker writes in her book "The disease to please," that people pleasing is a form of addiction. Just like a drug addict seeks drugs, people pleasers seek approval.

Are you addicted to approval? Are you chasing the carrot of approval?

3 problems people pleasers battle

1. You obsess about what others think.

- Do they like my new outfit?
- Do they approve of my choice in music?
- My car... my house... do you think they liked it?
- I would like to get a new hair style... but what will they think?
- I want to be cool... do they think I am cool?

- Are we ok? Do they still like me? I texted them and the bubbles appeared... but then the bubbles disappeared...

2. People pleasers are often overly sensitive to criticism.

Your boss gives you some negative feedback and you are ready to quit.

You put your work on display and you receive 100 compliments, but you receive 1 criticism and that one critic is all you can think about. “I am a failure because someone didn’t approve...”

That is how the carrot works... if 100% of people do not agree, like, love, approve... then I am a failure. I must pursue complete approval.

Because we are overly sensitive to critic... we avoid it. We run from it or shut down. Because we don’t listen to feedback we miss opportunities to grow and improve.

3. You have a hard time saying no.

- What will they think if I say no?
- They ask you to do something and your heart says you don’t have the emotional or physical strength to manage this... your brain is saying you don’t have the time to do this... yet your mouth is saying “Yes of course I will do this.”
- I don’t want to hurt someone’s feelings... so I end up buying whatever someone is selling.
- We have bought wrapping paper we knew we would never use... magazines we would never read...
- We went to the party we didn’t want to go to... Hung out with the people we have never felt comfortable with...
- Someone people kept dating people they didn’t even like, thinking to themselves “How can I break this off and them not hate me?”

If you are finding yourself overcommitted right now, ask yourself.. “Do I have the disease to please?”

The fear of men

God’s Word speaks about seeking the approval of others. In scripture it is often referred to as the “fear of men.” This carrot of approval really is centered in fear... and scripture tells us it is a trap.

Proverbs 29:25 (NIV2011) Fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord is kept safe.

The fear of men will prove to be a snare. A snare is a trap that catches an animal. It grabs onto them and will not let them go. The Hebrew here actually implies a hook through the nose of an animal.

You have the term being led by the nose. This trap of fearing men... seeking the approval of others... is like a hook through your nose leading you around.

When an animal is caught in a trap it will do anything to get out of the trap... Sometimes animals will actually chew through their limbs to break free from a snare... yet today maybe you do not feel that way about this approval trap. Maybe you are justifying this as "it's just my personality.."

You need to get serious about this problem. It is a snare. It is a trap. It is a hook through your nose. Nothing good will come chasing the carrot of approval. This is not just a carrot. It is a trap!

Decide with me today... I have struggled for way too long trying to gain the approval of others. Those 3 battles people pleasers battle... I am going to stop obsessing on what others think... I will stop being overly sensitive to criticism... I will allow myself the ability to say no.

The fear of men is not just a mental, psychological issue... It is not just an emotional, self-esteem issue... It is not just a relationship issue... The fear & obsession of approval is a Spiritual issue.

Here is what the Apostle Paul says about the subject...

Galatians 1:10 (NIV2011) 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.

We have to decide what our goal is. Do we want the approval of humans or the approval of God?

Do we want to please people... serve people, or do we want to serve Jesus Christ?

Now Paul isn't telling us to be a rude jerk and aim for making everyone angry by doing what they disapprove of... He is saying that above all else we must seek God's approval.

I have 2 facts for you.

#1 It is impossible to have the approval of every human on earth. Someone will always disapprove. You can find the most amazing video on youtube and it can have millions of likes... but there will always be someone who will push the “dislike” button.

#2 It is possible to have God’s approval.

The one true God who created everything. You can please him. He can approve of you. You can do things that he approves of. You can make the God of heaven smile.

Maybe you have the wrong picture of God. Maybe you think he is up there with a lightning bolt watching for you to mess up and make him unhappy. Sense he is all knowing, he already knows that you are going to mess up... so he is probably already mad at you... Basically you have the picture of the angry God you can never gain the approval of... GET A NEW PICTURE.

Zephaniah 3:17 (NIV2011) The Lord your God is with you, the Mighty Warrior who saves. He will take great delight in you; in his love he will no longer rebuke you, but will rejoice over you with singing.”

Do you have this picture of God? God delights in you. In His love he will no longer rebuke you... Do you realize that there is a day coming where you will never hear another negative criticism because you will be perfect in heaven? Instead of rebuke God rejoices over you with singing.

Does your God rejoice over you? Does your God sing? Get that picture of God!

Do you want God’s approval?

- I don’t want to just call myself a Christian... I want God’s approval.
- I don’t want to just join a denomination... I want God’s approval.
- I don’t want to focus on your approval... I want God’s approval.
- I did not come to church today to win your approval...
- I did not worship today to make you think something high about me...
- I did not come to this altar to make you think something holy about me...
- I am here to win the approval of God. I want to walk in his approval.

Who wants God’s approval?

Then you need to know what God approves of!

Read your Bible! Receive HIS Word! AND OBEY IT!

Pray! Repent! Actively desire what God approves.

What God approves of most is Jesus! Have Jesus and you will have God's approval!

Worship God not to gain his approval... Worship Him because you are approved!

Love God! Love others! Walk in his approval. Because God approves of me I am confident! I can do anything! God approves of me! How I treat others will come from a place of God's approval... not anger or fear or lust.

This sentence will change the world. "I don't care if they like me or not, I'm going to serve Jesus."

Approval seeking can be Idolatry

Idolatry is the worship, love, adoration of something other than the true God.

When you love what others think about you more than what God thinks about you it is Idolatry.

When you hang on the words of others but don't care what God says it is idolatry.

When you obsess over your instagram likes and social following more than liking & following God it is idolatry.

There were people in the presence of Jesus Christ... the one who did miracles...the one who created all things...God almighty wrapped in flesh... And they chose an idol of approval over the true God.

John 12:42-43 (NIV2011) Yet at the same time many even among the leaders believed in him. But because of the Pharisees they would not openly acknowledge their faith for fear they would be put out of the synagogue; for they loved human praise more than praise from God.

Do not fear men... your fear of what others think can stop you from being in God's approval.

You have to decide what is more important today. God's approval or man's approval?

Musician

In a few moments we are going to talk to God. I challenge you to come talk to God at the front of this stage today. I challenge you to leave behind your fear of what others think and come embrace God's approval.

In the past you may have let this fear of others keep you from receiving prayer, or worshipping, or obeying... make up your mind. Today I choose to serve Jesus.

Some of you may need to walk down here without your boyfriend or girlfriend... your husband or wife... make up in your mind... if they come they come... but I will serve Jesus no matter what they do.

You are coming to talk to a God who loves you. He accepts you. He approves of you.

Your worth isn't based on what people think about you. Your worth is based on what God thinks about you.

Embrace it! Hold onto it. Believe it!

You can't please everyone—But you can please God. And because of Christ and what He did on the cross, you are approved of God.