

Why Do We Fear Man? *(Proverbs 29:25)*

I. What is the Fear of Man?

- A. To be afraid of man.
- B. To respect man as God.
- C. To depend on man as source of life.

II. What Do We Fear of Man?

- A. We fear being exposed (John 3:19-21).
- B. We fear being rejected (John 12:42-43).
- C. We fear being physically hurt or oppressed (Genesis 12:11-13).
- D. We fear being denied what we desire (John 12:42-43).

III. Why Do We Fear Man?

- A. We lack genuine love for God and others (John 14:21, 1John 4:18-21).
- B. We believe man is the means to satisfy our needs and desires (Jeremiah 17:5-6, Js. 4:1-3).
- C. We believe man is the source to solving or creating our problems (Proverbs 29:26).
- D. We are preoccupied with what man can do to us above what God can do to us (Matthew 10:28-31).

IV. Implications of the Fear of Man

- A. To the extent one believes that man's thoughts, behaviors, and actions are the source or solution to their needs, desires, and problems is the extent they may seek to bow down or suck up to man to obtain what their desire or to keep from losing what they currently have (John 12:42-43, Proverbs 29:25-26, Romans 1:18-25).
- B. To the extent one believes that man's thoughts, behaviors, and actions are the source or solution to their needs, desires and problems is the extent they may try to deceive or lie to man to obtain what they desire or to keep from losing what they have (1Samuel 15:1-35).
- C. To the extent one believes that man's thoughts, behaviors, and actions are the source or solution to their needs, desires and problems is the extent one may try to control or manipulate man to obtain what they desire or to keep from losing what they have (Esther 3:1-7:10).

V. Questions we must Consider

- A. What is it that you need?
- B. Who do you believe is responsible for supplying that need?
- C. Who are you depending on to meet that need?
- D. What actions do you take to meet that need?
- E. How do you respond when your need goes unmet?
- F. Is what you calling a need truly a need or is it a desire you have elevated to a demand which you have made a need?

- G. Can you love God and love your neighbor without it?
- H. Is it something that the bible would validate as a need?
- I. Is it something that keeps you bound to the thoughts, behaviors, and actions of man in order to have it?
- J. Is it possible that you have elevated a desire to a demand which has turned into a lust which now feels like a need?

VI. Desires we elevate to demands which turn into lusts which feel like needs that lead us into the Fear of Man

- A. To be in control
- B. To be loved
- C. To be accepted
- D. To be understood
- E. To never be hurt or disappointed
- F. To be respected
- G. To be served
- H. To have personal preferences accommodated at all times
- I. To be viewed as competent
- J. To be approved of
- K. To belong to someone
- L. To be held in high regard
- M. To be significant
- N. To be fulfilled
- O. To be satisfied
- P. To be valuable to others
- Q. To maintain a favorable position with others
- R. To be secure/safe
- S. To never be alone

VII. How Do We Overcome the Fear of Man?

- A. Identify the fears that have consumed your time.
- B. Identify the desires behind the fears (behind every fear there is a desire for (something ex. Fear of rejection = Desire for approval).
- C. Identify the people, places, things, and situations you believe are the source and the solution to your needs, desires, and problems.
- D. Examine the scripture to see if your belief in C lines up with what the Scripture says you need to love God and to love others (Luke 10:38-42, Timothy 6:6-8, Matthew 4:1-11).
- E. Confess and repent of trying to control the uncontrollable (Job 38-42, Proverbs 28:13-14) Confess and repent of making people, places, and outcome of events idols of your Heart (Ezekiel 14:1-11).
- F. Minimize your focus on what people think of you (1Corinthians 4:3).
- G. Maximize your focus on what God thinks of you (1Corinthians 4:4).
- H. Study, learn and accept the sovereignty of God in all things (Ecclesiastes 3:1- 11, 7:13-14, 9:1, 11:5, Colossians 1:15-17).

- I. Accept the fact that you will have to give an account of your life to God not people (1Corinthians 4:5, Romans 14:10-12, 2 Corinthians 5:10, Ecclesiastes 12:13-14).
- J. Accept that fact that every good and perfect gift is from God not man (James 1:16-17).
- K. Accept the fact all that you need comes from God not man (2Peter 1:1-3, Philippians 4:19, Romans 8:31-32, Psalm 145:8-16, Hebrews 4:16).
- L. Look to God for justice and not man (Proverbs 29:26, Romans 12:19).
- M. Don't insist that people live a life to please you; insist they live a life to please God (Galatians 1:10, 1Corinthians 10:31).
- N. Humble yourself and submit to the doctrines/disciplines/duties of the Christian faith (2Peter 1:1-10, 1Peter 4:10, Romans 12:1-21, 2 John).
- O. Practice serving people according to God's Will and not according to how you feel or what you want from them in return (1Corinthians 13:1-8, Romans 12:9-21, John 13:34-35, Luke 6:31-38) Practice setting your mind on God's agenda in every aspect of your life and seek to live according to that agenda (Matthew 6:33, Colossians 3:1-25, Ephesians 5:1-18).

The Fear of Man Check List

(Place a Check by the things you see yourself doing.)

- ___ Peer pressure
- ___ Difficulty saying no to others.
- ___ Consumed with what you perceive you need from others.
- ___ Consumed with what you don't want from others.
- ___ Justifying your mistakes to others.
- ___ Second guessing decisions because of what others may think.
- ___ Getting embarrassed.
- ___ Telling lies to cover up.
- ___ Anger (not getting what you want or getting what you don't want).
- ___ Preoccupation with how you look.
- ___ Avoiding or isolating self from others.
- ___ Feeling good or bad about self according to the standards of people around you.
- ___ Constantly comparing yourself to others.
- ___ Avoiding sharing your faith.
- ___ Compromising your beliefs because of the setting you are in.
- ___ Feeling controlled by the thoughts, behaviors, and actions of others.
- ___ Spending a lot of time focusing on what others can or will do to you.
- ___ Spending a lot of time focusing on what others will not do for you.
- ___ Spending a lot of time focusing on what others can or will do for you.
- ___ Constantly trying to measure up to standards set by people.
- ___ Talking in terms of what you need from others instead of what you desire.
- ___ Cannot be happy or content unless certain people in your life are "meeting your need" or satisfying personal preferences.
- ___ Constantly trying to protect yourself from what people can say or do to you.
- ___ You can remember more about your embarrassments than your sin.
- ___ You can remember more about being offended, rejected, or denied than you can offending, rejecting and denying Jesus Christ.
- ___ Trying to say what you think will please or provoke others to get what you want.
- ___ Worry whether people like you or not.
- ___ Wanting to do things for yourself and by yourself so that people will not bother You.

(Check list derived from insights in the book When People are Big and God is Small by Ed T. Welch.)