

The Fear of Man Lays a Snare

Beloved Kinney,

We all struggle, in varying ways and varying degrees, with what the Bible calls “the fear of man.” Put simply, we care too much about what people think of us. Proverbs 29:25 says, “The fear of man lays a snare, but whoever trusts in the LORD is safe.” There’s so much security in trusting God rather than entrusting our hearts to the opinions of man.

I must admit, this has been a struggle for me for much of my life, and the fight has only had to increase after becoming a pastor! I want us to consider some other manifestations of the fear of man in our lives. Read and pray over this list of various behaviors we might exhibit that are likely indicators the fear of man is present in our hearts.

- 1) You receive an excessive amount of joy when you are affirmed of or complimented by others.
- 2) You feel inordinately down when you are not approved or affirmed by others.
- 3) You become anxious about what others might think about you.
- 4) You pay too close attention to what pleases or displeases others.
- 5) You over analyze people’s body language, facial expressions, or tone of voice and begin to assume they meant something by it when perhaps, they didn’t.
- 6) You twist what people say to mean something they did not intend.
- 7) You are easily offended.
- 8) You serve others in order to be noticed by them.
- 9) You will not let others serve you because you don’t want to come across as needy.
- 10) You expect people to serve you because you believe you deserve their appreciation.
- 11) You have an excessive fear of confrontation.
- 12) You fish for compliments and affirmations either directly or indirectly.
- 13) You are overly sensitive to correction or constructive criticism.
- 14) You keep people at arms length for fear of being rejected or hurt by them.
- 15) You use flattery words toward others so that they’ll like you.
- 16) You get disappointed or angry when someone contradicts you or disagrees with you.
- 17) When meeting new people, your sole focus is on making a good impression rather than
- 18) You are overly shy when meeting new people because you’re afraid of making a bad impression.
- 19) You give into sin in order to be accepted by others.
- 20) You are unwilling to confess your sins, struggles, or failures to others because you don’t want them to have a negative view of you.
- 21) You are overly concerned with your physical appearance.
- 22) You must be the center of attention in order to gain approval.
- 23) You must avoid being the center of attention for fear of being seen.
- 24) You’re preoccupied with what people think of you during times when your focus should be elsewhere.
- 26) You show favoritism.

- 25) You are easily embarrassed.
- 26) You are overly agreeable.
- 27) You are overly disagreeable.
- 28) You are a “sympathy-seeker.”
- 29) You come across as having it “all together,” even when things are not going well.
- 30) You are unwilling to share the gospel.

Next week, I'll do a blog on how to fight against the fear of man! Until then, confess this to the Lord and ask him to change your heart.

Love,
Pastor Josh