



Seeking God's Approval

Standing Firm – Part 2

1 Thessalonians 2:1-6

Most of us were taught from the time we were very small children to be conscious of how our testimony is affecting others. But a problem arises when we are more concerned about what people think than what God thinks. Many people today so desperately want to be accepted by people that they are willing to compromise their convictions in order to please others. In this passage from 1 Thessalonians, Paul reminds us that God's approval should be our main concern. If we can live to please God, that is a real source of encouragement in the Christian life.

I. The _____ to Paul.

- A. There were a number of people who _____ Paul wherever he went.
- B. Criticism is never pleasant, but it really hurts when it comes from _____.
- C. If it's your goal in life to _____ people, you are going to be frequently _____ because people are extremely hard to please.
- D. People are not only hard to please, but they will also lead you _____, which can lead to discouragement.

II. The _____ of Paul.

- A. The response of Paul was one of _____.
- B. There are four characteristics of Paul's response:
 1. His manner was _____. (v. 2)
 2. His message was _____. (v. 3)
 3. His motive was _____. (v. 3)
 4. His methods were _____. (v. 3)
- C. Paul's example should teach us to speak the _____ in love and to rely

on the power of the _____ to do it, not gimmicks.

III. The _____ of Paul.

- A. Paul could be faithful in spite of circumstances because his primary purpose in life was to please _____, not _____. (v. 4)
- B. Seeking God's approval first brings us the encouragement of a _____ Christian life.
- C. When you seek God's approval first you will be encouraged by the _____ of other people.
- D. When you seek God's will you have the assurance that you are gaining the approval of the _____ of the universe.
- E. How do you know God is approving you?
 1. It begins with a right _____ of God. (Matt. 7:11)
 2. Be _____ by his Word.
 3. See the _____ of the Spirit in your life. (Col. 1:10)
 4. When you receive disapproval from God's _____. (Matt. 5:10-12)
 5. When you receive encouragement from God's _____. (1 Thess. 5:11)
 6. By the _____ of the Holy Spirit. (Ro. 8:16)