



The Kingdom Perspective

The Trap of Other's Opinions (FOPO)

Hello this is Pastor Don of Christ Redeemer Church. Welcome to The Kingdom Perspective.

Do you worry about what others think of you? If yes, join the club. I saw an article recently on what one psychologist calls FOPO (fear of people's opinions). We all suffer from this at least a bit, perhaps some more than others. We are incurably social creatures and so we're all susceptible to this to a greater or lesser degree.

Peer pressure is not something that only teens and college students struggle with. Worrying about what others think does not magically dissipate once we graduate or become adults.

Now, this struggle is not good; living for the approval of others is a snare. It is what the book of Proverbs calls the "fear of man". As Proverbs 29:25 puts it, "Fearing people is a dangerous trap...".

Now, why is it a trap? Well, as writer and recording artist Shai Linne says:

"Craving human affirmation is a no-win proposition. Those who don't receive it are miserable. Those who do receive it only want more."

~Shai Linne, native Philadelphian, recording artist, and author

The only thing that can save us from the fear of man is the fear of God. It is not that we weren't made for the approval of another. We were. But the approval we were made for is not that of our neighbor but of our Savior. We were made for God. This is why the Scriptures tell us: "The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, that one may turn away from the snares of death" (Proverbs 14:27) and "The fear of the Lord leads to life, and whoever has it rests satisfied..." (Proverbs 19:23).

Something to think about from The Kingdom Perspective.

"This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful. But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by any human court. In fact, I do not even judge myself. For I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted. It is the Lord who judges me. Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive his commendation from God."

~ 1 Corinthians 4:1-5 (ESV)

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