

Find Freedom From Pleasing People

I sat on the couch yesterday morning, my Bible in one hand and a hot cup of coffee in the other. (Always these two things go together.) And I told God of this black hole I have inside of me that pulls for approval.

I feel like I should just walk around with a T-shirt that says, "Am I OK? Will someone please tell me if I'm OK?"

Am I a good mom? Am I a good writer? Am I a good person? Am I a good friend? Am I a good daughter? Am I a good teacher? Am I a good Christ-follower?

Am I?

But this question will not be satisfied. If someone says, "Good job!" about my writing, I wonder why only that one person said good job. Why didn't more people say it? Did the rest hate what I wrote? Three children can tell me I'm a good teacher, but the silence of the others leaves me wondering. Even if I get approval from someone, it still is not enough to quench the need.

My son wants to know if his guitar playing is good. My husband is anxious to hear what I thought of his sermon. My friend wants to know that I approve of her. Everyone asks this question. *Did I do OK? Am I OK?*

Am I?

I took this question to the Lord and pretty much refused to get up from the couch until I had an answer: *Where should I look for the approval that I need so badly?*

I prayed and flipped through the book of Luke, reasoning through the Scriptures for the better part of an hour, and God

revealed to me one answer: Approval happened when I believed in the cross and resurrection. There was nothing, not one thing, God could approve of when He looked at my life. Then Jesus cloaked me with His righteousness, and this is when God approved of me and allowed me into His kingdom.

Approval has already happened.

Approval has already happened. (I repeated this to myself on the couch, so I thought you should think about it twice too.)

“We also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation” (Rom. 5:11, NIV). Once we were not acceptable and approved by God.

Now we are.

We rejoice!

We are already accepted. Already loved. Already held tight in the loving hands of the Father. Already called “good enough.”

Already.

So when we feel that groping need for approval, we need to shift from seeking fulfillment from people and instead practice remembering the declaration of approval on our behalf at the cross of Christ.

This is a radical shift in thinking, is it not?

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