

1) My approval drive can be approved.

- **Approval of Parents** - *Proverbs 15:20* A wise son makes a glad father, but a foolish man despises his mother.

Did you live a life pleasing to your parents when you were under their authority? How does that affect you now? How are you training your children to value your approval as a parent?

- **Approval of Governing Authorities** - *Romans 13:1–3* Let every person be subject to the governing authorities...do what is good, and you will receive his approval.

Would the governing authorities in your life say that you are affirming and loyal to their leadership?

- **Approval of your Spouse** - *1 Corinthians 7:33–34* The married man is anxious about worldly things, how to please his wife...the married woman is anxious about worldly things, how to please her husband.

What did you do (intentionally) to please your spouse this week? How about next week?

- **Approval of a Watching World** - *1 Corinthians 10:32–33* Give no offense to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God, **33** just as I try to please everyone in everything I do, not seeking my own advantage, but that of many, that they may be saved.

Are your words and conduct creating a gap or building a bridge between unbelievers and the gospel? How?

2) My approval drive can be addictive.

- Do you lay awake at night thinking of how to get a person to like, think well of you, notice you, include you, or reward you?
- Is your happiness or contentment dependent the approval of others?
- Do you feel valued or significant even when others don't recognize your performance or achievements?
- Do you experience pain when the approval of others is missing or withdrawn?
- Do you feel inferiority, insecure, depressed, and suicidal over the loss of approval?
- Are you jealous when the approval that was once given to you, is given to another?
- Are your thoughts consumed with others? Do you give someone too much space in your head? Are you allowing them to move in and live rent free in your mind?
- Are you willing to forfeit the approval of God to win the approval of men?

Approval addicts fear exposure or rejection.

Are you so fearful of exposure or failure, you will do anything to get approval? Is your fear evidenced by any of the following?

- Overcommitted
- Workaholic
- Overspending
- Overly talkative
- Flirting and sexual favors
- Critical – You must destroy the competition to make yourself look better and win.
- Abandon the Truth. Put on a mask. Pretend to be someone you are not.

Are you so fearful of rejection or ridicule you will do anything to avoid it? Is your fear evidenced by any of the following?

- Avoid people rather than risk their rejection of me. You'd rather not talk at all.
- Easily embarrassed.
- Indecisive. If I make the wrong decision they won't like. If I'm going to be a leader I must conquer the fear of man.
- Clingy. When you finally get some approval you drain the life out of a person because they can never do enough to meet your need for approval.
- Self-deprecating. You put yourself down hoping someone will disagree and build you back up. You are fishing for a compliment. Begging for someone to make a deposit in your bank of approval.
- Ashamed of being a follower of Jesus.

Approval addicts are snared by the controlling expectations of others.

Are you snared by pretense like Abraham? (Read Genesis 20.) Do you pretend to be someone you are not to gain approval?

Are you snared by pressure like Peter? (Read Matthew 26:69-75.) Are you ashamed of being a follower of Jesus?

Approval addicts trust people to supply what only God can provide. (Isaiah 51:12, Hebrews 13:6)

Read Isa. 51:12. What hurt do you need God to comfort? Are you going to him for comfort or someone who can't really supply the comfort you need?

Read Heb. 13:6. What is the greatest threat you are facing? What can man do to you? Do you trust the promises of God in the midst of the threat?

Approval addicts never feel safe.

Do you feel safe? Why or why not? Does it have anything to do with where you are looking for security?

3) My approval drive can be altered. (Galatians 1:10)

Does your source of approval need to change? List the people who came to mind as you studied this message. In prayer release them to God. Tell God you want his approval no matter who disapproves?