

1) Replace the fear of man with the fear of the Lord. (2Cor. 5:10-11)

The Fear of the Lord: The continual awareness that I am in the presence of God and that one day I will appear before him in judgment.

How would it change your life if you lived with the awareness that God sees what you do, hears what you say, and knows what you are thinking?

Read Jeremiah 1:8-9. What promise helps our craving for attention?

Read Romans. 14:18. What promise helps our craving for acceptance?

Read 2Cor. 5:10-11. Are you persuasive or more often persuaded by others? Where does courage to persuade come from?

2) Learn the attitudes that always get God's stamp of approval. (Matthew 5:3-11)

Read the list of beatitudes in Matthew 5:3-11. Discuss the 8 attitudes that God always approves. Where do you see yourself in the comparisons?

1. God always approves of humility. (v. 3)

Nobody is drawn to the guy who flaunts what he has.

Everyone is drawn to the guy who understands what he needs.

2. God always approves of repentance. (v. 4)

Nobody expects perfection.

Everybody expects an apology.

3. God always approves of putting others first. (v. 5)

Nobody wants to be impressed.

Everybody wants to be loved.

4. God always approves of an appetite for Him. (v. 6)

Nobody is satisfied by sin.

Everyone is satisfied by right choices.

5. God always approves of forgiveness. (v. 7)

Nobody is perfect.

Everyone wants a second chance and a fresh start.

6. God always approves of an unpolluted heart. (v. 8)

Nobody appreciates a hypocrite.

Everybody values authenticity.

7. God always approves of reconciliation. (v. 9)

Nobody cares if you're right.

Everybody cares about enduring relationships.

8. God always approves of uncompromising faith. (v. 10)

Nobody respects a coward.

Everyone respects the one who stands for what they believe to the end.

3) Exchange God's disapproval of you for God's approval of Christ. (Matthew 4:16-17)

The default setting of the human heart is to try to get God's approval by being or doing good.

How did God show his approval of his son?

How do sinners get the approval of God?