

1. Intro -
 - a. As human beings we are **Approval Addicts**
 - b. Have you ever taken a picture just so you could put it on facebook?
 - c. Social media, selfies, flexing at the gym, name-dropping, desperate for compliments, craving attention, desiring acceptance from everyone under the sun
 - d. Why are we so desperate for approval? How does this relate to idolatry?
2. *[3] Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, [4] who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, [5] to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.*
 - a. We are desperate for approval because we are born separated from God
 - b. We try to fill the eternal need for approval with temporary acceptance
 - c. This points towards our need for God → CS Lewis
 - i. ex: people fighting to have their sin accepted by society
 - d. **We crave approval from people, but actually need to be approved by God**
3. *[6] I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—[7] not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ.*
 - a. In Christ, we can be approved by God → accepted by Him despite our sin
 - b. But for a lot of people, that doesn't seem to be good enough to satisfy our longing
 - i. Being approved by God is so intangible, want to be accepted by people
 - ii. Give more value to what world thinks → idolatry
 - c. Constantly return to our old master → forget how it is that we find approval
 - d. **The only way that we will find any real approval is through the Gospel**
4. *[8] But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed. [9] As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed.*
 - a. Strong words. Why? Explain the Judaizers seeking to appease the Jews
 - i. When we seek the approval of man and place that above the approval of God, we worship an idol and “live” another Gospel
 - b. To give more weight to man's approval, is to embrace another Gospel
 - c. **When we live for the praises of man, we worship the idol of approval and forget the Gospel**
5. *[10] For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ.*
 - a. When we live our lives to be approved by man, we are not serving Christ
 - b. You know that you have an idol of approval if your greatest nightmare is rejection
 - c. So what does approval idolatry look like in our lives?
 - d. Source & Surface Idols
 - i. **No boundaries** - “I have a hard time saying no” Why?
 1. Good intentions, but often stems from fear of rejection, letting someone down

2. Jesus said no → Jesus left people sick, blind, possessed, but did everything God wanted him to do → he was approved by God
 3. People pleasing is false understanding of where we find approval
 4. “Being a people-pleaser is like being a stray dog at a whistler’s convention.”
 5. If you live under that rock, you eventually wound up burned out, beat up, bitter, and resentful → eventually it boils over
 - a. Towards people
 - b. Towards organized religion & eventually towards God (if your no boundaries relates to ministry)
 6. Realize that living to please people is a dead end road.
 - a. You can do everything and people will never appreciate you, thank you, love you enough
 - b. While you are striving to please people you are forgetting that what you really crave is pleasing God so you’ll always be disappointed and let down by sinful, fallen people
 7. If you’re wired this way, you naturally assume God functions like this too: “I just need to impress him with my works.” → It’s a lie
 8. You are accepted 100% dependent on the Gospel
- ii. **Compromise** - so desperate to be accepted by people you abandon your morals, your convictions, your faith → this is the biggie
1. With nearsighted faith, we crave acceptance from people more than God
 - a. What if people don’t like me, agree w/ me, judge me, not someone’s best friend, don’t get invited, get left out, etc
 - b. There’s an easy way to deal w/ those fears: compromise
 - i. Your morals, your standards, your personality
 - ii. Pretend to be someone you’re not
 1. “I drink so I can relax and be social.”
 - iii. Different person at work, w/ friends, w/ family
 2. False understanding of where we find approval
 - a. To seek to be approved by man at the expense of God is a tragedy of the worst sort b/c man isn’t your judge
 - b. How many have made tragic decisions in order to win the love of a parent, a child, a friend, a boss?
 - c. *Compromise is often the first step in faith-destruction*
 3. What you need to hear: Your deep need to feel approval is only found in Jesus Christ. You’re compromising the only thing that matters for the sake of your own insecurities.
- iii. **Living to impress people**
1. How it relates: Your whole life becomes a charade to impress others. You live for the applause of the crowd.

- a. In a world filled w/ celebrity obsession, this is a major problem. Everyone wants their 15 seconds of fame
 - i. Willing to ridiculous things to get it, make complete fools of themselves, sell themselves, etc
 - 2. Hypocrisy: doing things to be seen
 - a. Working hard only when people know to earn approval
 - b. “Church talk” when appropriate (“I’ll pray for you...”)
 - 3. Narcism: You think you are much more important than you actually are; The whole world exists to give you praise;
 - a. Ex: celebrities who make sex tapes & have no shame
 - i. No different than snapchat
 - ii. Twitter example
 - iii. Bret Favre texting pictures of genitiles
 - b. Narcissism is an approval idol because you feel empty when nobody is paying you attention, laughing at you, talking about how pretty you are, liking your pics, etc
 - 4. And it is straight up dangerous because you are essentially stealing God’s role as the one to receive glory and praise
 - a. You are so desperate for praise that you place yourself as “god” and demand others worship you
 - 5. And remember, you non-conformist-don’t-what-people-think-types: the opposite is idolatry too
 - a. Your lack of approval, gloating and boasting in how against the grain you are is just as idolatrous b/c those who do this often do it to garner and gain attention (Lady Gaga)
 - 6. What you need to hear: You will feel important, meaningful, and valued once you grasp that you are loved by your Creator, and only his opinion truly matters.
 - 7. *“It’s none of your business what other people think about you.”*
 - e. **True approval isn’t found in the praises of man, but in the blood of the lamb**
6. **Who do you fear, live for, seek approval from?**
 - a. My kids, my parents, my friends, my boss, my pastor, my spouse, my twitter followers, my facebook friends, etc
 - i. You can’t live for any of those things and live as a servant of Christ
 - b. At the end of the day, there is only one opinion that matters, one audience
 - c. If you are here and you aren’t a follower of Christ:
 - i. You’ve been looking for love, looking for acceptance in a community, looking to be valued, appreciated by people, and you really are longing for God.
 - ii. You are loved, valued, approved, cherished in the Gospel alone.
 - d. Your idols won’t approve you, they’ll destroy you → **Repent and replace**
 - e. **True Approval is Only Found in the Gospel**