FINDING GOD’S APPROVAL

Part 3

**DATE: 8/14/2016 pm**

**TEXT: Proverbs (various)**

**INTRODUCTION**

One of the driving forces in many people’s lives, is the great need for Approval

Children naturally long for the Approval of their parents

A husband or wife wants the Approval of their spouse

Many young adults crave the Approval of their peers

Pastors seek the Approval of their Churches

Church Members seek the Approval of their Pastor

A person’s appetite for Acceptance is very strong

The desire for Acceptance can be *Destructive*

If that desire leads to compromising with sin

On the other hand, the same desire can be *Constructive*

If your passion is to be Accepted by God

Eventually, every person must make a decision whom they will serve and who’s Approval they will seek

**Joshua 24:15 –*“And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; …***

***…whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD”***

Let me ask, *Whose approval or favor do you seek?*

*Is the approval or the favor of God important to you?*

**Matthew 6:24 *– “No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon”***

If so, then the book of Proverbs offers us some practical, important insights about the Approval of God

So, let’s continue to see what the Book of Proverbs has to say about God’s Approval

I don’t know about you, but I what to be sure I have the Approval of God on my life

And the only way we will be able to tell, is to place our lives alongside the Word of God and honestly compare them

**“Finding God’s Approval” – Part 3**

**~~~Prayer~~~**

**I. FAITHFULNESS, DEDICATION, AND TRUTHFULNESS**

The first thing I want to look at this evening regarding the approval of God is …

Whole-hearted Faithfulness, Dedication, and Truthfulness

**Proverbs 12:22 – *“Lying lips are abomination to the LORD: but they that deal truly are His delight”***

Solomon is dealing again with the tongue

But it goes much deeper than that

Over and over again the Bible connects the Heart to what a person says

We need to learn to listen carefully to what is being said

**Proverbs 4:23 *– “Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life”***

God as designed us with 2 ears and one mouth for a purpose

**Proverbs 12:22** contrasts telling the Truth with Lying

**A. Lying Lips – v. 22a**

***“Lying lips are abomination to the LORD”***

There are just some things God hates

And lying lips happens to be one of them

**Proverbs 6:16, 17 *– “These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto Him:” “A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,”***

Why? / Because Lying is everything God is not

Because lying is the embodiment of Satan

**John 8:44 –** ***“Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it”***

**James 3:6 *– “And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell”***

Lying lips are evidence that someone is foolish

**Proverbs 14:7 *– “Go from the presence of a foolish man, when thou perceivest not in him the lips of knowledge” (truth)***

A Foolish person is usually a lost man

But that’s not always necessarily so

Believers have the ability to act foolish and they will tell on themselves when they say some things

The Foolish man’s life can be summed up in one verse

**Proverbs 12:15a –** ***“The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise”***

He has all the answers and doesn’t need anyone’s opinion

The lie here is that they say they love the Lord, but won’t be obedient

**I John 2:4 –** ***“He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him”***

We have a lot of unstable Christians today

They can’t make up their minds, double minded

**James 1:8 –** ***“A double minded man is unstable in all his ways”***

These types of people are living a lie!

**B. A Truthful Heart – v.22b**

***“but they that deal truly are His delight”***

So what does it mean to ***“deal truly”***

I think **Ephesian 4:25** puts it pretty clearly

***“Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another”***

God Approves of those that deal ***“truly”***

The word *“****truly”*** speaks of *firmness, steadfastness, steadiness, or faithfulness*

God favors those who are Faithful and True

Faithfulness and Truth are a big deal to the Lord

Because God is Faithful and True

**I Corinthians 1:9 – “*God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord”***

**II Corinthians 1:18a – “*But as God is True”***

John the Baptist said in **John 3:33 …**

**“*He that hath received His testimony hath set to His seal that God is true”***

Faithfulness, Truthfulness, and Reliability are some of the key ingredients of any society

If we can't trust the words and promises of others, then society falls apart

When people fail to be truthful, to fulfill their promises, and keep their word …

The judicial system collapses and the economy crashes,

The family disintegrates when the husband and wife are not faithful and can no longer trust one another

As church members, we need to be truthful to one another

When you joined this church, you agreed to that

If you are here on your own conditions, you mind-as-well leave, because you are lying

Beloved, it is vital that we are truthful and faithful to God and to one another in every area of our life, no matter how big or how little it is

Many times, the little things have a dramatic effect on our life

**Ill.** The first attempt to dig the Panama Canal was made by a French company. Men and machinery tackled the mountains and jungles. The project was abandoned, however, not because of the mountains and vast jungle, but due to the mosquitoes. Yellow fever from mosquitoes killed thousands. American doctors later discovered ways of protecting people against mosquitoes. When the mosquitoes were taken care of, the mountains and jungles soon succumbed. There is a great difference between the size of a mountain and a mosquito; yet, the small mosquitoes did more damage to the workers. More men perished from the bite of the mosquitoes than from danger in the mountains.

Beloved, no one succeeds in the big opportunities of life who has not been faithful in the small obligations

God wants us to be faithful, even in the little responsibilities we have

Do you deal truly with the Lord and with others?

Are you faithful?

**Luke 16:10 – “*He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much”***

Those who are **…**

**FAITHFUL, DEDICATED, AND TRUTHFUL**

Find God’s Approval

Next, we have …

**II. WAITING ON THE LORD**

Waiting on the Lord in Prayer finds God’s Approval

**Proverbs 15:8 …**

**A. The Sacrifice of the Wicked**

***“The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD:***

This exact phrase is repeated in **Proverbs 21:27a** except the ending

So what does Solomon mean by this?

It is kind of like what happened with Cain and Abel

Abel’s sacrifice was accepted, but Cain’s refused

Cain's problem was like that of a lot of people today

Many of whom claim to love Christ!

But will not allow themselves to be led and directed by the Word of God because their hearts are stubborn and rebellious

Therefore, they try to please God in their own way …

… and, as with Cain, it is not acceptable to our Creator!

**Proverbs 14:12 *– “There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death”***

**B. The Prayer of the Upright**

***“but the prayer of the upright is His (God’s) delight”***

The prayers of those who are upright, godly, and righteous are a delight to the Lord

The word ***“delight”*** means *favor or acceptance*

The Lord likes to hear from us, especially when we are obeying Him and doing His will

Many do not get their prayers answered because they live a stubborn, sinful, rebellious life that shuts the Lord out of their lives

Then they have the audacity to ask God to solve their problems and clean up their messes when they have repeatedly snubbed Him

If you want to get on praying ground with the Lord, then you need to deal with the sin issues first

If you have never trusted Christ as your Saviour, you need to do that

There is a need for us to repent of what we have done wrong and seek God's forgiveness for our rotten attitude

God loves those that follow righteousness

**Proverbs 15:9 –** ***“The way of the wicked is an abomination unto the LORD: but He loveth him that followeth after righteousness”***

The 3rd thing that brings the Approval of God is …

**III. FINDING A GODLY WIFE**

**Proverbs 18:22 – *“Whoso findeth a (Godly) wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the LORD”***

One reason … that in spite of my own lack of spirituality, discipline and consecration, I have found favor with the Lord is because of my wife

God has blessed my life with an almost perfect helpmeet

Some men want a wife but cannot find one

An outstanding woman is difficult to find

The Bible tells us that God’s Favor is upon that man

A Godly wife is a treasure that is far above rubies, gold, or silver, especially when that wife has a love for God, a love for her husband, and puts up with him

**Proverbs 12:4a *– “A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband”***

**Proverbs 31:30 –** ***“Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised”***

The man that has a wife like that understands what I mean

On the other hand, a godless woman will be a nightmare

**Proverbs 12:4b *– “but she that maketh ashamed is as rottenness in his bones”*** (She is like cancer)

**Proverbs 27:15 –*“A continual dropping in a very rainy day and a contentious woman are alike”***

**Proverbs 21:9 *– “It is better to dwell in a corner of the housetop, (attic) than with a brawling woman in a wide house”***

If the wife becomes bitter, cold, unfeeling, uncaring, or unfaithful, she creates distress and distractions for her husband

Her bitterness or coldness may be caused by some kind of sin in her life

Or by her husband that acts like a jerk

When husbands are harsh, impatient, and selfish, they create emotional barriers with their spouses

Woman are emotional creatures, and those damaged by insensitivity and rough treatment …

Will have their tender emotions bruised and scarred

If you have bruised your wife in any way, then seek her forgiveness

Give her time to emotionally heal

In most cases, it takes time for her spirit to trust you and open back up

God's plan for the wife is to be an encouragement and help to her husband

Men need attention, affection, adoration, and admiration

A wise wife will endeavor to meet her husband’s needs

(If she feels secure)

Most men have insecurities

Behind men that have accomplished great things or have become very successful are usually very supportive, loving, and caring wives

**Proverbs 19:14 –** ***“House and riches are the inheritance of fathers: and a prudent wife is from the LORD”***

**Proverbs 18:22 – *“Whoso findeth a (Godly) wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the LORD”***

The last thing we will look at tonight is …

**IV. TO DO JUSTICE AND JUDGEMENT**

**Proverbs 21:3 –** ***“To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice”***

The two concepts of **justice** and **judgment** go hand in hand

The word ***“justice”*** means*righteousness* and refers …

… to righteousness as a principle (practical righteousness)

Justice speaks of *fairness, reasonableness* especially in the way people are treated or decisions are made

The word *“****judgment”*** has the sense of a *just decisions* or right judgment, based on Justice

God is more interested in true righteousness than religious ceremony and outward form

**A. A Demonstration of the Heart**

The Lord is more pleased when we do what is right and just than when we offer Him sacrifices

For Godly living and obedience to the Word of God are a demonstration of what has taken place in the heart

This is what He wants from us

It is the key reason why the Macedonian Christians were such a powerful blessing to others

They had given themselves to the Lord first

**II Corinthians 8:5 – “*And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God”***

**B. The Premium on Obedience**

Our obedience is more acceptable to the Lord than our sacrifices because God puts a premium on our obedience to Him

**Mark 12:33 *– “And to love Him (God) with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices”***

This is stressed repeatedly throughout the Bible

Our compliance to Christ is evidenced by our love for Him

**I Samuel 15:22 – “*And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams”***

**John 14:15 – “*If ye love Me, keep My commandments”***

**Matthew 23:23 *– “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone”***

**Micah 6:6-8 *– “Wherewith shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old?” “Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?” ….***

***“He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?”***

**Hosea 6:6 – “*For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings”***

 **CONCLUSION**

How different the world would be if every single believer started the day with a statement like this

*Father in heaven, I want Your approval more than the approval of men…show me how I can bring You pleasure today*

The culture as we know it would be turned upside down because we would see mighty works of God on a regular basis

We are called with a holy and precious calling to serve God with all our hearts

Seeking His approval first completely nullifies a double-mindedness about what we are to do

You are born again into the freedom of seeking God’s approval first