

What Will They Think of Me?
The Fear of Man vs. the Fear of God
1 Samuel 15:24-28

Introduction: Culture Worships Approval

We live in a world where people fear embarrassment more than they fear hell. They won't go soul winning, but they'll beg strangers online for likes. They'll spend \$500 on Jordans to look rich, while living off food stamps. They're addicted to image, not integrity.

What do they think of me? Do they think I'm rich? Do they think I'm awesome? What do they think of me? People worry too much about what other people think of them. They are afraid that people will think bad of them or not like them.

""Proverbs 29:25

The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe.""

You're not free if you live for other people's opinions. That's bondage. Real freedom is in trusting the Lord—not TikTok, not You Tube, not this world. We are not of this world the Bible says.

So, for example, I don't care what people think of me. It's obvious. I care what God thinks of me. People's opinions are like smoke – visible for a moment, and then carried away by the next breeze.

Listen. Stop worrying about what other people think of you. When you do this, you fear man and not God. You need the fear of God and not the fear of man.

Look at the verse again. The Bible tells you the truth. "The fear of man bringeth a snare." That's a trap. It's a hidden trap that makes escape almost impossible. This trap will destroy you.

And if you think it's just young people today who fall into this trap, let me take you back to one of Israel's first kings. Saul had the anointing of God—but the fear of man cost him everything.

Point 1: Saul Lost Everything for Fear of the Crowd

""1 Samuel 15:24

And Saul said unto Samuel, I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD, and thy words: because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice.""

Saul had God's command. He disobeyed because he wanted to make the people happy. He tried to be a people-pleasing leader and ended up rejected by God.

People today do the same. Pastors won't preach on hell because they're scared someone might leave the church.

Parents won't discipline their kids because they want to be liked, not respected.

Teenagers go to parties they don't even enjoy just to avoid being made fun of.

They're trading obedience to God for applause from the crowd.

Saul feared the people and lost his kingdom. But today, people don't just lose their calling—they sell their very soul for a handful of applause. Let's talk about what it costs to chase this world.

Point 2: People Trade Their Souls for Image

""Matthew 16:26

For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?""

""Luke 12:15

And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.""

""2 Peter 2:19

While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.""

Here's what it looks like today:

- Women showing off their bodies online to gain followers—exchanging purity for popularity.
- Men blowing paychecks on rims, grills, designer clothes, or weed—just to impress broke friends.
- “Christian” influencers watering down the Gospel to avoid getting canceled.

They call it freedom, but it's spiritual slavery.

Some chase the world openly, while others hide their faith secretly. They believe in Christ—but fear the crowd more than they fear God. Let's look at how fear keeps people silent when they should be standing.

Point 3: Believers Stay Silent Because They Fear Being Rejected

""**John 12:42–43**

Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.""

You see this all the time:

- Christians who believe in biblical marriage but won't speak against Pride Month.
- Students who believe the Bible but stay silent when evolution is taught.
- Church members who post Bible verses on Sunday but filthy music and party photos on Saturday.

They believe, but they won't confess. Why? Because they don't want to be "uncool," "unfollowed," or unfriended.

If you're scared to speak truth, are you really a disciple?

""**Matthew 10:33**

But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.""

And it's not just what we say—it's what we do. Some people might never deny Jesus with their mouth, but their actions show a heart still tied to the old life. Just like someone we read about back in Genesis.

You are saved and going to heaven no matter what – if you have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. But God can deny you for all types of things. He can deny you blessings, answers to prayers, rewards in heaven, and more. You might ask for help. And you don't get it. Why? Because you are afraid of what a man might think of you.

Don't stay silent. Speak out about Jesus Christ.

Point 4: Lot's Wife Looked Back—A Warning for Today

""**Genesis 19:26**

But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.""

""Genesis 19:17

And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said, Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed.""

The angels said to Lot and his wife: *"Don't look back!"* But Lot's wife did. That disobedience cost her life.

Today's version of looking back looks like this:

- Christians who get saved but keep posting club pics and shaking their bodies for views. Hey, don't do these things. You need to look forward with Jesus Christ. Don't look back.
- People who leave drugs, but still hang out with their old crew "just to chill." If you hang around all of that stuff, you'll go back to it. You need to get away from that. Don't look back.
- Believers who are always "remembering the good times" in their sinful past. Those weren't good times. You want to forget about those bad times. And move forward.

""Philippians 3:13-14

Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, 14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.""

Don't go back to the things of the past. We are to press forward toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Don't look back.

Lot's wife didn't say anything. She just disobeyed. That's all it takes. Again, she went against God's words.

Lot's wife looked back—and she was judged immediately. But not everyone falls away overnight. Some drift slowly, falling more and more in love with this present world, like a man named Demas.

Point 5: Demas Chose the World Instead of the Work

""2 Timothy 4:10

For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.""

Demas isn't called an enemy. He's not said to have committed adultery. He didn't join false doctrine. He just walked away from God's work. And you have that choice too. You can do God's work with us here, or you can walk away and go do what you want. That's what Demas did. Why?

Because he ***loved this present world.***

It still happens:

- Church members get a promotion at work and suddenly “don't have time” for church anymore. Everything else is more important. Church days aren't even remembered because it's just not important.
- Soul winners get busy with “side hustles” and start skipping ministry. Money becomes more important. God is put at the bottom of the list. And then people wonder why things go wrong.
- Young men stop preaching because their girlfriend thinks it's “too intense.” They choose to do what their girlfriend wants versus what God wants.

It's not scandal—it's slow compromise. And it's killing the work of God. Again, it's all slow compromise. And this puts a stop to the work of God.

Demas chose the world because he couldn't serve two masters. **YOU CANNOT SERVE TWO MASTERS.** Demas couldn't and neither can we. Jesus made it plain: you can't live for the worldly people and for Christ at the same time. It's one or the other. Make your choice.

Point 6: You Cannot Live for God and Culture

""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.""

""Galatians 6:14

But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.""

Here's what divided loyalty looks like in 2025:

- Christians who say “God knows my heart” while living in sin. They believe their heart to be good even though they continue in sin. They think they can sin and it's okay because

God knows their heart. "The heart is deceitful above all things," the Bible says, "and desperately wicked."

- Women singing "Worthy is the Lamb" on Sunday and shaking it to Beyoncé on Monday. This is normal out there. We aren't going to be like that here. We're going to continue to walk in the Spirit on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.
- Preachers who won't mention sin because it hurts their brand. All the churches out there don't want to make anyone angry. We will preach against sin here. You might not like it, but that's what helps you. That's why it's in the Bible. But they choose friendship with men.

You can't serve God and keep one foot in the world. Choose a side, get on that side, and stay on that side.

So what's it going to be? Whose approval are you living for? Because when you stand before God, none of the crowd, none of the followers, and none of the opinions will matter. Only one judgment will matter. God's the one you want to please.

Conclusion: Who Are You Really Living For?

""Isaiah 2:22

Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?""

You're living for approval from people who can't even control their next breath. Look at the verse again and stop trying to please men, women, and children. "Cease ye from man." Instead, go after God and what he wants.

The breath of a man can be gone in a moment – taken away by God Almighty who owns everything including you. God owns you. God owns me. Some people hate to hear that. But it's true. And he can take your breath away at any moment. A man has no worth compared to God. God can be trusted. Man can't be trusted. Put your trust in the Lord.

Do something for him for once and stop worrying about yourself and others so much. Hey, wake up and hear what I'm saying.

""Luke 16:15

And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.""

This world claps for sin. But Heaven is not clapping. God sees through the filters and followers.

God doesn't care how many friends you have on social media or how many followers you have. We esteem or respect or honor things because men believe these things to be worth something. For example, we honor the 2025 NCAA national champions. Men love sports. Men idolize teenagers playing basketball. They must have their autograph.

They must get their jersey signed. They must get close to them. It's weird. "For that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God." Abomination is greatly hated by God.

Do you really think God is for all those people putting a sport above him? And they do. It's obvious. The best players in the world don't have time for church. They don't have time for reading the Bible.

""Isaiah 29:13

Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men.""

You'll see and hear athletes honoring God with their mouth and lips while they make a game number one in their life and they believe God is helping them. Their heart is far from him and instead on a bouncing piece of rubber filled with air.

Call to Action: Repent of the Fear of Man and Live for God

""Ecclesiastes 12:13

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.""

If you've been living for likes, praise, fashion, fame, or acceptance—it's time to repent of these sins.

If you think your shoes matter more than the Bible, you've got a problem. This is definitely 100% sin as you seek approval from this world. You cannot be a bold servant of Christ while being a slave to this culture.

Stop asking in your head, "What will they think of me?" Start praying to God and drawing near to him. Stop worrying about all the other things in your life. God is far more important than any of those things.

Let's pray.