



**Sermon-based reflections connect the week to the weekend!**

*Dig deeper into the talk each week, in a small group or independently. Challenge yourself to see how the message actually makes sense and applies to your everyday life.*

**Message Info:** People Problems - People Pleasing, 9/24/23 - Though we need to care on some level what others think, we can care too much. When we allow ourselves to be manipulated for fear of disappointing others, it doesn't just affect us physically, socially, and emotionally, it affects us spiritually. But there is a healthy balance, and it's found in Jesus. (Passages: *John 12:42-46, Galatians 1:10, Isaiah 40:29, Psalm 28:7-8, Nehemiah 8:10b, 2 Corinthians 12:9, Matthew 15:39, John 5:41*)

**Discussion Questions:** Take your time and dig into these questions.

Do you ever feel anxiety over what others think of you? Over their unreal expectations? Or maybe about the step you took to set a boundary? Have you ever felt manipulated into a space you didn't want to be in? Are you ever exhausted due to over-commitments?

Read John 12:42-46. What stands out to you in this passage. Why?

More people were beginning to believe in Jesus, but fear of the Pharisees kept them silent. The rulers sought human approval. Fear of rejection or disappointing someone causes people to make poor choices. We misinterpret our heart's desire to be accepted and loved by thinking we can earn it from others. But we're really giving away our peace and happiness, even influence in our relationships. Can we follow God well if we are people pleasing? Are we seeking God's heart, or that of others?

We can't be people pleasers and experience the blessings God has for us (Galatians 1:10). The good news is, we don't have to earn God's love. And it's ok to disappoint people, there's something more important. Settle these into your heart to rebalance:

1. Inner strength - It comes from God and the work he does in our souls (Isaiah 40:29, Psalm 28:7-8)
2. Reorient identity - Who we are is found in Christ. We're the target of his grace and affections (Ephesians 1:4)
3. Reorder relationships - God > people. Don't live for what others think about you (Proverbs 29:25)
4. Reorder priorities - Our hearts priority should be God to experience joy, healing, and hope. (1 Thessalonians 2:4)

**Weekly Challenge:** Spend extra time at church on Sunday and talk to someone new!