

Proverbs 27:21 - 21 The crucible for silver and the furnace for gold,
but people are tested by their praise.

I want to talk today on praise and rejection.

Let me first off say, this is not an easy message. To preach,
because it effects me, to hear because it effects me.

I'm not going to keep you long today will you give me 30 minutes?

Look again at Proverbs 27

Proverbs 27:21 - 21 The crucible for silver and the furnace for gold,
but people are tested by their praise.

We are told in Scripture to encourage one another. So let me say
this at the onset. There is nothing wrong with giving people a little
praise. Who doesn't like to hear well done. Jesus was even told
that, at His baptism, this is my beloved son in whom I'm well
pleased.

And by the way that happened before Jesus had done any miracles.

So your work is not what gets the Father's acceptance. We work because we are, not because we are seeking for it.

However, when we as individuals live off of and almost demand praise there is an issue.

There are some people that can not get by without the praises of men. And that is what I want to share about today. We always want to hear from the Father in heaven well done. But when we are always seeking the praise of men there really is an issue.

When you find people like that you may have a tendency to think you shouldn't give them praise or encouragement. However that is not what Scripture tells us.

Look what Paul writes to the church at Corinth.

1 Corinthians 11:2 - 2 I praise you for remembering me in everything and for holding to the traditions just as I passed them on to you.

Now later in this passage Paul also does some correction. In how there were misusing the Lord's supper Paul said should I praise

you on this matter, no.

So what I'm I saying? Our calling, our job well look at 1
Thessalonians 5:11

1 Thessalonians 5:11 - Therefore encourage one another and build
each other up, just as in fact you are doing.

So praise, encouragement to someone is not a bad thing. And
here's the thing.

When I encourage you, my job is not to wonder if you will accept it
well, or get a big head. I really can't even be concerned about that.
My job, our job is to build each other up.

God has a way of humbling the proud.

But here's the really important thing, We need to get to a place
where the praises that the Father has for us is sufficient.

Psalms 49:18 (NLT) - In this life they consider themselves fortunate
and are applauded for their success.

Look at how the Amplified translation says this, Though while he lives he counts himself happy and prosperous, and though a man gets praise when he does well [for himself],

See here is something you need to be aware of. There is a tendency when someone has a great ministry, maybe they are a great orator. They have a great healing ministry or prophetic ministry or anything like that.

There is a chance that they can become so impressive that the listeners come away talking more about the speaker than about Jesus!

And that is a problem.

Acts 4:13 - When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus.

I remember speaking in a church and because I wasn't wearing a suit coat and that bothered them, many never heard the message.

They were more focused on me as the vessel and in that case it displayed not praise, but rejection.

And I want to talk about that in a just minute.

Let me just say a couple more things concerning praise.

God will use the compliments you receive from men to show you your heart.

Here's what we need to learn, when God accepts me that is all I need. My acceptance of another doesn't benefit me like my acceptance from God.

I need to get to a place that I can preach a message and instead of wondering what you all thought about it, I need need ask God what He thought about it.

Listen I am not saying a don't appreciate you telling me, good message but if I am more concerned about what you think rather than what God thinks then I am preaching a message motivated by the fear of man and not God.

I need to give a message out of the fear of God and not the fear of man.

Proverbs 29:25 - Fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord is kept safe.

Listen church we need to have an atmosphere of honor toward one another, edifying and encouraging one another in love.

It is correct to honor people, encourage people, love people, edify people, but you should not seek for, expect or find your your identity and fulfillment in the praise of others.

Look at John 12:42-43 - Yet at the same time many even among the leaders believed in him. But because of the Pharisees they would not openly acknowledge their faith for fear they would be put out of the synagogue; 43 for they loved human praise more than praise from God.

The one you fear is the one you will aim to please. That's why Scripture tells us the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

Wisdom is I want to do nothing, but please my Father.

Jesus had one motivation while he walked on the earth, and that was to make Papa look good. Not himself, not the disciples, but God.

Which brings me to the second and last part of my message.

We ought to be more like Christ everyday on this journey. Remember we were created in His image. As we become more aware of our destiny and calling we ought to be more like Him.

And in case you are thinking that as you become more like Jesus you will become more accepted. The truth is it will most likely be just the opposite.

You can be perfect like Jesus and still be rejected.

Now this is something I think is extremely important to hear. If I look back at all the times I have felt rejected or all the times I have made another feel that way, in both of these situations it was not a

malicious act of either party. The hurt was not caused intentionally by myself or from those who hurt me.

Look at 2 Timothy 3:12 - In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,

Luke 4:14-15 - Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. 15 He was teaching in their synagogues, and everyone praised him.

Everybody did what? Praised him.

Let's continue

Luke 4:16-22 - He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read, 17 and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written: 18 "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, 19 to proclaim the year of the

Lord's favor." 20 Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. 21 He began by saying to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." 22 All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. "Isn't this Joseph's son?" they asked.

So far so good.

Then he continues to talk about leprosy during the time of Elijah, and how a prophet isn't accepted in his hometown. And then look what happened.

Verses 28 and 29 - 28 All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this. 29 They got up, drove him out of the town, and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built, in order to throw him off the cliff.

Went from praise to people wanting to kill him.

Matthew 8:34 - Then the whole town went out to meet Jesus. And when they saw him, they pleaded with him to leave their region.

He had just delivered a man from demon possession and the whole town pleaded with him to leave, because they lost some pigs.

Luke 17:25 - But first he must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation.

Who can forget when the crowd yelled out give us Barabbas crucify Jesus. That was the ultimate rejection.

Now let me just say this. We will all in our lifetime if you have not already, you will feel rejection. But I need you to understand something which is vitally important. Although rejection hurts it doesn't need to wound.

You need to understand something that is critical until you learn to find satisfaction in nothing by the Father you will always be looking for acceptance someplace else or from someone else. Which will always open your heart for more rejection.

See this is how it works. We look for acceptance from people and when we don't receive it we feel rejected.

In his book. "Dealing with the Rejection and Praise of Man." Bob Sorge where much of this message was inspired by says,

"When you get to the place where your soul craves nothing but the acceptance of Jesus, you will no longer be victimized by the rejection of man."

He goes on to say, "When we're no longer inflated by others' acceptance, we'll no longer be deflated by their rejection."

Proverbs 13:8 - A person's riches may ransom their life, but the poor cannot respond to threatening rebukes

What does that have to do with any of what you have been talking about. Let me just say this. TONS.

See when you have something to loose it can be ransomed, but if I don't care about my reputation, my name, then it can't be taken from me.

Let me clarify here. I am not saying my reputation isn't important,

it is. I am not saying my name isn't important it is. What I am saying, is this church if my reputation is dependent on pleasing someone other than God, then it's a reputation that isn't important. If my motivation is to make a name for myself it's a name not worth having.

David put it this way

2 Samuel 6:13-16 - When those who were carrying the ark of the Lord had taken six steps, he sacrificed a bull and a fattened calf. 14 Wearing a linen ephod, David was dancing before the Lord with all his might, 15 while he and all Israel were bringing up the ark of the Lord with shouts and the sound of trumpets. 16 As the ark of the Lord was entering the City of David, Michal daughter of Saul watched from a window. And when she saw King David leaping and dancing before the Lord, she despised him in her heart.

He goes on to say in verses 20-22

When David returned home to bless his household, Michal daughter of Saul came out to meet him and said, "How the king of Israel has distinguished himself today, going around half-naked in

full view of the slave girls of his servants as any vulgar fellow would!”²¹ David said to Michal, “It was before the Lord, who chose me rather than your father or anyone from his house when he appointed me ruler over the Lord’s people Israel—I will celebrate before the Lord. ²² I will become even more undignified than this, and I will be humiliated in my own eyes. But by these slave girls you spoke of, I will be held in honor.”

David was saying my reputation to you doesn't matter it's what God thinks about me that matters. My name is great because God called me.

See here's the thing, who do people try to blackmail? Those that have something to offer, you can't blackmail a homeless man because he has nothing to lose. Those who have a good reputation will seek to protect it. And again I believe you need a good reputation, but not at the expense of needing to please man.

Jesus according to Philippians 2:7 made Himself of no reputation. As I said earlier his motivation was simply to please the Father.

When I have nothing to lose, I can't be bought, or blackmailed. If

my reputation is simply to please the Father I can be free from the praises of men.

See here's the thing "When your praise doesn't touch me to the point of my head getting swelled. And your rejection although it hurts doesn't wound me I am able to love you freely.

John 13:1 - It was just before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end

What is this saying, Jesus knowing that he would be betrayed by Judas, left at the cross without most of the disciples loved anyway.

Last me just share one more story and one more comment and then we are just going to ask the Holy Spirit to work in us.

I found from googling an article about how natural pearls are made listen to this illustration:

A natural pearl begins its life as a foreign object, such as a parasite or piece of shell that accidentally lodges itself in an oyster's soft inner body where it cannot be expelled. To ease this irritant, the oyster's body takes defensive action. The oyster begins to secrete a smooth, hard crystalline substance around the irritant in order to protect itself.

This substance is called "nacre." As long as the irritant remains within its body, the oyster will continue to secrete nacre around it, layer upon layer. Over time, the irritant will be completely encased by the silky crystalline coatings. And the result, ultimately, is the lovely and lustrous gem called a pearl.

Hear that it was called an irritant. An irritant that becomes something beautiful.

Jesus wants to take our pains and turn them into pearls. Does it hurt yes, but it doesn't need to wound.

Let me close with one more quote from the book *Dealing with the Rejection and Praise of Man*

"It's a sign of maturity when we can receive correction without interpreting it as rejection.