

Pursuing the Wrong Goals

John 5:41-47

41 I do not receive honor from men. 42 But I know you, that you do not have the love of God in you. 43 I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive. 44 How can you believe, who receive honor from one another, and do not seek the honor that comes from the only God? 45 Do not think that I shall accuse you to the Father; there is one who accuses you--Moses, in whom you trust. 46 For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me. 47 But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"

One of our greatest weaknesses is the need for praise. From a child we receive praise. But why is it so important to us?

We have all sorts of ways of placing honor and praise on people. I think that the part of our society that feeds so much on this is the entertainment industry. Look at all the different award shows they have to honor themselves and tell themselves how great they are doing.

I am waiting for the awards program that come on in prime time to honor the police, firemen, doctors, nurses, and teachers for their great work. How do the rest of us get along without trophies to cover our walls?

But none of that matters to God. He is not awed by our meager accomplishments. As a matter of fact He desires those who seek His praise, His honor.

Like the child that has finally mastered something special and you can hear them call, "Watch daddy, watch me." They are looking for the praise of their father. God honors those who seek to be honored by Him, simply because they seek it.

So let us look at what Jesus is saying here to the religious people of His day.

I. The honor that counts

(5:41) "I do not receive honor from men.

(5:44) "How can you believe, who receive honor from one another, and do not seek the honor that comes from the only God?

A. Jesus was not looking for their stamp of approval.

1. His self worth came from Himself, knowing who He was and how the Father loved Him.
2. That is where we fall so often. We are looking for approval from our family, friends, co-workers. For many that is their sense of self-worth. They think they are what others think that they are.

3. But Jesus knows exactly who He is.
 4. He knows precisely what He is doing and how He is doing.
 5. He isn't looking for a pat on the back from the religious leaders of His day. He did not need their approval.
- B. Their not seeking God's honor affects their faith.
1. How can you believe, who receive honor from one another, and do not seek the honor that comes from the only God?
 2. Where and what they seek betrays their faith.
 3. If a man is obsessed with getting wealth, his faith might be in money, that is where he gets his sense of worth and accomplishment.
 4. If a woman obsesses with her appearance, her clothes, plastic surgery, etc. she may get her sense of self worth it how she appears to others and the compliments she receives. **She has faith in her beauty.**
 5. But those who seek God's honor and approval show that their faith is in Him.
 6. You cannot serve two masters, Jesus said.
- C. Whose honor are you pursuing.
1. It might be your friends.
 2. It might be your boss.
 3. It might be your family members.
 4. It might be your coach, teacher, or some other authority figure in your life.
 5. I think the saying of Jesus applies here. Seek first the kingdom of God and all these things will be added to you.
 6. If you seek to please God, then you will get the approval of everyone else, in the areas that really matter.

II. **Loveless**

(5:42) "But I know you, that you do not have the love of God in you. 43 I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me

- A. Love is the all powerful motivator.
1. Now look back at our previous illustration of the little boy showing

off for his dad.

- a. Would he do the same for a stranger; not at that age.
- b. You see it is his love for his dad that craves that praise.
- 2. These religious leaders did not seek God's praise because they did not love Him.
- 3. We deeply desire the praise of those that we love.
 - a. It says back to us, that they love us too.
- B. Since Jesus came in the Father's name if they really loved God they would have received God's Son

III. **Looking for the wrong Prophet**

(5:43) "I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive.

- A. Jesus was not what they wanted in a prophet much less a Messiah.
- B. They had their own preconceived perception of the Messiah and Jesus did not fit.
- C. Yet if another would come, not in God's name, but their own then they would receive him.
 - 1. Some think this may be a prophecy concerning the Jews acceptance of the anti-christ.

IV. **Judged by your own standard**

(5:45) "Do not think that I shall accuse you to the Father; there is one who accuses you--Moses, in whom you trust.

- A. Paul points out in Romans one that we do not even live up to our own standards, let alone God's standard.
- B. They trusted in Moses, but they did not follow Moses.
- C. It would be the words of Moses that condemned them in judgement.

V. **The Bible and the Words of Jesus Agree**

(5:46) "For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me.
(5:47) "But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"

- A. Moses was not at odds with the teaching of Jesus, nor Jesus with Moses.
- B. The Spirit of God moved in the writers of the OT to show forth the coming Messiah.

