



FROM APPROVAL ADDICT TO CONFIDENCE IN CHRIST

FFC WOMEN'S DISCIPLESHIP RESOURCES
TAKE YOU TO GOD'S WORD FOR ANSWERS

From Approval Addict to Confidence in Christ

We who long for approval are very concerned with how we look to others, so much that we become approval addicts. A pat on the back or a word of praise becomes cocaine for our egos. Instead of looking at how we can love others in Christ, we look for how they will love us. Let's examine our hearts, repent of how we idolize approval, and work on rooting out pride and fear of man. You can work to develop new skills that evidence strong confidence in Christ.

Directions for Study

This study encompasses three aspects commonly found in approval addicts: fearful thinking, prideful thinking, and self-centered thinking.

- As you study these scriptures, ask your coach to pray for you to become loving and humble. Share your journaling with your coach.
- Divide the study into three weeks, and take a full week to work on each aspect.

1. CONFIDENT IN CHRIST, YOU CAN OVERCOME FEARFUL THINKING THAT ADDICTS YOU TO APPROVAL

1 John 4:18, 1 Corinthians 13:4-7, Proverbs 14:26

Love is self-giving. Fear is self-protecting. Love moves towards others, and thinks of their needs. Fear shrinks away and focuses on what will happen to self. Love means believing the best about the other person. Approval addicts often fear that others are selfish and will not respond in kindness, so we respond to them negatively. Believing the best about others communicates with them in ways that expect them to respond well. Certainly there will be times when others respond sinfully, but that just gives you an opportunity to respond in Christ-like love, returning good for evil.

- Identify ways in which your communication is more fearful than loving.

- In the conviction of the Holy Spirit by the Scriptures above, confess your specific sin to God. If it has affected others, confess it to the appropriate people (1 John 1:5-10). Journal:

Consciously, give a **smile and conversation** to 5 people for the express purpose of communicating Christ’s love and kindness. Ask them one question and make one statement regarding something you are thankful for, in conversation with them. Journal this to share with your coach:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

- Choose 2 people whom you will serve in action this week. Keep a record of what you do, and share this with your coach.

1. _____
2. _____

2. **CONFIDENT IN CHRIST, YOU CAN OVERCOME PRIDEFUL THINKING THAT ADDICTS YOU TO APPROVAL**

Proverbs 6:16-17, Proverbs 11:2, Proverbs 16:18-24

Pride is very concerned with how we look to others. Pride spends time thinking about being either a loser or a winner. Pride focuses on nervousness, or on poise. Pride says either, “I’m ugly,” or “I’m good-looking.” Pride thinks about sounding smart, or pride thinks about sounding stupid. Pride focuses on being treated poorly if a mistake is made. A proud person makes an idol of her reputation, and will spend a lot of energy defending it.

Humility focuses on how best to use opportunities to minister to others, with acceptance of the consequence if a mistake is made. Humility prepares well and communicates to benefit others. Humility communicates kindness by smiling no matter how others react. Humility is not afraid to confront personal failure or sinfulness if others notice it. In humility, you give your reputation to God. Humility recognizes that God is responsible for any of your achievements, and so you redirect personal praise back to God.

- Pride assumes others have the same evil motives you find in your heart. Love “*believes all things,*” therefore, humility puts the best possible interpretation on other’s actions. Identify how you have been prideful: _____

- In the conviction of the Holy Spirit by the Scriptures above, confess your specific sin to God. If it has affected others, confess it to the appropriate people (1 John 1:5-10). Journal your confession:

- Humility associates with the humble (Romans 12:16). Discuss the basis on which you choose friends with your coach. What friendships will you work to develop that model genuine humility instead of enhancing

your social standing?

3. CONFIDENT IN CHRIST, YOU CAN OVERCOME SELF-CENTERED THINKING THAT ADDICTS YOU TO APPROVAL

3 John 9-10, Matthew 20:22-28, Philippians 2:3-4

Confidence in Christ is self-giving rather than self-serving. This is a type of greatness that is pleasing to God. We must serve others in His name in order to overcome the desire for approval that is based on seeking our own glory and greatness. The following ideas that will help you to overcome the self-centered thoughts and actions of an approval addict.

- Make a list of two people closest to you in your life. If you are married, put your husband's name first. Like the disciples were told to wash *each other's* feet, you should include those with whom you have regular dealings: first spouse, then children, your family care group, parents, siblings, work associates.

- Identify what is of interest to each of them. Learn to talk with them on these terms. Write down a question for each of them that would indicate you have an attitude of being a learner and a servant to them. Talk with your coach about whether the way you ask the questions is condescending or sincerely caring.

- Pray regularly for each person on your list, and pray for a wise, gracious, and humble attitude toward them. Find out what is going on in their lives so you can pray specifically, or pattern your prayers after Colossians 1:9-12. Keep a record.

- Find out what their God honoring goals are. Identify a way in which you can help them achieve one goal.

- Identify one way in which you can minister to them by meeting a specific need. Perhaps you have resources to share, or they simply could use an encouraging word from you.

- Ask their forgiveness. Have you been unwilling to grant requests or done so grudgingly, been discontented with them, responded discourteously or condescendingly, been critical or condemning, intolerant of their idiosyncrasies, have been self-righteous, have been selfishly demanding, or have been unjustly suspicious?
