

The Fear of Man And Racism *(Proverbs 29:25)*

I. What is the Fear of Man?

- A. To be afraid of man.
- B. To respect man as God.
- C. To depend on man as source of life.

II. What Do We Fear of Man?

- A. We fear being exposed (John 3:19-21).

“This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God.” John 3:19-21

- B. We fear being rejected (John 12:42-43).

“Nevertheless many even of the rulers believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they were not confessing *Him*, for fear that they would be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the approval of men rather than the approval of God.” John 12:42-43

- C. We fear being physically hurt or oppressed (Genesis 12:11-13).

“ It came about when he came near to Egypt, that he said to Sarai his wife, “See now, I know that you are a beautiful woman; and when the Egyptians see you, they will say, ‘This is his wife’; and they will kill me, but they will let you live. Please say that you are my sister so that it may go well with me because of you, and that I may live on account of you.” Genesis 12:11-13

- D. We fear being denied what we desire (John 12:42-43).

“Nevertheless many even of the rulers believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they were not confessing Him, for fear that they would be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the approval of men rather than the approval of God.” John 12:42-43

III. Why Do We Fear Man?

- A. We lack genuine love for God and others (John 14:21, 1John 4:18-21).

“He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him.” John 14:21

“There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love. We love, because He first loved us. If someone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also. 1 John 4:18-21

- B. We believe man is the means to satisfy our needs and desires (Jeremiah 17:5-6, Js. 4:1-3).

“Thus says the Lord, “Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind
And makes flesh his strength, And whose heart turns away from the Lord.
“For he will be like a bush in the desert And will not see when prosperity comes,
But will live in stony wastes in the wilderness, A land of salt without inhabitant.
Jeremiah 17:5-6

“What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members? You lust and do not have; so you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures.” James 4:1-3

- C. We believe man is the source to solving or creating our problems (Proverbs 29:26).

“Many seek the ruler’s [a]favor, But justice for man comes from the Lord.”
Proverbs 29:26

- D. We are preoccupied with what man can do to us above what God can do to us (Matthew 10:28-31).

“Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a cent? And yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So do not fear; you are more valuable than many sparrows.” Matthew 10:28-31

IV. How Can Racism Lead to The Fear of Man? Listen to these quotes and then let’s consider the implications:

- A. “Racism is not mere individual, overt prejudice or the free-floating irrational driver of race problems, but the collective misuse of power that results in diminished life opportunities for some racial groups. Racism is a changing ideology with the constant and rational purpose of perpetuating and justifying a social system that is racialized... A racialized society is a society where race matters profoundly for difference in life experiences, life opportunities, and social relationships.... A racialized society can also be said to be a society that allocates differential economic, political, social, and even psychological rewards to groups along racial lines.” (Michael Emerson; Christian Smith. *Divided By Faith*, pp.7,9)

- B. “People of different racial, ethnic, national, and gender backgrounds continually confront one another on the basis of a perceived self-superiority. They look for reasons to heap scorn on others. We are experiencing increased cultural confrontation. As polarization increases, each intersection of cultures causes more friction. (Charles Ware. Prejudice and the People of God, pp.8,35)
- C. Implications about the fear of man to consider from these quotes:
1. Where there is racism among people groups, both groups see each other as either an avenue or hindrance to that which they treasure above love for God and love others thereby creating the fear of man amongst one another.
 2. In essence, where racism exist both groups see each other as the source of their problems or the solution to their satisfaction thereby creating the fear of man amongst one another.
 3. Where there is a perceived self-superiority among a group above another group there will be mistreatment of other groups by that group.
 4. Both groups may be preoccupied with maintaining or gaining some form of power, position, platform, possessions, or prominent practices in relation to one another thereby creating a fear of man amongst one another.
- D. Comments you may hear that reveal the fear of man in racism:
1. “If “they” move into your neighborhood beware of the safety of your wives and children and know that the value of your property will go down.”
 2. “Every reason why “we” can’t make it in this country is because “they” are always trying to keep us down.”
 3. “We” have been mistreated and denied “our” rights far too long from “them” !“They” must give “us” what is right or else.”
 4. “Those people” need to work hard like everybody else and stop looking for “our” handout. If “they” think that “we” are going to give up what “we” have earned by hard work, “they” have another thing coming.”
 5. “That’s why “we” need to vote the _____ party so that “they” don’t try to take from “us” what “we” value and built in this nation as the good people “we” are.
 6. “Those people” are taking over and are taking away “our” resources. “We” have to do something or “our” whole way of life will be ruined and taken away.”
 7. “If “they” would change their ways then “we” could finally progress in life!”

8. “Those people” need to give up all their privilege and accept that “we” will not stop fighting until “they” let “us” have all that “we” deserve that “they” have gained by the sweat of “our” ancestors.”

VII. How Do We Overcome the Fear of Man?

- A. Identify the people, places, things, and situations you believe are the source of your problems and the solution to your needs, desires, and problems.
- B. Confess and repent of making people, places, things and situations the source of your problems and the solution to your needs, desires, and problems in place of God (Proverbs 28:13).
- C. Confess and repent of the unloving attitudes and actions you have had towards the people you believe have been the source of your problems and the solution to your needs, desires, and problems.
- D. Minimize your focus on what people think of you (1Corinthians 4:3).
- E. Maximize your focus on what God thinks of you (1Corinthians 4:4).
- F. Learn how to use the injustices you encounter as opportunity to embrace the sovereignty of God in all things. (Genesis 50:20, Romans 8:31-32, Ecclesiastes 3:1-11, 7:13-14, 9:1, 11:5, Colossians 1:15-17).
- G. Challenge injustices without compromising your love for God, your love for others, and your position in Christ, while looking for God to bring the justice accordingly. (1 Thessalonians 5:14, Proverbs 29:26, Romans 12:19-21)
- H. Embrace the fact that every good and perfect gift comes from God not man, therefore man is not the source or the solution to your problems and satisfaction. (James 1:17)

“Unless biblical Christians significantly enter the fray and take over the leadership for unifying the racial divide, we will be hopelessly deadlocked in a sea of relativity regarding the issue, resulting in restating more questions rather than providing permanent answers. It is my uncompromising contention that the only perspective is the divine perspective; the only proper agenda is the kingdom agenda. If the Bible is allowed to be the standard by which blacks and whites determine truth, then freedom from the moral malaise will be the outcome; for as Jesus taught, the truth has a unique capacity of making people free.”
(Tony Evans. Oneness Embraced, pp. 106)