



Study 3: God is glorious so we don't have to fear others

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Scanning

Main Texts: John 12:42-43

Other Texts: 1 Corinthians 4:1-5; Isaiah 6:1-13; Proverbs 29:25; Psalm 27:1-3

Group exercise: Share a time in your life in which you have experienced the fear of man.

Going Deeper

1. How would you define “the fear of man”? What stands out to you in Sande’s explanation below?
 - What are some of the symptoms that indicate someone is living under the fear of man? Which ones can you see in your own life?
 - How does the fear of man work like a snare in our lives (Proverbs 29:25)?
2. What are the lies that the fear of man uses to control our lives?
3. How should we define “the glory of God”? What do we mean when we say that God is “glorious”?
4. How does the glory of God free us from the fear of man?
5. How does the gospel free us from the fear of man?
6. What does Ed Welch mean when he says this (in When People are Big and God is Small):

The most radical treatment for the fear of man is the fear of the Lord. God must be bigger to you than people are.... Regarding other people, our problem is that we need them (for ourselves) more than we love them (for the glory of God). The task God sets for us is to need them less and love them more.”

Applying

7. If you were free from the fear of man right now, what would you do? What will it take for you to get there?

“Fear of Man. This can take many forms. Sometimes it involves an actual fear of what others can do to us (Prov. 29:25; Luke 12:4-5), but it is most commonly seen as an excessive concern about what others think about us. This can lead to a preoccupation with acceptance, approval, popularity, personal comparisons, self-image, or pleasing others (John 9:22; 12:42-43; Gal. 1:10; 1 Thess. 2:4). This idol can make us reluctant to confront serious sin. The constant desire for approval and acceptance can cause us to gossip or keep us from speaking out on moral issues. It can also make us do things we really know are not right, eventually leading to guilt and resentment. Furthermore, if we fear what others may think of us, we may also be reluctant to admit our wrongs or ask for help, which often prolongs conflict.” (Ken Sande, The Peacemaker)