

## How to Stop Being a People-Pleaser

Lesson 02 in the series: "Changing for Good"

A. God has important things for us to accomplish in this world.

"God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago." Ephesians 2:8-10 (NLT)

B. If we are people-pleasers, we will NEVER accomplish the things God has for us to do.

"Obviously, I'm not trying to win the approval of people, but of God. If pleasing people were my goal, I would not be Christ's servant." Galatians 1:10 (NLT)

"Fearing people is a dangerous trap, but trusting the Lord means safety." Proverbs 29:25 (NLT)

"Our purpose is to please God, not people." 1 Thessalonians 2:4 (NLT)

"Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people."  
Colossians 3:23 (NLT)

C. Three things we can do to stop being people-pleasers:

1. We can evaluate ourselves.

"Examine yourselves to see if your faith is genuine. Test yourselves." 2 Corinthians 13:5 (NLT)

a. I might be a people pleaser if:

- I am overloaded with things other people want me to do.
- I can't say "No".
- I go along with the crowd even when it bothers my conscience.
- I take responsibility for how other people feel.
- I go to great lengths to avoid conflict.
- I don't admit when my feelings are hurt.
- I over-apologize.

b. Why is it so hard to say "NO"?

- We want to help people.
- We want people to like us. We want to "fit in".
- We don't want to disappoint people and risk losing relationships.
- We don't like conflict.

*Life Application:* God will help us evaluate ourselves.

"Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life." Psalm 139:23-24 (NLT)

2. We can build relationships with other Christians who can help us please God rather than people.

"... enjoy the companionship of those who call on the Lord with pure hearts." 2 Timothy 2:22 (NLT)

a. We need Christian friends who will accept us and want to be with us because they love us.

"There are "friends" who destroy each other, but a real friend sticks closer than a brother."  
Proverbs 18:24 (NLT)

"When three of Job's friends heard of the tragedy he had suffered, they got together and traveled from their homes to comfort and console him... When they saw Job from a distance, they scarcely recognized him. Wailing loudly, they tore their robes and threw dust into the air over their heads to show their grief. Then they sat on the ground with him for seven days and nights. No one said a word to Job, for they saw that his suffering was too great for words." Job 2:11-13 (NLT)

b. We need Christian friends who will tell us the truth even when it hurts.

"As iron sharpens iron, so a friend sharpens a friend." Proverbs 27:17 (NLT)

"Wounds from a sincere friend are better than many kisses from an enemy." Proverbs 27:6 (NLT)

- c. We need Christian friends who will give us wise counsel.

“He who walks with the wise grows wise, but a companion of fools suffers harm.” Proverbs 13:20 (NIV)

“Let the message about Christ, in all its richness, fill your lives. Teach and counsel each other with all the wisdom he gives.” Colossians 3:16 (NLT)

- d. We need Christian friends who will spur us on to action.

“...let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.”  
Hebrews 10:24 (NIV)

“Dear brothers and sisters, if another believer is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path. And be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourself. Share each other’s burdens, and in this way obey the law of Christ.”

Galatians 6:1-2 (NLT)

3. We can say “NO” like Jesus did.

“As Jesus and the disciples continued on their way to Jerusalem, they came to a certain village where a woman named Martha welcomed them into her home. Her sister, Mary, sat at the Lord’s feet, listening to what he taught. But Martha was distracted by the big dinner she was preparing. She came to Jesus and said, “Lord, doesn’t it seem unfair to you that my sister just sits here while I do all the work? Tell her to come and help me.” But the Lord said to her, ‘My dear Martha, you are worried and upset over all these details! There is only one thing worth being concerned about. Mary has discovered it, and it will not be taken away from her.’” Luke 10:38-42 (NLT)

“Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed. Simon and his companions went to look for him, and when they found him, they exclaimed: “Everyone is looking for you!” Jesus replied, ‘Let us go somewhere else--to the nearby villages--so I can preach there also. That is why I have come.’” Mark 1:35-38 (NIV)

*Life Application:* We need to stand firm on our convictions that God has things for us to accomplish.

“It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.” Galatians 5:1 (NIV)

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### Connect Group Questions:

1. Describe a time in your childhood when you desperately wanted to “fit in” with a certain group. How did things turn out? If you could go back in time and talk to your younger self, what would you say?
2. Discuss the following list of characteristics that describe a people-pleaser:
  - My schedule is overloaded with things other people want me to do.
  - I can’t say, “No” or I say, “Yes” knowing I don’t have time.
  - I go to great lengths to avoid conflict.
  - I take responsibility for how other people feel.
  - I don’t admit when my feelings are hurt.
  - I over-apologize.
  - I go along with the crowd even when it bothers my conscience.

How does this list make you feel? Why?

3. Read Galatians 1:10 & Proverbs 29:25. What’s wrong with being a people-pleaser? Aren’t we supposed to help others? What’s the difference?
4. Read Luke 10:38-42 & Mark 1:35-38. How did Jesus say “no”? Why is it often hard for us to say “no” to friends, coworkers and relatives?
5. Discuss the following ways Christian friends can help each other please God more than people:
  - We need Christian friends who will accept us and want to be with us. (Proverbs 18:24)

- We need Christian friends who will tell us the truth even when it hurts. (Proverbs 27:17)
- We need Christian friends who will give us wise counsel. (Proverbs 13:20)
- We need Christian friends who will spur us on to action. (Hebrews 10:24)

How do you help each other please God in your Connect Group?

6. Spend some time as a group sharing at least one thing you believe God has called each of you to accomplish (at home, at work, as a Christian, as a friend, etc.).