

Fearing People or Trusting in God

Proverbs 29:25

Discussion Questions

- 1) What does fear of man mean? How would you explain to someone what it is?
- 2) Can you think of any Biblical examples of someone falling into the snare of fear of man? (Hint: John 18:15-27).
- 3) Why do you think that fear of man will prove to be a 'snare'? What is it about the fear of man that might get us to fall into the trap?
- 4) Read this passage from Edward T. Welch's book *When People are Big and God is Small*: "Marriage has been a privilege and blessing to me. It has also been the context for a surprising discovery. I found that being okay in Christ was not quite enough for me. When I was first married, I knew that Jesus loved me, but I also wanted my new wife to be absolutely, forever smitten with me. I needed love from her. I could handle small amounts of rejection from other people, but I felt paralyzed if I didn't have the love I needed from her. I needed unconditional love. If she didn't think I was a great husband, I would be crushed, and, as you might guess, a little angry. This led to a second awakening. I suddenly realized that I had mutated into a walking love tank, a person who was empty inside and looking for a person to fill me. My bride, was, indeed, gifted in being able to love, but no one could have possibly filled me. I think I was a love tank with a leak." Discuss your thoughts on this passage.
- 5) What is the opposite of fear? Why might trusting in God keep us safe from the fear of man?
- 6) Two ways that we might grow in learning to trust and fear God are: I) growing in our knowledge of God and II) being quick to admit when we are wrong. Why might these be effective in helping us to trust in God? Can you think of any other ways that we can learn to fear God instead of fearing people?
- 7) What would have been the result if Jesus had cared more for the approval of people than for God?
- 8) Spend some time identifying areas in your own life where you might be vulnerable to fearing people's disapproval more than fearing God. Pray about these areas.