

Healing Your Approval Addiction: Jesus, Our Great Physician Sermon Guide

In this sermon, Pastor Carl Gulley explores the concept of living an "unsung" life — one that doesn't seek constant approval or visibility. Drawing from Jesus' teachings in the Sermon on the Mount, he challenges us to find freedom and significance in God's love rather than human recognition. This guide will help us dive deeper into these ideas and consider how we can apply them to our lives.

This sermon emphasizes:

- Jesus teaches about the dangers of seeking human approval over God's approval
- Living for others' recognition can lead to an "approval addiction"
- The concept of secrecy as a spiritual discipline to combat approval-seeking behavior
- Understanding the true meaning of being a "hypocrite" in Jesus' teachings
- Finding significance in God's love rather than human visibility
- The power of serving others without seeking recognition

Key Scriptures:

"Beware of practicing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them; otherwise you have no reward with your Father who is in heaven." Matthew 6:1 (NASB1995)

"But when you give to the poor, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing so that your giving will be in secret; and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you." Matthew 6:3-4 (NASB1995)

"When you pray, you are not to be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners so that they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, close your door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you." Matthew 6:5-6 (NASB1995)

"For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ." Galatians 1:10 (NASB1995):

Table Questions:

These are questions based on the scripture and sermon to help you put the teaching into practice. They can be used in discipleship, Lifegroup, as a family or with whoever is around your table this summer:

1. How do you think our culture's emphasis on social media and "influencers" affects our desire for approval and recognition?
2. Can you share a time when you did something good in secret? How did it make you feel?
3. What areas of your life do you find yourself most tempted to seek others' approval? How might you address this?
4. How can we balance Jesus' teaching on secrecy with the call to be "the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14)?
5. Carl mentioned the "mathematical formula" of visible equals significance. How have you seen this play out in your own life or in society?
6. What are some practical ways we can cultivate a spirit of humility and secrecy in our daily lives?
7. How might our relationships change if we were less concerned with impressing others and more focused on pleasing God?
8. Reflect on the story of CJ Gomez. How does his journey challenge or inspire you in your own faith walk?
9. What does it mean to you personally to "lead a quiet life" as mentioned in 1 Thessalonians 4:11?
10. How can we support and encourage one another in finding our significance in God's love rather than human approval?