

Hostage: Approval Addiction

November 1, 2009

Acts 5:1-11

1. Share with the group some of the images addiction conjures up. What are the common things we think that people might be addicted to?

Read Acts 4:32 through Acts 5:11.

2. Do you agree with Pastor Randy's statement that Ananias and Sapphira were addicted to approval? Why or why not?
3. How much do you really care about what other people think? How does it affect your behavior? Who do you find yourself most wanting to impress?
4. Why are some peoples' opinions more important than others to us?
5. Where are we supposed to receive our worth as people? What is the danger of seeking worth as a person from the approval of others?

Read and discuss these statements. First apply them to the lives of Ananias and Sapphira and then your own life.

- "Comparison is an indicator of approval addiction. If you habitually compare yourself to other people and get competitive in the most ordinary situations, you probably have it."
 - "Deception is an indicator of approval addiction. If you have approval addiction you will eventually shade the truth."
 - "Loneliness is an indicator of approval addiction. Because if you spend much time and care making sure people see what you let them see, no one really knows you."
6. Share some ways that Jesus was the freest person on the planet. What do you think it would have been like to be his friend?

7. What are some negative things that happen in our lives if are addicted to approval?

8. How do you think we can be set free of the desire to please others?

9. In the message we shared three ways to break free of approval addiction.
 - The first is to learn what God really thinks of you. Have everyone in your group find at least one verse that describes in a powerful way how deeply you are loved by God. Share this with each other.

 - The second is to resign from impression management. In what ways do you spend great care managing what other people think of you?

 - The third is service in secrecy. What good thing could you do this week and make sure no one ever finds out who did it?

10. How would you truly know if you have broken free of approval addiction? What would someone's life look like if they were focused on pleasing God first? How is this different than your life now?