

John 12:43

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

Analysis

John diagnoses the secret believers' problem: they 'loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.' This heart issue reveals misplaced affection—valuing human approval above divine approval. The comparison demonstrates that love for God's praise must exceed love for human praise. Their priority disorder results in disobedience. This validates Jesus' teaching about serving two masters (Matt 6:24). The verse diagnoses much of weak Christianity: knowing truth but fearing confession. True faith values God's 'well done' above human applause.

Historical Context

Honor and shame were central to first-century Mediterranean culture. Loss of social standing through excommunication threatened identity, livelihood, and community. This cultural context makes the courage of open disciples even more remarkable.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does love for human praise corrupt genuine faith?

2. What does this teach about the necessity of prioritizing God's approval?
3. In what decisions are you tempted to value human praise above God's approval?

Interlinear Text

ἠγάπησαν	γὰρ	τὴν	δόξαν	τῶν	ἀνθρώπων	μᾶλλον	ἥπερ
they loved	For		the praise		of men	more	than
G25	G1063	G3588	G1391	G3588	G444	G3123	G2260

τὴν	δόξαν	τοῦ	θεοῦ
	the praise		of God
G3588	G1391	G3588	G2316

Additional Cross-References

John 5:44 (References God): How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?

John 5:41 (Parallel theme): I receive not honour from men.

Luke 16:15 (References God): And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.

1 Thessalonians 2:6 (Parallel theme): Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ.

2 Corinthians 10:18 (Parallel theme): For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth.

Matthew 6:2 (Parallel theme): Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

1 Corinthians 4:5 (Resurrection): Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will

make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.

John 12:26 (Parallel theme): If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.

John 8:54 (References God): Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God:

Luke 19:17 (Parallel theme): And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.

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