

Pleasing People by Lou Priolo

Study Guide

Written by Wendy Wood

CHAPTER 1

Define idolatry:

Take the people-pleasing inventory. What did you learn about yourself?

What are the two sides of the people-pleasing coin?

Write out the 10 ways people pleasing may manifest itself as idolatry. Under each manifestation, write how you see this trait in your own life. Use specific examples of interactions and situations with specific people (or groups of people) where this sin shows up in your life.

1.

2.

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9.

10.

Summarize this chapter in 5 sentences.

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CHAPTER 2

When has people-pleasing crossed the line between a godly desire and a sinful desire?

Write out the 6 ways that it is beneficial to please people. Next to each one, write the danger that you need to be aware of so that this good desire does not become a sinful/ruling desire.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

Write out the two questions to ask yourself about motives when pleasing people. (Very end of chapter).

1.

2.

This week, ask yourself these questions throughout the day. What do you learn about yourself?

Summarize this chapter in 5 sentences.

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CHAPTER 3

How is people-pleasing enslaving? How do you see this in your life?

How does pride relate to people-pleasing? How have you experienced this in your life?

When you hear that losing eternal rewards is a possibility for people pleasers how do you respond? What do you need to change in your thinking and believing about eternity to make this an encouragement to honor God over people?

What sins have you been blind to in your people-pleasing? What sins are revealed in your desire to make other people approve of you or think highly of you? What sins are revealed in your desire to be loved and cherished by others?

Where has people pleasing blinded you to hypocrisy in your life?

List the 6 ways that people pleasing blinds you to sin. After each one, write out very specifically how you see this in your life. Take some time to repent of these sins before God.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

Summarize this chapter in 5 sentences.

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CHAPTER 4

Write out #7 for ways that people pleasing blinds us to sin.

Which types of flattery or manipulation are you susceptible to fall prey to?

Where do you identify yourself in the steps of being susceptible to flattery?

From topic #8, what other temptations do you recognize in your life that you frequently give in to? Write them out. Next to each one use specific examples of where you see this in your life.

How has people pleasing led you to the sins of anxiety and worry? Be specific. Think through each person or group that you seek to please inordinately, how do you get anxious or worry about these relationships.

Summarize this chapter in 5 sentences.

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CHAPTER 5

What's your reaction to the statement "you can't please all the people even some of the time"?

Write out the 6 reasons it is futile to try to please people. Next to each one, write out a scripture that corresponds to that truth.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

Which verses do you need to meditate on? Put them on 3 X 5 cards and use the following questions to mull them over in your mind.

1. What does this scripture teach concerning God's will for a holy life?
2. How does my life measure up to this scripture? Specifically, where and how do I fall short?
3. What definite steps of action do I need to take to obey?

Summarize this chapter in 5 sentences.

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CHAPTER 6

Write out the following verses:

2 Corinthians 5:9

2 Corinthians 5:15

2 Timothy 2:15

Is it your ambition to please God? Have you really made it your aim to do so?

Write out a prayer confessing how you have sinned against God by not making it your ambition to please Him. Repent of your sin and ask God to help you renew your mind in His truth about how great and worthy God is pleasing only Him. Add to your prayer a commitment you are willing to make to take steps to please Him.

What benefit would you experience in having only one Master to please?

How is God's understanding of our motives, thoughts, attitudes, actions and words beneficial? Write out the verses from these sections that means to most to you about God being a perfect judge and looking at the heart instead of outward behavior.

Why is it beneficial that God is not partial? What does this mean to you?

How is God's immutability a blessing to us as we seek to please Him?

"God is pleased with those things that will eventually lead to our happiness. Yes, it is true that God often expects us to forfeit short-term happiness for the sake of long-term happiness. Sometimes we are called to sacrifice temporal happiness so that we might experience a greater

measure of eternal bliss. But He never asks of us that which is not in our own best interest and for our own ultimate happiness.” page 105. What might God be asking you to give up in temporal happiness as you move from people-pleasing to God pleasing? What long term benefits do you think you will receive?

Think of a time when you were misjudged or had misinformation spread about you. Jot down a few sentences about how you felt.

Write out Isaiah 11:3b-4a. What comfort is found here?

Summarize this chapter in 5 sentences.

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CHAPTER 7

Summarize the 4 definitions of pride in your own words.

1.

2.

3.

4.

Write out the evidences of pride that you see in your life from pages 113-124. Write the complete manifestation of pride and a bible verse that corresponds to every evidence of pride you struggle with.

Go back through the meditation questions for these verses. Put the verses on 3X5 cards and spend the next few weeks thinking about how you need to put off pride.

1. What does this scripture teach concerning God's will for a holy life?
2. How does my life measure up to this scripture? Specifically, where and how do I fall short?
3. What definite steps of action do I need to take to obey?

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CHAPTER 8

What is the chief end of man?

When you please God, what do you have?

Under each characteristic of a God-pleaser, write out a scripture and key ideas that you need to focus on.

1. He realizes that he cannot please God apart from being a Christian.

2. He studies the scriptures to understand exactly what it takes to please God.

3. In everything he does, he is conscious of pleasing God.

What questions does a God-pleaser ask himself?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

How does this change your interactions with other people?

What specific actions will you take to help you remember to focus your mind on God and how you can please Him over man? Remember, we are told to “take our thoughts captive”. How will you do this?

4. When he pleases people, he does so out of loving motives, not selfish ones.

What are the motives of a God-pleaser?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.

Again, how will take your thoughts captive and practice these God-pleasing motives?

5. He knows that is it more blessed to give than to receive.

In this section address how fear and selfishness are related.

What are the “giving” thoughts of a God pleaser?

- 1.
- 2.

3.

4.

5.

Who do you need to approach with a giving attitude? How will you do this?

6. He considers amending not only his actions, but also his thoughts and motives.

What is the God pleasers internal focus?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

Write a few more that relate to your specific life situation.

1.

2.

3.

4.

7. He is concerned about fulfilling not only his public duties but also his private ones.

8. He is more concerned with what God sees in his heart than what man sees in his appearance.

9. He programs his conscience by the Bible rather than by the culture.

10. He does not shy away from necessary conflict or confrontation.

11. He does not worry or fret when he displeases people if, by so doing, he pleases God.

Which of these 11 attributes of a God-pleaser really stand out to you and why?

Which are you going to focus on. What is your plan?

Summarize how focusing on pleasing God is the remedy, or “put on” needed to “put off” people pleasing.

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CHAPTER 9

For each statement about what is required to please God, summarize the important points and write a key scripture.

Pleasing God requires faith.

Pleasing God requires walking with Him.

Pleasing God requires sanctification (holiness).

Pleasing God requires your cooperation.

Pleasing God requires doing good works.

Pleasing God requires knowledge and wisdom.

Pleasing God requires gratitude (worship).

Pleasing God requires godly ambition.

Answer the questions on the pleasing God worksheet.

Summarize the key points in this chapter in 5 sentences.

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CHAPTER 10

Why is humility a key aspect of pleasing God?

As you read all the scriptures about people humbling themselves or God humbling them, what do you learn?

Why is the first aspect of putting on humility to not cover our sin and be quick to admit when we are wrong?

Write out the 5 steps of asking for forgiveness.

- 1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Practice these steps this week. Write out at least 3 specific times that you work through this forgiveness process. Describe the situation that lead to having to ask for forgiveness. Write out how you said these 5 steps. What was the result?

Write out 1 Corinthians 4:7 and James 1:17.

What gifts and abilities are you tempted to take credit for?

There are 9 ways to esteem others better than yourself listed. Write out the ones that you need to focus on.

On page 179 there are 6 questions to mediate on regarding Christ's humbleness. Spend some time thinking through these questions. What is your response to meditating on these questions?

From the study so far, looking back at the specific sins of people pleasing you have identified and the ways to please God. What areas do you need to focus on?

What scriptures do you need to meditate on to allow God's word to work its way into your heart through the power of the Holy Spirit? Put those verses on 3X5 cards and begin thinking through them every day.

What would it look like to you to give your reputation to God? What needs to change in your thinking, believing, acting and speaking?

How do you need to look to your responsibilities and leave your reputation to God?

What do you typically receive praise for? How will you redirect this praise back to God?

Who do you know who is humble? What do you see in these people's lives that points to their humility?

How can you seek to associate with the humble?

Summarize this chapter in 5 sentences.

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CHAPTER 11

Define a servant.

Define a slave.

Matthew 20:26-27 says “It is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave.”

What is your reaction to Jesus’ call to be a servant and a slave?

Jesus says in the following verse “just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many”

What was Jesus’ motive in serving and giving His life for others?

Read Romans 6:16-17. How have you been a slave to people pleasing?

Christ's incarnation, His perfect life, His crucifixion, death and resurrection have set you free from being a slave to pleasing people. How can this change your motive in serving others? (think gratitude!)

Make a list of the closest people in your life.

How can you talk in terms of what is of interest to each of them?

What questions can you humbly ask each person to show involvement in their lives?

What questions might you ask when you meet someone new?

What will you pray for each person in your close circle and what attitude will you pray God will help you have toward each one?

How can you help each one achieve their God-honoring goals at this time? (Be aware that this may change as life situations change) Work through the questions in this section to help you come up with specific examples.

How can you minister to these people? Write out ideas for each person.

What specific things do you need to ask for forgiveness from each of these close people in your life? Think through the statements listed in this section. The following questions will help you think through what specific areas you need to seek forgiveness for. Have you been unwilling to grant requests or granted requests for help but with much complaint? Have you been discontented with the performance of others? Have you responded in a discourteous or condescending manner? Have you had unrealistic expectations for them? Have you had intolerance for their idiosyncratic (non-sinful) behaviors? Do you micromanage every aspect of their responsibilities? Are you unjustly suspicious of them rather than trusting them?

What would it look like to you to put on the garments of humility every day?

Summarize this chapter in 5 sentences.

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CHAPTER 12

Write out 1 Timothy 4:7-8.

What specifically would you like others to focus on about you as they form an opinion of who you are? What will you be known for that will last for the life to come?

In what ways do you fish for compliments?

Write out Proverbs 25:27

What specifically about searching out one's own glory do you need to repent of? Take time to do that with God.

How can you give God the glory due Him in the situations you listed above where you are tempted to fish for compliments for yourself?

Assess your friendships. Are there friends who flatter you - who exaggerate your virtues or minimize your flaws? What do you need to do about these relationships?

In what areas of life are you discontent? Are you discontent with your marriage? Kids? Financial status? Job? Friendships? Church? Weather? House? Events in your past? Your family of origin?

Look up the following verses.

Phiippians 2:14

James 5:9

Numbers 11:1

Romans 8:28-29

Ephesians 1:11

Job 42:2

Psalms 139: 13-16

What is wrong with being discontent? How is this a sin against God?

Have you valued friendships over being loyal to God and His truth? Are their relationships right now that need God's truth even at the risk of losing that friendship? What are you going to do about it?

My Weaknesses

The Things in my life about which I am easily embarrassed

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- *
- *
- *
- *
- *
- *

Christ's Power

The specific ways in which God could receive glory through my weaknesses

My Strengths

The things in my life about which I am tempted to act independent of God or do with sinful motives

- *
- *
- *
- *
- *
- *
- *

Christ's Power

The specific ways God could be given the glory for everything that I am strong in.

What people pleasing thoughts do I need to take captive? Think about your thoughts. As you interact with people, you talk more to yourself than anyone else. What do you say to yourself? How are these thoughts focused on pleasing the other person rather than on pleasing God?

For example: "I hope she thinks I know the bible really well."
"I wonder if she approves of my new hairstyle."
"What can I say that will make me look like I'm in the know?"

1.

2.

3.

4.

Now rewrite those thoughts to be God-pleasing.

For example: "How can I encourage her through scripture?"
"I wonder if she needs my help today?"
"How can I point her to God's grace in this conversation?"

1.

2.

3.

4.

What responsibilities have I neglected in hopes of keeping my reputation good among people? Have I spoken truth and confronted when necessary? Have I offered the hope of gospel? Have I chosen friends based on status rather than looking to serve the lowly and humble?

Summarize this chapter in 5 sentences.

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CHAPTER 13

Put the following verses on 3X5 cards and spend time meditating on them every day.

Matthew 6:19-21

John 6:27

Philippians 3:20-21

**Colossians 3:1-4

1 Timothy 4:7-10

1 Peter 1:13

1 John 2:28

1 John 3:2-3

To what degree does eternity influence the way you live?

Does it affect your thoughts, words, attitudes, and actions?

To what extent do thoughts of your eternal destiny motivate you to please God more than man?

Write out the 16 situations listed for when to think eternally. Under each one, write a summary of why it is helpful to think about heaven.

1.

2.

3.

4.

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14

15

16

Write out a prayer confessing your sin of worldliness to God. Ask Him to give you the grace to love Christ “with your whole heart, soul, mind, and strength” and to “set your affection on the things above, not on things on the earth”. Commit to trust God that He will bring to completion the work He has started in you in His timing.

Summarize this chapter in 5 sentences.

Begin working on Appendix B.