



Pendulum Week 3 – Caring What People Think Spiritual Formation Guide

We hope you'll use this guide to take the teaching from Sunday's service and reflect on it with a few friends or with a group. If you have questions or want to talk more about how to take a next spiritual step, contact us at info@wschurch.org.

Scripture:

"Choose a good reputation over great riches; being held in high esteem is better than silver or gold."
Proverbs 22:1

"As for me, it **matters very little how I might be evaluated by you** or by any human authority. I don't even trust my own judgment on this point. My conscience is clear, but that doesn't prove I'm right. It is the Lord himself who will examine me and decide."
1 Corinthians 4:3-4

"Blessed are you when people hate you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil because of the Son of Man. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven. For that is how their ancestors treated the prophets. Woe to you when everyone speaks well of you, for that is how their ancestors treated the false prophets."
Luke 6:22-23, 26

"They came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, that man who was with you on the other side of the Jordan—the one you testified about—look, he is baptizing, and **everyone** is going to him." To this John replied, "A person can receive only what is given them from heaven. You yourselves know how plainly I told you, 'I am not the Messiah. I am only here to prepare the way for him.' ...He must become greater and greater, and I must become less and less."
John 3:26-30

Reflection Questions:

- Quickly share one of your most embarrassing moments. How did you react?
- What stood out to you from Sunday's service? How did you sense God at work in you through the songs, the story video, the message, and being together with others as part of the church? (The message main points and scripture are listed below if it helps you think back.)

- Which side of the pendulum do you naturally go to – caring too much about what people think or not caring what people think?
- Read Proverbs 22:1. How would you describe the wisdom of choosing a good reputation?
- Read 1 Corinthians 4:3-4. What wisdom do you see in Paul (the author)'s perspective in these verses?
- Now, read Jesus' words in Luke 6:22-23, 26. How did Jesus live out these words during his time on earth?
- Finally, read John the Baptist's words in John 3:26-30. John's followers are asking him about how to feel about Jesus gaining more and more attention. How do John's words inspire you? How do they challenge you?
- Chip shared this: "Your reputation ultimately belongs to God, who has a purpose for it."
 - Quoting Andy Stanley about our reputation, he said, "Understand who it's *from* and who it's *for*."
 - "Your image is intended to reflect and magnify His image in this world."
 How do you react to this?
- How do you sense God at work in you through this discussion and this teaching. Do you have more questions? Do you have a situation or relationship or part of your life where God wants to do more work in you?
- Take some time to be still in God's loving presence, and pray borrowing the words from John the Baptist: "God, you must become greater. I must become less." (John 3:30)

Want some resources and ideas for how to grow spiritually as we start a new year?

Visit www.wschurch.org/resources to see some of the tools that our team is recommending.

Message Main Points and Scripture:

- **How much do you care about what people think about you?**
- **We have a moral obligation to care what people think about us.**
- Proverbs 22:1 - "Choose a good reputation over great riches; being held in high esteem is better than silver or gold."
- Titus 2:2-10 - "Teach older men to be self-controlled, worthy of respect, wise, strong in faith, love, and patience. Likewise, teach older women to live in a way that honors God, not speaking against others or enslaved to wine, but teaching what is good. Then they can train the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be wise and pure, to be good workers at home, to be kind, and to yield to their husbands. **Then no one will be able to criticize the teaching God gave us.** In the same way, encourage young men to be wise. **In every way be an example** of doing good deeds. When you teach, do it with honesty and seriousness. Speak the truth **so that you cannot be criticized. Then those who are against us will be ashamed because there is nothing bad to say about us.**
- Slaves [or servants] should be subject to their masters at all times, trying to please them and not arguing with them. They should not steal from them but should show their masters they can be fully trusted **so that in everything they do they will make the teaching of God our Savior attractive."**
- **He intends for HIS WAYS to be displayed to the world through your life.**
- 1 Cor 8:10-12 - "Suppose one of you who has knowledge eats in an idol's temple. Someone who is weak in faith **might see you** eating there and be encouraged to eat meat sacrificed to idols while thinking it is wrong to do so. This weak believer for whom Christ died is ruined because of your 'knowledge.'"
- **How you live your life raises or lowers the bar for others.**
- 1 Corinthians 4:3-4 - "As for me, **it matters very little how I might be evaluated by you** or by any human authority. I don't even trust my own judgment on this point. My conscience is clear, but that doesn't prove I'm right. It is the Lord himself who will examine me and decide."

- 1 Corinthians 4:11-13 – “We are hungry and thirsty, we are naked and beaten and homeless, and we grow weary from the work of our own hands. When we’re cursed, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; when slandered, we speak kindly. Yet we are treated like the rubbish of the world, like everybody’s trash...”
- Luke 6:22-23, 26 – “Blessed are you when people hate you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil because of the Son of Man. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven. For that is how their ancestors treated the prophets. Woe to you when everyone speaks well of you, for that is how their ancestors treated the false prophets.”
- John 3:26-30 – “They came to John and said to him, “Rabbi, that man who was with you on the other side of the Jordan—the one you testified about—look, he is baptizing, and **everyone** is going to him.” To this John replied, “A person can receive only what is given them from heaven. You yourselves know how plainly I told you, ‘I am not the Messiah. I am only here to prepare the way for him.’...He must become greater and greater, and I must become less and less.”
- **Your reputation ultimately belongs to God, who has a purpose for it.**
- **“Understand who it’s *from* and who it’s *for*.” – Andy Stanley**
- **Your image is intended to reflect and magnify His image in this world...**