

22: APPROVAL VS. ACCEPTANCE: THE BATTLE MOST MEN NEVER ADMIT

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In [Week 5: Identity in Christ](#)

3 Min read



“There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” — Romans 8:1

Between 50% and 70% of men carry some unmet emotional need related to paternal approval into adulthood. Guys just want to hear their dad say, *“I’m proud of you.”* This void contributes to their perception of who their Heavenly Father is.

Many men spend years seeking approval and reassurance from their peers, their brotherhood, their wives, and their spiritual community. They believe forgiveness is real and that God saved them. What they’re not sure of is, *“Is God fully pleased with me?”* So, men live performing instead of abiding.

Romans 8:1 settles that question: “There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” No condemnation doesn’t mean no conviction—it means the verdict has already been settled.

On the trail, this changes how a man walks. He no longer hikes, looking over his shoulder, expecting judgment to catch up. He walks forward, steady and unashamed. Acceptance becomes the ground beneath his boots, not a prize dangling ahead.

When that truth settles deep, a man stops negotiating his place with God and starts living from it. The trail grows quieter inside because the loudest accusation has already been silenced at the cross. He walks each day before God without fear of rejection or shame.

APPLICATION

Living for approval is tiresome; men look over their shoulder, wondering whether they still measure up. Ministry becomes an evaluation. Silence feels like disappointment. The unsaid fear underneath it all is simple: *If I fail, will God still love me?*

Romans 8:1 answers that fear. No condemnation means the relationship isn't probationary or conditional. God isn't waiting for improvement to finalize acceptance.

On the trail, a man can be honest about fatigue, doubt, and struggle. He confesses more quickly because his standing isn't at risk. He repents freely because shame no longer holds power.

Insecurity drives men to burn out. Men rooted in God's acceptance are anchored in grace. One walks to earn a sense of belonging; the other walks because he already belongs.

Over time, the difference shows in a man's pace, humility, and resilience—especially when the miles grow long, and the terrain turns refining under God's steady hand.

LIVE IT OUT

This week, pay attention to when you fail, notice whether you withdraw or draw near. Practice returning to God immediately, not after you've "improved." Begin prayer from acceptance, not apology.

Let Romans 8:1 echo God's approval. As your boots hit the trail, remember your responsibilities are grounded, not graded. The Father's verdict over your life is settled, not shifting.

PRAY THIS...

"Lord, as I walk life's trail, let me live out Your words, "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."

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Practice builds the man.*

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