

Kev 's Guys eGroup sermon notes from 05/11/2019

Pastor Steven Furtick

Sermon Title: "The Pressure to Perform" - Imposter syndrome explained – The fear that keeps us in perpetual "performance" mode – Being content to stay in Galilee and not travel to Judea

Quote of the Day: "We are consumed and obsessed with chasing clout, approval, and publicity."

Scripture: John 7 1 to 13:

New International Version (NIV): Jesus Goes to the Festival of Tabernacles - 7 After this, Jesus went around in Galilee. He did not want[a] to go about in Judea because the Jewish leaders there were looking for a way to kill him. 2 But when the Jewish Festival of Tabernacles was near, 3 Jesus' brothers said to him, "Leave Galilee and go to Judea, so that your disciples there may see the works you do. 4 No one who wants to become a public figure acts in secret. Since you are doing these things, show yourself to the world." 5 For even his own brothers did not believe in him. 6 Therefore Jesus told them, "My time is not yet here; for you any time will do. 7 The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify that its works are evil. 8 You go to the festival. I am not[b] going up to this festival, because my time has not yet fully come." 9 After he had said this, he stayed in Galilee. 10 However, after his brothers had left for the festival, he went also, not publicly, but in secret. 11 Now at the festival the Jewish leaders were watching for Jesus and asking, "Where is he?" 12 Among the crowds there was widespread whispering about him. Some said, "He is a good man." Others replied, "No, he deceives the people." 13 But no one would say anything publicly about him for fear of the leaders.

Sermon notes – The Pressure to Perform by Steven Furtick

- This is an interesting revelation in the life of Jesus. Many will say, I never heard a sermon on this passage of scripture before – and you will not be able to say this after today.
- This is a human moment in the life of Jesus and instructive to us today.
- As we read this passage of scripture, we hope to see an example of Jesus and how it applies to our lives.
- No one who wants to be a public figure acts in secret or refuses to post on Instagram.
- Even his own brothers did not believe him – however for Jesus, it was not yet his time.
- We read in this scripture a salty Jesus – the world does not hate you because the world hates me.
- As one preacher says: "If you have not yet had a head on collision with the devil lately, it might mean that you are headed in the same direction as the devil."
- Pastor Mikey would say: "Of course, I am in conflict – I am in contradiction with the world's values."
- And it is not easy to live on this earth according to Kingdom Principles.
- See vs. 8 of John 7: You do what you need to do. I am not yet going to this feast.
- **I wonder how better how lives would be if we used this word: "Not Yet."**
- While many were looking for Jesus, no one would say anything publicly about him – for fear of the Jews.
- See vs. 10 – the key verse for today: "He went in secret."
- Today I want to talk to you about *"The Pressure to Perform."*
- Opening prayer: Spirit of God, I thank you for the accuracy with which you register in our hearts today - and minds of people who are open to hear it. Give us this openness and let us receive whatever you wish to speak. And we give you praise in advance – in Jesus name we say Amen.
- **Say this today: "I don't need to post it to prove it."**

- It is so great to now apologize for my teenage years. I did not have an appreciation at the time of the pressure of parenting – and we really can't unless we are blessed with the same pressure of parental responsibility ourselves.
- My mom and dad stretched their resources to take care of me and I did not appreciate the sacrifices they made for me.
- My dad was barber and my mom was a teacher – not exactly high paying jobs – and they provided for me so competently – so much so that I never had an appreciation of the pressure they were under – to the point that I never felt their pressure.
- I remember going to a telephone company office to help my mom and dad clean the office – at night – after they completed their day jobs.
- **My father grew up without a father and there were times during my teenage years where my Dad probably felt the pressure of trying to perform at a level that he was not built for – and there was a sense that his pressure probably paralyzed him – as life often can – when we find ourselves exposed to a particular responsibility that we have never experienced before – not only on the financial side on the emotional side of parenting – for example, when we give it all materially, you have nothing left emotionally.**
- At a baseball game – I encountered a man who was undergoing a lot of stress at work that impacted him emotionally.
- **It used to be enough that all we had to was protect our kids, provide for our kids, and prepare our kids. With this, comes the anxiety of letting kids fail a little bit – so they don't fail a lot. Should we let your kids skin their knees now - so our kids don't break their necks later.**
- **Should Peter be allowed to sink down into the water but not let him drown? Even Jesus did not prevent the failure – so the person could learn the lesson – that would enable them later.**
- Sometimes there is so much pressure coming from so many different directions – and if you stop to think about the life of Jesus – he was under pressure from the Pharisees who wanted to Kill him in order to preserve their political power – and so they were watching everything that they did and watched Jesus with scrutinizing eyes – to the point that even if he healed someone – and then they accused him of healing someone on the wrong day of the week (the Sabbath).
- How would you like to be accused of doing the right thing at the wrong time? This is Jesus.
- They even followed him to see if he was going to wash his hands before he ate.
- The Pharisees were not interested in knowing that Jesus was eating with the unclean as a act of mercy and grace – they were more interested in seeing if he was following their laws – and they only focused on the cosmetics – and everything he did was under scrutiny – Oh no! He is talking that women. Oh no! He is talking to a leper and he is not supposed to act like that or talk like that.
- And often Jesus would perform the miracle for the crowd – but they would miss the deeper meaning – which is what is happening in John Chapter 7.
- Jesus had just fed 5000 men + women + children – and he provided for their needs in such a great way that they all had their fill. After filling them physically, Jesus was now trying to fill them spiritually – and it turns out that they were following him not for the spiritual dynamics of who he was – but only for the physical benefits of what he could provide – and when Jesus began to speak in the bible at a deeper level – many of them did not want to hear it – where he says: “Now that you have had bread – now recognize that I am the bread of life – the miracle that I just performed was not about what I did – it was to point to who I am.”

- And they did not like the phrase “And if you drink my blood and eat my flesh you can remain in me” It was if he had the crowd and then he lost them. where he had the following and then he lost them.
- See John 6:66: Many then deserted Him and followed him no more.
- Many went away because it was a hard saying – and then Jesus turned to his disciples and asked: Do you want to walk away too? A Pastor Furtick Classic: And Peter says I am out of options since I already gave my boat away to put my investment in you – and Peter needs to see where this ends – even if it ends at a cross.
- This is the context of John: 7.
- It is one thing to deal with opposition from the devil – it is another thing to deal with opposition that was inside of your own house.
- And Jesus had seven siblings (some traditions infer) – and his blood brothers pulled him aside and proposed a strategy as to how to get his followers back – and they have got it all figured out – and they have got it all calculated – and they stated: Hey Jesus, do more of the stuff like feeding people – and less of the “cannibal stuff” that you say in your speeches – why don’t you go to Judea at the Feast of the Tabernacle? And you can do the stuff that you had been doing in the northern part of Palestine – which was not as densely populated as Jerusalem and Judea – and do publicly what you had been doing privately – lets take this show on the road and get better headlines – we can get you a great spot at the Coachella of the old testament – this was the feast where they would come to the “Festival of Booths or Tabernacle” – and they would stay for a week – and they would thank God for the water, manna, and sustenance that God gave them. Mana = What is it and what it is – so God meets What is it? with what it is – and it shows that God can show up in any situation – where he answers the question of what is it with Who He is – and it will become what you need for the season that you are in.
- And yet his own brothers say: Common Jesus, do some of the flashy stuff – and take this show 55 miles south to Judea – and if you can do these public things in front of people – you can then become a public figure.
- The phrase “Public Figure” drew me to this text.
- **See the phrase: “No one who wants to become a public figure acts in secret.”**
- **And we live in a time when everyone wants to be a public figure.**
- Even people who have a private account spend their energy posting stuff and commenting on stuff – to create an image and a projection of a reality that bears no resemblance to the reality of their situation.
- And Jesus’ brothers pull Him aside to say – Hey, we have a great idea – why don’t you show the world who you really are?
- The Nexus of this text is in verse 5.
- However, let’s first look at this: Even Jesus’ brothers did not believe in him. And since they did not believe – they were trying to get him to perform.
- **Anytime that you have unbelief in your heart, it will cause you to try to perform to prove something that you don’t really believe. In psychological terms, it is called the fraudulence complex – or some call it the imposter syndrome** – and speaks to many of us – and our inability to internalize our strengths and our accomplishments – it is called the imposter syndrome because many of us secretly deep down think we are a fraud.
- **Many us think that we have so much less to offer than what people expect of us.**

- We figure that that the reason that they are complementing us is because they don't really see us for who we are – and if they ever saw us for who we are – how stupid we feel – how inexperienced we feel – how nervous we really feel – they would throw us out of the room.
- This happens to fathers. This happens to mothers. It happens to leaders. It happens to teenagers.
- This is the fear of being found out to be less than they thought that you were.
- **It is a fear that keeps you in performance mode.**
- It is the fear that keeps you spending money to look like someone important – because deep down you are afraid that you are really not that important.
- **It is the fear that keeps you overcompensating.**
- And you get into situations and rather than letting other people be the center of attention – you feel the need to overcompensate – to show how intelligent you are – because deep down you do not feel intelligent enough – so people think that you are cocky – but you are not really cocky – you are scared with the conflict between who you are supposed to be and who you feel like and who you really are.
- It is called the imposter syndrome.
- It means that sometimes while we are trying to fulfill our purpose – we feel like a fake. It is not like we are hypocrites – it is not that we are insincere – it is that deep down inside we are people – and we feel like a child – where I am a preacher, but I feel like a sinner.
- We want to be wise, but sometimes, we feel like a fool.
- Is there anyone here today that is under the pressure of an unrealistic expectation?
- And when you feel that – the temptation and the tendency is to prove it. And we say things like: I have to prove I am a good dad. I got prove that I am a good Mom. I got to prove that I am a good preacher.
- **When you do it to prove it, it takes to joy out of it.**
- Jesus did not mind performing miracles – he just was not going to do it for the wrong motives.
- **Jesus was going to Judea – he just was not going to make a public spectacle out of his power.**
- Jesus was ultimately determined to show the world who he was – but he was not going to do it for the Grammy.
- I think the key thing that he says is the text is: Not now. Jesus says: I am not going to Judea right now.
- It is such a strange world that we live in.
- I do not know how to tell my kids how to grow up with the constant pressure to perform – and now everyone gets to experience performance anxiety – since we now perform all of the time for one another – and do it constantly.
- If you cook a good meal for your family, this does not count – because you also need to make an Instagram story out of the meal.
- This is a very common thing to preach about – because this “need to perform” is killing us.
- Jesus said: If I go to Judea for the wrong reasons, and if I show up with the wrong motives, and if I live my life to perform for others – rather than to glorify my Father - it will kill me.
- The religious leaders of the day were waiting to literally kill Jesus.
- And what are the things that are potentially killing you?
- Is says that he purposely stayed away from Judea. What does this mean?

- **What do you purposely need to stop thinking about in this season of your life? Who do you need to purposely stop comparing yourself to in this season of your life?**
- For me it is Buck – my exercise partner.
- While doing leg squats, I was told, don't do squats like Buck. Buck is built differently than you. "You are going to break your back trying to do squats like Buck."
- And I wonder how we look to God trying to do something that we are not designed for.
- I saw Kevin Hart on Instagram and after watching him, I felt like a failure for my whole life. Within 15 seconds of watching Kevin Hart, I am questioning the basis of my whole existence. This occurred because I compared myself to a person that was built differently than me and has a different calling.
- And please do not judge me while I am in this vulnerable position.
- **Because the truth of the matter is, some of you are hurting in ways that you do not have to hurt – because you are putting yourself in a position that you were not built to live in.**
- Jesus said, I am not going to Judea – because you want me to go to Judea.
- We do not have to post it to prove it.
- We don't have to turn stones into bread to show that Jesus is the son of God.
- **We live out of purpose – not popularity.**
- We live out of purpose – not for the empty praises of others – but only for the praise that can only come from God.
- **Is there anyone here to today that is content to say in Galilee and not travel to Judea – to know that it is our season to be obedient.**
- And this is all that we have to do.
- All that we have to do is to be obedient in this season of our lives.
- And Jesus said: Ya'll go to Judea. I am not going. Not now.
- **Trying to impress people and trying to measure up to arbitrary standards – that are changing so fast – it will kill your joy, and it will kill your marriage, it will kill your ministry, and it will kill your family.**
- Not even Jesus could please everybody – and he was sinless and spotless.
- Think about that: Jesus, the son of God could not please everybody.
- And yet, we expect that we can.
- Honestly, it was probably a lot of pressure to be a sibling of Jesus – where you bring home C's in chemistry and He is changing water into wine – and affecting molecular structures in real time.
- This is a lot of pressure.
- It is a lot of pressure to feel special.
- And sometimes the pressure that we feel to be special does not come from God – it comes from culture – who tells you that you have to be so special – so different – so unique – so set apart – but you already are.
- You already are.
- We are already set apart.
- Jesus says: I do not need to go to Judea to show them who I am. I already know – come to that place where we live for purpose and not for proof.
- Because – who are you trying to prove it to?
- **Whoever you are trying to prove it to is not paying attention – because they are trying to prove it to someone else that is also not paying attention – and so while we are busy posting to each other**

our results to prove to one another what we are worth – our purpose is dying in the place of our insecurity.

- **When you know it is real and you know it is authentic – it enables you to do it from a place of purpose.**
- Jesus is going to go to Judea eventually – to be tortured and to be killed – however, Jesus is not going to go because his brothers pushed him into it.
- Be careful of what people or cultural norms push you into.
- You will never be pushed into purpose – you will be pulled into purpose from within.
- Because pushing is not purpose.
- God does not drive, he leads.
- Jesus says: “I will go when it is time for me to go.” I am not going for clout, I am going for Kairos. This is the Greek word that means opportunity or the timing of God.
- In Greek philosophy, fate determined timing – in Kingdom philosophy, God determines the timing. This means that I am where I need to be right now – and I am good staying in Galilee.
- And we have a whole generation that is trying to be a public figure.
- I saw on Instagram a person that listed their title as a “public figure” – and they had 70 followers. This is pressure to be special – the pressure to be important.
- **However, if you belong to God and you are living on assignment, and you know that you are anointed, and you know your gift, it will take the pressure off – because we are good in Galilee.**
- I will teach in Galilee. I will perform miracles in Galilee. I will pray in Galilee. I am good in Galilee.
- I see it even seep into our ministry in very subtle ways – and we are not careful we become so performance orientated – that we are preoccupied by the statistics vs. the substance.
- And we use all forms of social media to spread the gospel.
- However, we can become pre-occupied with performance.
- Many of us don’t need performance, we need presence – the presence of each other.
- Unbelief always leads to performance – it kills you – when you go to those places in your mind – trying to prove something.
- I guess it is good to know if one song or sermon Instagram post gets more likes than another post.
- With ministry, you can’t always measure success in the form of objective performance.
- And I do not know that one that got the most likes was the one that God used the most.
- Who am I to say that the one sermon post that got the fewer likes was any less effective?
- Just perhaps one person saw a sermon Instagram post was so overwhelmed that their hands were shaking and they could not click to “like” the post – and they had a bottle of pills in their hand – and based on something that we spoken through their screen – prevented a tragic event – and changed the trajectory of their life – and we can’t measure that.
- When you do it for the wrong audience – and when people don’t clap – you quit.
- Jesus was not doing it for the praise. He was doing it for a purpose.
- The 2019 version of What Jesus says: I don’t have to post it to prove it.
- Jesus says: I do not do it because they are clapping. I do it because it is part of my calling.
- **We are not chasing their approval, we are fulfilling our assignment.**
- **This message is for our generation. We are consumed and obsessed with chasing clout, approval, and publicity.**

- And somethings need to stay private. Somethings that God does in your life are not for public disclosure. Somethings are not for public display or public display of affection. When you pray, Jesus tells us to pray in private – and not to impress someone – but to get in a secret place – your closet – get a room where you get along with God – and ask God this: What I am I called to do – what am I called to be? - I no longer want to take my queues from culture – the crowd is killing me - – God, what do you want me to do in this season of my life? – It is too much pressure to please people – God I just want to please you – I do it for you God – I show up for you – I forgive for you – I love for you – I serve for you – I breath for you – I live for you – I worship for you – not for an audience of them – God is my audience.
- **And when God is your audience, the opinions of people are no longer your sustenance.**
- We so need this word from the Lord because we are not going to get it from the world.
- It is getting weirder and weider and weider – how we are all performing for each other – all of the time – it is exhausting, and it sucks – it is a worthless endeavor - and it does not matter.
- And God, give us the word of sanity today.
- The crowd will kill you.
- I love the word that John said: There was widespread whispering about Jesus. Everybody had a comment to make, however, no one the courage to say it out loud to his face.
- And this is the world that we live in.
- **And when we give too much weight to the whispers of people and not enough weight to the word of God, it will kill us – it will kill us on the inside.**
- Bonus study: <https://renner.org/its-time-for-you-to-lay-aside-every-unnecessary-weig/>
- So, the phrase “Imposter Syndrome” was coined a few decades ago in psychological terms – however the problems is as old as Moses – who stood up one day to see a burning bush that was not consumed – pleading ‘who am I that I should stand before King Pharaoh?’ – no matter how many miracles that God did through Moses, he still had trouble believing that he was enough to lead the Hebrew people through captivity. This is why he struck the rock instead of speaking to it. This is why he was still trying to prove his value at the end of ministry – to prove it to who?
- Jesus said that I am going to Judea – when it is right for me.
- And God give us the clarity to know what is right for us – what we are built for – so we stop finding ourselves in such compromising positions that do not even fit our build – God, give us the wisdom to know that when people are pushing us – just because it is normal does not mean that it is wise – God give us the wisdom to know our timing – give us the wisdom to know when we need to put something in a private journal and not Facebook – Give us the wisdom to know that it is your voice.
- Closing prayer: Father, I thank you for what you have spoken today – and how it was applied in individual lives. Let us pray and thus save us from all of this consternation and agony – to be able to receive this fact: That is ok to stay in Galilee. It is ok to operate within our own respective gifts – it is ok to do things the way we need to do it – and that proving stuff to people never produced the power of God. Never. Even when Jesus as hung on the cross, they were still trying to prove something different vs. what he was. He was on the cross to do it – for you and me – to address our despair - and endure the cross. The presence of the Lord is here to remind us of your righteousness and to remind us – we do not have to perform a religious act or a behavior modification program to be accepted by your heavenly farther.
- Closing prayer #2: There is someone here who has been feeling that we are not enough and it has caused us to enter into modes of communication – and methods of life – and paces of a life style

that do not fit our assignment or our calling. And there are places that we are going to have to purposely stay away from in the coming days – places in our mind – places in our imagination – places that we need to stay away from in order to live in peace. And we have been under a pressure that did not come from God – to live up to something that was not even originated in His heart. Today, we pray that the peace of God will be our portion for this season of our lives. And whatever we do, we would not do it for popularity or for praise – but we would do it for purpose – to do it on purpose – with an intentionality that Jesus had – as he set his face toward the future – with destiny in his heart – praying even under pressure in the Garden of Gethsemane – May God give us this spirit of focus – and determination to raise our family – and to run our race – and to live our life – and to ignore the whispers – to come out of unbelief. Stop trying to prove it – we do not have to prove it – it is already spoken – it is already settled. Amen.