

**Ron Armstrong • November 9 & 10, 2019**  
**Chasing Carrots: We Chase More Than Stuff**

**1 Thessalonians 2:1** For you yourselves know, brethren, that our coming to you was not in vain, **2** but after we had already suffered and been mistreated in Philippi, as you know, we had the boldness in our God to speak to you the gospel of God amid much opposition. **3** For our exhortation does not come from error or impurity or by way of deceit; **4** but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who examines our hearts. **5** For we never came with flattering speech, as you know, nor with a pretext for greed—God is witness— **6** nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, even though as apostles of Christ we might have asserted our authority. **7** But we proved to be gentle among you, as a nursing *mother* tenderly cares for her own children. (NASV)

**2 Corinthians 12:8** Concerning this I implored the Lord three times that it might leave me. **9** And He has said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness ...”

**A. The approval chaser and the perfectionist.**

1. Almost everybody wants some approval from others. Complete self-containment is a fallacy.
2. But how do you know if it's a problem? Watch for symptoms that it's holding you **HOSTAGE**:
  - a. You obsess over what over people think of you. (Constant mental **REPLAYS**.)
  - b. You are overly sensitive to criticism.
  - c. You have a terrible time saying “no.”
  - d. The real person you want approval from is not in the room or in the **PRESENT**.
  - e. It is preventing contentment.

3. Perfectionism is often broken into three types:
  - a. **EXTERNALLY** oriented. You strive for perfection because you believe others expect it of you. You often have feelings such as, “I will never be good enough.”
  - b. **SELF**-oriented. You set really high expectations of yourself. Often it is to cope with another feeling such as fear, pain, or loneliness. “If I could ... then I would ...”
  - c. **OTHERS**-oriented. You expect others to live to your standards. It can result in a lack of empathy, judgmentalism, and abrasiveness.
4. Sorry, but you can have more than one type at the same time.
5. Perfectionists can be hard to spot. Some work obsessively, but others **PROCRASTINATE** or habitually quit.

**B. What can we do if these are the carrots we're after?**

1. Choose to run toward your feelings.
  - a. **NAME** the feeling. (I'm struggling for approval or I'm being controlled by perfectionism.)
  - b. **FEEL** it.
  - c. Say to yourself:
    - I. It's only a feeling.
    - II. It is going to pass.
    - III. It's just information. I don't have to do anything about this feeling.
2. We often pray, “Lord, please change what I feel.” Instead, it may be time to pray, “Lord, help me to endure what I feel.”