

Introduction:

- *"But the Lord watches over those who fear him, those who rely on his unfailing love. He rescues them from death and keeps them alive in times of famine."* (Psalm 33:18-19, NLT)
- I came across an interesting "fact" on a children's education site recently. I use the term loosely, as I've struggled to find corroborating evidence. "Nonetheless, it is purported that in Sri Lanka it was once believed that lizards stored wisdom in their tongues. As such, Sri Lankans used to feed lizard tongue sandwiches to their children in the hopes that they would grow to be clever and well-spoken. **APPLICATION:** *You can laugh at the proposition, but the thought of it poses an interesting challenge ... what effort are YOU putting into acquiring more wisdom? You may not be eating lizard tongue sandwiches, but what are you doing? There are no short cuts or magic recipes in the quest for greater wisdom. But there is a beginning point ... "The **FEAR OF THE LORD** is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding" (Proverbs 9:10).*
- We continue tonight in our study on the fear of the Lord.

I. Understanding What We Are Learning

- A. Pictures of the fear of the Lord. I gave you five of those last week. Review and reflect.
1. The fear of God is to keep you from sinning. Ex 20:18-20
 2. The fear of the Lord is fear of moving out of his fellowship and into the ways of sin. Is 18:3
 3. The fear of the Lord corresponds with humility and a tender heart towards God. Is 66:2
 4. The fear of the Lord makes us friends with God. Ps 25:14
 5. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of: knowledge, wisdom and hating evil. Proverbs 9:10; 1:7; 8:13
- B. Defined:
1. Free Dictionary
 - a) An unpleasant emotion of dread/terror.
 - b) To expect dread or terror.
 2. Webster 1828 Dictionary: (a dictionary prior to removal of God from our culture)
 - a) A painful emotion or passion excited by an expectation of evil.
 - b) Anxiety
 - c) Reverence, respect, high regard, holy awe. "In good men, the *fear* of God is a holy awe or reverence of God and his laws, which springs from a just view and real love of the divine character, leading the subjects of it to hate and shun every thing that can offend such a holy being, and inclining them to aim at perfect obedience.'
 3. TDNT (Theological Dictionary of NT) Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W. (1985). TDNT (p. 1275). Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans.
 - a) "The NT opposes all hampering anxiety but relates fear of God to faith as total trust."
 - b) "Fear of God takes the form of reverent and submissive recognition in trust and obedience."
 - (1) Ex 18:21 Those who fear God are reliable.
 - (2) Dt 4:10 Those who fear God listen to the word and willing obey. Dt 6:13; 8:6

- (3) Dt 6:13-19 Fear of the Lord exclude punishment that overtakes those who do not fear God.
 - (4) Ps 34:11 The fear of the Lord has a moral orientation. These people desire to do and to live right.
- C. So what is it that we are seeking to understand when we speak of the fear of the Lord?
- 1. We are learning that the fear of the Lord is to have great reverence, respect and awe of God, His word, and His ways.
 - 2. We are learning to live humbly before God and the fruit of the fear of the Lord is peace, strength, and abundance.
 - 3. We are to understand that the fear of the Lord can be taught.
 - a) Dt 31:12 hear this Book of instruction and learn the fear of the Lord.
 - b) Zechariah taught King Uzziah to fear the Lord 2 Chron 26:5
 - c) One of the greatest things we can do for our children is to teach them the fear of the Lord.

II. Putting It Into Perspective

- A. Most people see the fear of the Lord as a negative thing because it is most often used in conjunction with the judgement, wrath or discipline of God.
- 1. It is used to scare people straight or to scare them into living right. That would be dread or terror and that is not our (the believers) definition of the fear of the Lord.
 - 2. It is used often in the end times message. As so it is often associated with the dread or terror of God being released in the earth.
 - 3. It is often used along with the discipline of the Lord with the loving side of God presented. We know that God disciplines those He loves but people must see the loving side of God in that.
- B. The Bible has way more positive things to say about the fear of the Lord especially in connection with the blessing and favor of God. Again, Ps 128:1 How joyous are those who fear the Lord.
- 1. The fear of the Lord makes us friends with God. "The friendship of the Lord is for those who fear him, and he makes known to them his covenant." (Psalm 25:14, ESV)
 - 2. "A song for pilgrims ascending to Jerusalem. How joyful are those who fear the Lord— all who follow his ways! **You will enjoy the fruit of your labor.** How **joyful and prosperous** you will be! Your **wife will be like a fruitful grapevine**, flourishing within your home. Your **children will be like vigorous young olive trees** as they sit around your table. That is the Lord's blessing for those who fear him. May the Lord **continually bless you** from Zion. May you see Jerusalem prosper as long as you live. May **you live to enjoy your grandchildren.** May Israel have **peace!**" (Psalm 128, NLT)
 - 3. "The Lord has remembered us; he will bless us; he will bless the house of Israel; he will bless the house of Aaron; he will bless those who fear the Lord, both the small and the great." (Psalm 115:12-13, ESV)
 - 4. Is. 8:3 God is a sanctuary to those who fear Him.

III. Where is the church regarding the fear of the Lord?

- A. The church is in a culture that does not acknowledge God. The USA has lost its fear of God. We no longer esteem the things of God and our humanistic approach to life has nullified the Word of God (made it of no effect). Where the Word is not honored its life cannot be released. Mt 15:6 But the wicked, have no fear of God. *"Sin whispers to the wicked, deep within their hearts. They have no fear of God at all."* (Psalm 36:1, NLT)
- B. The church is in a sloppy grace culture. Meaning that the 'message of grace' has gone way to far away beyond what it was supposed too. The extreme brings weakness to the churches position in the earth.
1. Because there is so little fear of the Lord, holiness is no longer a goal but a message to be opposed.
 2. Because there is so little fear of the Lord, believers choose to live in and with their sin rather than to be Christ like. Those who use grace to continue in their sin have no fear of God. If you truly love God there should be an awesome reverence for God.
 3. Is. 11:1-3 tells us that Jesus loved the fear of the Lord and delighted himself in it. We do not see Jesus making room for sin in His life, PRAISE GOD!!!
 - a) Jesus did not dread God.
 - b) Jesus revered God. He love the Word. He loved God's ways.
- C. Because the church misunderstands the fear of the Lord,
1. She ignores the presence of sin which disrespects God. We should be honoring him for all that He has done for us, through the far reaches of His love.
 2. Or she embraces legalism which leads to dread of God. *"Such love has no fear, because perfect love expels all fear. If we are afraid, it is for fear of punishment, and this shows that we have not fully experienced his perfect love."* (1 John 4:18, NLT)
 3. We are to have the fear of the Lord, the awe of God that causes us to willingly, with happy hearts obey Him. It is not a work, it is a joy to obey. *"Let the whole world fear the Lord, and let everyone stand in awe of him."* (Psalm 33:8, NLT)
 4. NT church feared the Lord. *"The church then had peace throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria, and it became stronger as the believers lived in the fear of the Lord. And with the encouragement of the Holy Spirit, it also grew in numbers."* (Acts 9:31, NLT) Acts 5:11 Annanias and Saphira – "great fear came upon the church". Dread did not come upon the church—holy awe and holy living did.
- D. Jesus is the perfect picture of a man living in the fear of the Lord.
1. Jesus is the perfect picture of a man living in the fear of the Lord.
 2. He was quick to live and act in the fear of the Lord. He only did what He saw the Father doing. And He only spoke what the Father was speaking. He was full of the Father's love and had absolutely no dread of the Father, just a delightful joy in doing the Fathers will out of the abundance of the Father's love He was receiving!
 3. He revered God perfectly.
 4. Early church walked this way with God.

IV. Walking In The Fear of The Lord

- A. Walking in the fear of the Lord comes from the heart and not the head.
1. It is not what we do for God but what He has done for us. Been forgiven much you love much.
 2. *"Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God."* (2 Corinthians 7:1, ESV)
 3. To complete development of holiness. The KJV reads perfecting holiness. A person who fears God will live holy. Live holy out of a reverence or fear of God... Out of thankfulness to God.
- B. Walking in the fear of the Lord will reflect submission on many levels.
1. Submission to one another.
 - a) As believers. *"And further, submit to one another out of reverence for Christ."* (Ephesians 5:21, NLT)
 - b) Husbands submit to God. Wives submit to husbands. Eph 5:22-28. If we would submit to each other in the fear of the Lord, there would not be any divorce.
 - (1) If I live Christ like, and walk like Christ that solves so many problems! Marriage is more than learning a techniques. It is dying to self and walking like Christ did.
 - (2) If we honored the Word we would treat our spouses differently!
 - (3) It does not matter what family culture you came out of, if you honored Kingdom culture it would take priority and the blessings and success of God would come.
 2. Honoring parents.
 - a) *"Every one of you shall revere his mother and his father, and you shall keep my Sabbaths: I am the Lord your God."* (Leviticus 19:3, ESV)
 - b) 10 command honor father and mother.
 3. Honoring the aged. *"You shall stand up before the gray head and honor the face of an old man, and you shall fear your God: I am the Lord."* (Leviticus 19:32, ESV)
 4. Employee and employer. This is literally talking of slaves. *"Bondservants, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters, not by way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord. Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men,"* (Colossians 3:22-23, ESV)
 5. Love people. *"but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect,"* (1 Peter 3:15, ESV)

Conclusion:

- *"Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord, and turn away from evil. It will be healing to your flesh and refreshment to your bones."* (Proverbs 3:7-8, ESV)