

THE FEAR OF GOD

TEXT: ROMANS 3:9-18

INTRODUCTION:

1. The Bible says in Proverbs 9:10, “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” Therefore, a person who does not fear God is unwise.
2. Our Lord said in Luke 12:4, 5, “And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him”
3. Our Lord was teaching a principle taught throughout Scripture – God wants men to fear Him (cf. Deut. 10:12; Josh. 4:24).
4. In Jonah 1:9, the prophet Jonah told the mariners, “I am an Hebrew; and I fear the LORD, the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry land.”
5. In other words, Jonah was trying to explain to these heathen mariners that he feared the true God, the Creator of heaven and earth.
6. Hebrews 11:7 says, “By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.”
7. Noah “moved with fear” and obeyed God. Those who did not fear God perished in the flood.
8. We see something similar in Revelation 14:7. In the coming tribulation, the whole world will be under the judgment of God because of unbelief. An angel comes from heaven and declares with a loud voice, “Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.”
9. This is the message we must proclaim to this sin-loving world.
10. Notice men are to fear God because it is God “that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters” (Rev. 14:7).
11. Jonah said, “I am an Hebrew; and I fear the LORD, the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry land” (Jonah 1:9).
12. Therefore, those who promote theories such as evolution and “global warming” do not fear God. They have a scornful attitude toward the Word of God.

13. Sinners do not fear God, as Romans 3:18 plainly says.

I. SIN IN MAN'S CHARACTER

1. This passage of Scripture gives us:
 - a. The sinful character of men (3:10, 11)
 - b. The sinful conduct of men – their speech (3:13, 14), and their behaviour (3:15-17)
 - c. **The cause of their sinful character and sinful conduct – “There is no fear of God before their eyes” (3:18).**
2. The Bible teaches that the fear of God is the font and origin of true wisdom. The Old Testament commands men to fear God, and the New Testament repeats and emphasizes the injunction.
3. But sinful men do not fear God. Romans 3:18 says, “There is no fear of God before their eyes.”
4. Romans 1:22 says, “Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.”
5. Romans 3:10 says, “As it is written (it is written in Psalm 14:1-3), There is none righteous, no, not one.”
6. “There is none righteous.” One of the great themes of Paul’s epistle to the Romans is that man is unrighteous, and will be judged by God for his unrighteousness (cf. Rom. 1:18-32).
7. The Bible teaches sinful man can only be justified (declared righteous) through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 3:20-28; 5:1).
8. Not by good works or baptism or church membership, etc.

II. SIN IN MAN'S CONDUCT (3:13-17)

1. Man has a corrupt tongue (3:13, 14). President Barack Obama’s White House chief of staff, Rahm Emanuel has a filthy mouth. Apparently he cannot express himself without using dirty words.
2. Lest anyone think I am singling him out because he is a liberal Democrat, there are plenty of Republicans with filthy mouths too.
3. A few years ago, Vice President Dick Cheney cursed out Sen. Patrick Leahy on the Senate floor (cf. Rom. 3:14).
4. Psalm 5:9 says, “their throat is an open sepulchre.” The apostle Paul refers to this Scripture in Romans 3:13.
5. Psalm 10:7 says the wicked man’s “mouth is full of cursing and deceit and fraud: under his tongue is mischief and vanity” (cf. Rom. 3:13, 14).
6. Psalm 140:3 says, “They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent; adders’ poison is under their lips” (cf. 3:13).

7. Because sinful men do not fear God, “Their feet are swift to shed blood” (Rom. 3:15).
8. Our Lord said that when He returns to earth, it will be like the days of Noah. Genesis 6:11 says the days of Noah were marked by violence.
9. “The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence” (Gen. 6:11).
10. “And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth” (Gen. 6:13).
11. The Bible vividly describes the wicked condition of hard, impenitent sinners in the last days. Though God will judge them severely during the coming tribulation, Revelation 9:11 says, “Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.”
12. WORLDWIDE: number of abortions per year: Approximately 42 million; number of abortions per day: approximately 115,000.
13. NATIONWIDE (USA): number of abortions per year: 1.37 million (1996); number of abortions per day: approximately 3,700.
14. *The Journal of Adolescence* recently published a special issue dedicated to the growing body of scientific research documenting the link between violent video games and a number of negative behaviors in children and adolescents who play them.
15. “After a half century of research, the empirical evidence regarding the negative effects of violent television, movies and video games is overwhelming,” said psychologists Eric Uhlmann of Yale University and Jane Swanson of the University of Washington, who were one of the teams that published their results.
16. With metal detectors, searches, and the overwhelming presence of police officers, NYC public schools look like juvenile-detention facilities.
17. Because of all the robberies, rapes, assaults, and murders in the NYC public schools, the NYPD was given control over school safety back in 1998.
18. There are over 4,000 police personnel, called “school safety agents,” employed with the NYPD’s “School Safety Division.”
19. Their jobs include patrolling schools, operating the scanning equipment, stopping rapes and other violent crimes, intervening in altercations, and making arrests.
20. This violence is not limited to NYC. This has become commonplace in public schools all over America.

21. There is no fear of God in the public schools, because God has been told to leave the public schools. Since 1962, prayer and Bible reading are now forbidden in most public schools.
22. Since then violence, teen pregnancy, and the dropout rate have skyrocketed.
23. Morals and test scores have plummeted.
24. "There is no fear of God before their eyes" (Rom. 3:18).

III. THE CAUSE OF MAN'S SINFUL CONDUCT (3:18)

1. Psalm 36:1 says, "The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, that there is no fear of God before his eyes."
2. Donald Grey Barnhouse defined the fear of God as "a reverential awe, and a trust and confidence in the goodness and wisdom of God" (*Romans*).
3. Dr. Barnhouse went on to say, "The only fright that is involved is that of committing sin, not because of any fright of the loving Father, but because we have such great love for Him that we do not want to displease Him."
4. Robert Haldane said, "They have not that reverential fear of Him which is the beginning of wisdom, which is connected with departing from evil, and honoring and obeying Him, and is often spoken of in Scripture as the sum of all practical religion; on the contrary, they are regardless of His majesty and authority, His precepts and His threatenings. It is astonishing that men, while they acknowledge that there is a God, should act without any fear of His displeasure. Yet this is their character" (*Romans*).

CONCLUSION:

1. William Newell was a beloved pastor and Bible teacher. In addition to writing many helpful Bible commentaries and other Christian books, Mr. Newell wrote the well-known hymn, "At Calvary."
2. One day, a friend pointed out a famous prize-fighter to William Newell, and Newell overheard a man in the crowd say, "I'd hate to be hit by him!"
3. Yet William Newell heard this same man curse God, use profanity, and take our Lord's name in vain.
4. Newell said, "He could fear a fellow-man. But in a few moments the same man's mouth was using the name of God, and even of Jesus Christ, in profanity! There was 'no fear of God before his eyes.' It meant nothing to him that God had said, 'The Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain.'

5. “This great passage then, (Romans 3:9-18) needs to be pondered, prayed over, thoroughly believed, and preached continually, in these last days, when God-consciousness is dying out. It is no kindness, but a terrible wrong, to hide from a criminal the sentence that must surely overtake him unless pardoned; for a physician to conceal from a patient a cancer that will destroy him unless quickly removed; for one acquainted with the hidden pitfalls of a path he beholds someone taking, not to warn him of his danger!” (*Romans*).