

Subject: *Fearing God*
Scripture: *Proverbs 1:7*

The fear of God is associated with the knowledge of God, **Proverbs 9:10** *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.* Over that past few months we have preached on the attributes of God and we have seen that God reveals Himself as eternal, unchanging, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, sovereign, righteous, holy, good, merciful, patient, jealous, and as a God of wrath. Knowing these things surely has changed us. The better you know God, the more you love Him, the more you trust Him, and the more you fear Him. A simple way to describe a person who fears God is one who sees himself in the light of who God is and lives in humility, reverence, and obedience. These verses remind us of the importance of fearing God:

Ecclesiastes 12:13 *Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.*

Micah 6:8 *He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?*

1 Peter 2:17 *Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.*

Fearing God is THE FOUNDATION OF ALL WISDOM

Proverbs 9:10 *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.* Wisdom is skill for living. Fearing God and having wisdom is linked to the knowledge of God's Word.

2 Timothy 3:15 *And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*

Psalms 19:7-9⁷ *The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.*⁸ *The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.*⁹ *The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.* One of the titles of God's Word is "the fear of the LORD" because the Bible instills the fear of God in our heart. It is the foundation of wisdom.

Fearing God is THE BOND OF TRUE FELLOWSHIP

This is the true bond of Christian fellowship and friendship. We want to associate with other people who are likeminded. You are known by the company you keep. Birds of a feather flock together. A reverent person hangs out with reverent people. An arrogant person hangs out with arrogant people.

Psalms 119:63 *I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts.*

Malachi 3:16 *Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name.*

Fearing God is THE MARK OF GODLY CHARACTER

This is always one of the main qualities in people who love and serve God faithfully. In previous generations they referred to a God-fearing man or a God-fearing woman. That was like saying a godly person or a man or woman of God.

Psalms 33:18 *Behold, the eye of the LORD is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy.*

Psalms 103:11 *For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. Psalms 103:13 Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him. Psalms 103:17 But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children.*

The Bible says that Noah “moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house” (Heb. 11:7). When Abraham was willing to sacrifice his son Isaac, God said “now I know that you fear God” (Gen. 22:12).

Fearing God is THE CAUSE OF TRUE REPENTANCE

Proverbs 8:13 *The fear of the LORD is to hate evil...*

The thief who was saved on the cross next to Jesus said to the other thief, “Don’t you fear God, seeing you are in the same condemnation?” John Newton, former slave trader who was saved, wrote these words to Amazing Grace: “Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved.” That was a call to repentance and salvation. And even after we are saved the fear of God causes us to keep on turning from sin, **Proverbs 16:6** *By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil.*

Fearing God is THE RIGHT RESPONSE TO GOD’S ATTRIBUTES

When we realize who God is, we will fear Him. Any person who doesn’t fear God, doesn’t know God. Paul describes the depravity of man and then makes this summary statement, **Romans 3:18** *There is no fear of God before their eyes.* In other words, they do what they do because they think like they think. They don’t know God and therefore they don’t fear God.

Psalms 76:7 *Thou, even thou, art to be feared: and who may stand in thy sight when once thou art angry?*

Revelation 15:4 *Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.*

Fearing God is THE MOTIVE FOR FAITHFUL SERVICE

Philippians 2:12 *Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.*

Hebrews 12:28 *Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.*

2 Corinthians 5:11 *Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men...*

Fearing God is the KEY TO OVERCOMING LESSER FEARS

Luke 12:4-5 *⁴ 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. ⁵ 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.*

Puritan William Gurnall was right when he said, “We fear men so much because we fear God so little.”

Proverbs 29:25 *The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe.*

Hebrews 10:31 *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*

Wherever true worship takes place there is an atmosphere of godly fear. Whenever you are aware of God’s presence you will fear Him.

Fearing God as an unbeliever is far different than fearing God as a believer. An unbeliever has a cringing fear that causes Him to run from God. A believer has a reverent fear that causes Him to draw near to God.