

- I) V17-21 INTRO: **Therefore** if anyone is in Christ he is a new creation; old things **REVIEW**
- II) Paul just wrote: Therefore, knowing **the terror** of the Lord we persuade men (V11)
Paul was very familiar with the holy fear of God that should direct his life
- III) The bible gives examples of how man responds when encountering God
FOR EXAMPLE
- IV) When God revealed Himself to Moses, He did so in a **startling way**
Moses was in Egypt, in the desert when God revealed Himself to Him
He was attracted by a shrub in the desert that was on fire, but not consumed
- V) When he came close to the site, God spoke to him
Ex 3:4-6 When the Lord saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, “Moses, Moses!” And he said, “Here I am.” Then He said, “Do not draw near this place. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground.” Moreover He said, “I am the God of your father—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” **And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God.**
ANOTHER EXAMPLE
- VI) When Isaiah encountered God, his response was one of fear
Is 6:1-5 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple. Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one cried to another and said: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory!” And the posts of the door were shaken by the voice of him who cried out, and the house was filled with smoke. So I said: “**Woe is me**, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, The Lord of hosts.”
FINALLY
- VII) The apostle Peter after Jesus gave the miraculous catch of fish
Jesus was teaching on the shore of the Sea of Galilee
The crowd was so large that he asked to borrow Peter's boat so He could teach
- VIII) When He finished, He told Peter to launch the 2 boats into the deep and cast nets
At first Peter protested, saying we fished all night and caught nothing
- IX) Still, since Jesus asked **Peter complied** and they caught a huge amount of fish

- I) The boats were filled to the point of sinking and it dawned on Peter what happened
Lu 5:8 When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me, **for I am a sinful man**, O Lord!
- II) Paul was aware of how holy God is, and how sinful man is
He knew judgment awaits man and dedicated himself to persuading man
The awareness of God's holiness and the coming judgment drove him to preach
- III) He was one who was personally acquainted and motivated by the fear of the Lord
WHAT IS THE FEAR OF THE LORD
- IV) This **terror** (fear) of the Lord speaks especially of awe and reverence for God
It is **a reverence** that keeps a thoughtless man from desecrating the sacred
- V) The biblical **fear of the Lord** has been described as a **cleansing fear** (2 Co 7:1)
It provokes us to live in such a way that our lives are purified from casual sinning
Ps 51:0 Create in me a clean heart O God and renew a right spirit within me
TODAY
- VI) The idea that man should **fear God** is seen as a **primitive** way of viewing life
Spiritually immature believers don't see any reason for such fear
EXAMPLE
- VII) **In 1980** I occasionally taught a high school study in Montclair High School
One young man did not believe Christians should fear God
- VIII) **Modern skeptics** think it is an **unenlightened** and **superstitious** way of thinking
QUOTES
- IX) **Fear of God** is often used to control rather than inspire
True morality **doesn't require fear**; it thrives on understanding and compassion
Fearing a deity can lead to irrational behavior and hinder personal growth
A loving relationship with the divine **should not be rooted in fear**
- X) The belief that there is **an all knowing God** is often ridiculed, and rejected
Without knowing it, this attitude reveals that **someone doesn't know God**
Ro 3:16-18 Destruction and misery are in their ways; and the way of peace they have not known. **There is no fear of God before their eyes.**

THE FACT IS

- XI) The **fear of God** is one of the things that God commands of those who serve Him
 - I) Dt 10:12-13 And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God **require of you**, but to **fear the Lord** your God, to walk in all His ways and **to love Him**, to **serve the LORD** your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to **keep the commandments** of the LORD and His statutes which I command you today for your good?
- II) The foundation of loving, serving, and obeying God **begins** with fearing God
It is by **the fear of the Lord** that we avoid **being** and **doing** what the Lord forbids
Pr 8:13 The fear of the LORD is to hate evil
- III) The fear of the Lord results in a blessed life and lasting satisfaction
Pr 1:7 The **fear of the Lord** is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction
Pr 19:23 The **fear of the Lord** leads to life; then one rests content, untouched by trouble
AT THIS POINT
- IV) Paul had been speaking of his own sincerity, responding to accusations
His whole purpose is to protect the purity of the gospel
- V) Paul knew the gospel was on trial, and he had been strategically set to defend it
Phil 1:17 Paul said that he was **appointed for the defense of the gospel**
He knew that his message would be listened to **in the context of his character**
For this reason he knew that he must be a man living a life **without reproach**
SOMEONE ASKS
- VI) Why should he care about what people thought: Is it not more important to be **real**
Why should he care if people misunderstood him or brought charges against him
WE CARE FOR TWO REASONS
- VII) **First:** Even **the appearance of evil** lest anything make others think less of us
Second: The appearance of evil provokes some to reject **the message** that we bring
- VIII) Paul makes this clear in other letters
1 Ti 3:7 (the pastor) must have a good testimony among those who are outside, **lest he fall into reproach** and the snare of the devil.
- IX) Paul's desire to please Jesus with his life resulted in his enemies calling **him crazy**
This is something that Jesus dealt with

Mk 3:20-21 Jesus went home, and once again a crowd gathered, so that He and His disciples could not even eat. And those belonging to Him having heard, went out to seize Him; for they were saying, "**He is out of His mind.**"

- I) This desire to live a separated life often does cause people to misunderstand
- II) Today, when somebody desires to live for Jesus people can think they are fanatics
 - This is the normal response from the world, and is the response of the lukewarm
- III) It is more acceptable to paint our faces and go crazy at games or riot after your favorite team wins a championship
- IV) Paul knew that Jesus had been given as a sacrifice **for him**
 - This knowledge caused Him to love and to serve Jesus with all of his strength
- V) **Spurgeon:** If Christ is not **all** to you, He is **nothing** to you...If He is **something**, He must be **everything**, and if He is **not everything**, He is nothing to you
- VI) Jesus died not only for Paul, but also for the whole world
 - 1 Jn 2:22 (Jesus) is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for **the sins of the whole world**
- VII) V15 This should motivate us to no longer live for ourselves, but for the Lord
- VIII) V16 He concluded by saying he did not "make judgments using **fleshly standards**
 - Though at one time he judged **according to the flesh**, he now no longer does
 - Fact:** the world's standard of value made Jesus and the gospel **worthless**
- IX) V12 This is because they only judge according to outward appearance
 - This is the normal way of making an evaluation
 - 1 Sa 16:7 But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have refused him. For **the LORD** does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at **the heart.**"
- X) Paul at one time evaluated Jesus using **fleshly means**, but no longer did so
 - Jesus spoke to him on the Damascus Road, and he had been saved
 - This salvation encounter completely changed him

IN LIGHT OF THIS

- XI) V17 Therefore *if anyone is in Christ* he is a new creation old things have passed
At this point Paul speaks of what it means to be *born again*
- I) V14-15 He had said all were spiritually dead, but Jesus died for all so we could live
He now expands on what that means
- II) He makes it clear that salvation has created an *entirely new person*
We are not simply *re-furbished*, but are (spiritually) *entirely new*
- III) The *power of God* revealed in the gospel makes it possible to be transformed
It is the power of God for salvation and for the resulting transformation
- IV) In our day the majority of Americans believe humans are *basically good*
Many say that it is our upbringing, economics, culture, race or education that fashions and determines whether we are good, or are behaving in an evil way
- V) In other words: we are simply a product of our environment and living conditions
In this model, good is relative: what is considered good by the majority becomes good for everybody
- VI) What isn't taken into consideration is human nature
AN EXAMPLE
- VII) Some won't even use the word evil when speaking of human behavior
We see this in today's news reporting
One politician called Charlie Kirk's assassination an unfortunate accident
- VIII) For some reason, many find it hard to believe that people are not born good
This doesn't answer the question related to why people do evil things
It simply provides an *excuse* for doing evil
- IX) Adam is called the Federal Head of humanity, and his children had sin natures
Adam was created perfect, but he fell through wilful disobedience
- X) We receive his *fallen human nature*: one in total rebellion against Him
Ro 5:19a Through the disobedience of the one man the many *were made sinners*

XI) The sin nature is the reason *for evil* because all human beings have sin natures
Ro 8:7 For the sinful nature is **always hostile** to God. It never did obey God's laws, **and it never will**

I) Sin has broken our connection with our God
Is 59:2 Your iniquities have separated you from your God' your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear

II) Because of this, we need to be **re-connected**
This is why Jesus came: to re-connect us to God
1 Ti 2:5 For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men the Man Christ Jesus.

III) Before we received Christ we satisfied our basic needs, like mere animals
Jesus said all we were concerned about was what we would eat, drink, or wear
There was a continuous drive for living, but no sense of purpose or eternity

IV) We were hopeless and helpless to save ourselves
But God who is rich in mercy and because of His great love saved us by grace

V) He made us alive together with Jesus Christ
Eph 2:4-5 But because of His great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in our trespasses. It is by **grace you have been saved**

THE RESULT

VI) V17 This is because *if anyone is in Christ* he is a new creation

VII) Before we were in Christ, we were **by nature children of wrath**
Now, in Christ we have received a new nature
2 Pe 1:4 And because of his glory and excellence, He has given us great and precious promises. These are the promises that enable you to share his *divine nature* and escape the world's corruption caused by human desires.

VIII) **In Christ** is a way of saying that a person is saved, speaking of our *position* in Him
This reveals the depth of the new birth and how incredible it is to be a Christian

IX) It reveals **security** because Jesus bore in His Own body **our judgment**

1 Pe 2:24 (Jesus) Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness--by whose stripes you were healed.

- X) It also reveals that we have been delivered from the power of darkness
- I) Through Jesus, we have been delivered from the power of the devil and the world
We are rescued captives that have been transplanted into a new home:
Col 1:13 For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves
- II) We are no longer members of the world, but of the body of Christ
Ro 12:5 We, being many, are **one body** in Christ, and individually members of one another
- III) Paul said that we were sinners and enemies of God, but God rescued us
This gives us hope and joy
Ro 5:10 For if while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to Him through **the death** of His Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved **through His life!**
- IV) Even though we were completely hostile to Him, He still showed us His grace
This is because He is intimately aware of how weak and needy we truly are
Ps 103:14 He knows our frame; He remembers that **we are dust.**
WITH THIS SAID
- V) V17 So, if anyone **is in Christ** he is a **new creation**
Being **in Christ** fulfills God's **eternal purpose** in creation
As new creations, our entire way of life is transformed by the grace of God
KEY
- VI) This new creation has a distinct purpose: we are to bring glory to God
Eph 1:12 we who first trusted in Christ should be **to the praise of His glory.**
- VII) V17 **Old things** have passed away **behold** all things have become new
Have passed away points to a definite moment or event in time
- VIII) **Behold:** A note of triumph! **Everything** is passed away, you are new!
You are new, and you can now live as a completely different person
Eph 4:22-24 You put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your

mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

- IX) Our former way of life, with its prejudices, lusts, profanity and sinfulness is gone
- I) We have not been rehabilitated or refurbished, we have been re-created
- II) You still *look like* the same person but you are *radically new*, from the inside
This newness *continues* because it never grows old: *you are everlastingly new*
- III) You are no longer identified with what you once were
1 Co 6 contains a small list of sins the Corinthians *were once* known for
1 Co 6:9-10 Or do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor men who have sex with men, nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.
BEHOLD!
- IV) This was wonderful news to Paul, in that he strove so hard to destroy the gospel
The mercy of God and his new life in Jesus drove him in serving Jesus
- V) V18 Now *all things* are of God who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus
All things refers to the blessings of salvation
- VI) Salvation originates with God because He is its author and He made it possible
He is the One who made it possible for us to be reconciled with Him
The word reconciled speaks of the *cessation of hostility*
THE FACT IS
- VII) Sin goes deeper than simply missing the mark: it speaks of continuous rebellion
At its core it is the desire of the creature to set itself in place of its Creator
It is the desire to place man at the center as the controller of all things
- VIII) This rebellion is not met with indifference, but with God's wrath against sin
He is the Master and Ultimate Authority and will not tolerate rebellion
Ps 7:11 God is a just judge, And God is angry with the wicked every day.
INSTEAD OF WRATH, HE GAVE MERCY
- IX) Through mercy and grace God determined to deal with sin *through His Son*
Jesus took the full force of God's wrath against sin and unrighteousness

Ps 85:10 Mercy and truth have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed

- X) Our war against God ended when we were reconciled with Him
Through Jesus reconciliation has been accomplished once and for all
- I) Now we who have been reconciled have a ministry of reconciliation
- II) V19 **God was in (by) Christ** reconciling **the world** to Himself not imputing God, by means of Jesus through His work on the cross, reconciled us Jesus's sacrifice was for all lost people, Jew and Gentile alike
- III) V19 not imputing their trespasses (missteps; lapses) to them
This speaks of His providing forgiveness for those who receive Jesus
Eph 1:7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace.

APPLICATION

- IV) V19 and has committed to us **the word of reconciliation**
Our ministry of reconciliation is a ministry of proclamation of **good news**
- V) V20 Therefore we are **ambassadors** for Christ as though God were pleading
Ambassadors: One who acts and speaks on behalf of the leader of another country
- VI) In a sense, when the ambassador speaks **the one he represents** is speaking
This is because they are representing them and are invested with authority
- VII) V20 as though **God were pleading through us** we implore you on Christ's behalf
Our message is to be recognized, not as our own, but as from God Himself
Mt 10:20 for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you

EXHORTATION

- VIII) O Corinthians: live out the message of the gospel and **live in peace with God**
You who are influenced by false teachers: recognize **our authority** is from God
We are **His ambassadors**, invested with His authority, and you must obey Him
- IX) V21 For He made Him **who knew no sin** to **be sin** for us that we might become the
This speaks of Jesus' death for us: He is the one **who knew no sin**
1 Pe 2:22 He **committed no sin**, and no deceit was found in his mouth

1 Jn 3:5 You know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in **Him is no sin.**

X) Jesus was the perfect sin offering, taking our just punishment upon Himself
Is 53:6 We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

I) **FINALLY**

By faith, we receive right standing with God and receive **His** righteousness

Ro 4:5 But to him that works not, but believes on him that justifies the ungodly, **his faith** is counted for righteousness.