

The background of the slide is a light gray gradient with several realistic water droplets of various sizes scattered across it. The droplets have highlights and shadows, giving them a three-dimensional appearance. A large red rectangle is positioned in the upper half of the slide, and a white rectangle is in the lower half, both containing text.

WHOM SHALL I FEAR?

A PRIMARY THEME OF PROVERBS

22 FEBRUARY 2024

A Key to Living Life

“...the samples of behavior are all assessed by one criterion...”

“Is this wisdom or folly?”

Definition of Wisdom:

The God-given skill to live a God-centered life in a God-hating world

Definition of Foolishness:

Making anything but God the center of life

BEGINNINGS

**1:7 -- *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge;
fools despise wisdom and instruction***

**9:10 -- *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom,
and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight***

**Without the fear of the Lord there is no hope of ever living a
godly life or even desiring one**

EXODUS 20:18-20

“Now when all the people saw the thunder and the flashes of lightning and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, the people were afraid and trembled, and they stood far off, ¹⁹and said to Moses, “You speak to us and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, lest we die. Moses said to the people, “Do not fear, for God has come to test you, that the fear of Him may be before you, that you may not sin.””

“Fear not! And yet, Fear!”

What kind of fear is meant in the passage, “*DO NOT FEAR!*”

Fear of guilt, or danger, or the unknown (Terror)

” What kind of fear is meant in the passage, “*That His fear may be before you, that you may not sin*”

It is an attitude of reverence that recognizes God’s immense glory and realizes before whom one is standing

God is both Immanent and transcendent

God’s transcendence and immanence are both true simultaneously and without contradiction

Acts 9:31: So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria enjoyed peace, being built up; and going on in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it continued to increase

2 Cor 5:11: Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade others.

And notice what we encounter even in heaven!

Rev 19:5 And from the throne came a voice saying, "Praise our God, all you his servants, you who fear him, small and great."

The fear of the Lord is prevalent throughout the Old and New Testaments, so we can't just write it off as some primitive Old Testament, pre-Christian understanding of an early relationship with a more severe deity

God in His transcendence cannot be approached casually or with a sense of entitlement

The fear of the Lord must go way beyond merely recognizing what He has done for us in Christ. It is rooted in His unfathomable “Otherness”

**Maximizing God’s immanence and
Minimizing His transcendence is Joel
Osteen theology**

IMPACTS OF MINIMIZING HIS TRANSCENDENCE

- It is an obstacle to truly knowing the One, True, revealed God
 - Can cause us to view God as beholding to us
 - Will minimize, in our attitudes, the vast difference between Creator and creature

Humanity stands before God, not God before humanity

- **We can minimize the malignancy of sin**
 - **It may have a weakening effect in our resolve to follow Christ**
 - **It invites the enemy to wreak havoc in our lives**

Most urgently, it can mean that we've fashioned the god we want rather than worshipping, serving, and loving the God who is



**We must encounter God's transcendence in
addition to His immanence if we want to truly
know Him**

RESPONSES

Isaiah: *“Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I live among a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.”*

Peter: *“Go away from me Lord, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!”*

FEAR OF THE LORD IN DEUTERONOMY 10:12-13

“And now, O Israel, what does the Lord your God ask of you but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to observe the Lord’s commands and decrees”

Fearing the Lord is **inextricably tied to loving, serving, and obeying the Lord in response to all the wonderful and gracious things he has done for us**

FEARING THE LORD IN PROVERBS

Proverbs 23:17 – continual submission to God in humility and faith

Proverbs 8:13 and 16:6 – hatred of evil and a desire to turn away from sin

Proverbs 1:29; 2:5; 9:10; 15:33 - leads to greater love for and knowledge of God

Proverbs 14:26 – gives confidence

Proverbs 19:23 – gives satisfaction and protection

Proverbs 15:16: Fearing God is better than all earthly treasures

FEARING THE LORD IN PSALMS

Psalm 33:8 - to stand in awe of the living God

Psalm 22:3 – to glorify Him

Psalm 40:3 – to trust Him wholeheartedly

Psalm 103:17 – to receive His steadfast love

Psalm 25:14 – to experience friendship with God

It is safe to say that fearing the Lord is virtually synonymous with giving God your undivided attention for His glory

Teach me your way, LORD, that I may rely on your faithfulness; give me an undivided heart, that I may fear your name (Ps. 86:11)

Isaiah 11:2-3: “His (Jesus) delight shall be in the fear of the Lord”

The fear of the Lord is far more relevant to us than we can imagine

Hebrews 4:13: (NIV)

Nothing in all creation is hidden from God’s sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account

A good healthy fear of the Lord means to have a 24/7, 360-degree awareness that everything we do, say, and think is in front of a holy and just God who sees and judges everything we do

It is the awareness that each of us lives life Coram Deo, before the face of our Holy, Glorious God!

A. W. Tozer - “The fear of God is... astonished reverence. I believe that the reverential fear of God mixed with love and fascination and astonishment and admiration and devotion is the most enjoyable state and the most satisfying emotion the human soul can know”