

**Fruitfulness and Fearing the Lord**  
““The fear of the Lord leads to life...”  
Prov 19:23

“No point throughout the whole of Scripture is more urged than this fear of the Lord.” William Gouge

“The fear of God in which godliness consists is the fear which constrains (compels or powerfully produces) adoration and love. It is the fear which consists in awe, reverence, honor, and worship, and all of these on the highest level of exercise. It is the reflex in our consciousness of the transcendent majesty and holiness of God.” John Murray

“To fear God is to have such a holy awe of God upon our hearts, that we dare not sin. “Stand in awe and sin not.” Psalm 4:4. The wicked sin and fear not; the godly fear and sin not. “How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?” Gen 39:9... He who fears God will not sin, though it be ever so secret.” Thomas Watson

“Godly fear consists with love. This is so true, that the more we fear God, the more we love him; and the more we love him, the more do we fear him. Godly fear is not a destroyer, but a regulator of other graces. Without it faith might become presumptuous, hope might lose its sobriety, love might degenerate into fondness or sentimentality, and joy might become giddy. But where the heart is full of godly fear, all these unhappy results are avoided. So far from agitating, it calms and quiets the mind. It seems to give both gravity and cheerfulness. It moderates without depressing; it animates without intoxicating. It is good ballasts to the ship in her passage through tempestuous seas.” **William S. Plumer**

“The first thought of the godly man in every circumstance is God’s relation to him and it, and his relation to God. That is God-consciousness and that is what the fear of God entails.” John Murray

“I take this grace of fear to be that which softens and mollifies the heart and makes it stand in awe of both the mercies of God and the judgments of God. This is that which retains in the heart that due dread and reverence of the heavenly Majesty that is fitting to be in and kept in the heart of sinners...This is that...which makes the sinner stand in awe of God.” John Bunyan

“For, to begin with, the pious mind does not dream up for itself any God it pleases, but contemplates the one and only true God. And it does not attach to him whatever it pleases, but is content to hold him to be as he manifest himself; furthermore the mind always exercises the utmost diligence and care not to wander astray, or rashly or boldly to go beyond his will...Because it sees him to be a righteous judge, armed with severity to punish wickedness, it ever holds his judgement seat before its gaze, and through fear of him restrains itself from provoking his anger. Besides, this mind restrains itself from sinning, not out of dread of punishment alone; but, because it loves and reveres God as Father, it worships and adores him as Lord.” John Calvin

**Review:** How many and what types of fear do we find in the Bible? For the first type of fear look up these passages Prov 22:3; Gen 44:34; Ruth 3:11; Ps 9:20; Matt 10:23 cf. Acts 9:23-25; Mk 5:23 cf. 36; 2 Cor 11:3, 28; 1 Tim 5:23; Phil 2:20 & Col 4:12; Rom 13:3. For the second type of fear look up these passages Gen 3:10; 12:10-13; 16:2; 19:30-32; Prov 29:25; Ex 32:1-6, 21-24; 1 Sam 13:11; 15:24; 18:7-9; Lk 22:1-2, 56-62 cf. Mk 14:40; Jn 12:42-43; Gal 2:11-14. Remember, sinful fear always breeds cowardice (2 Tim 1:7), but godly fear always breeds courage (Prov 28:1)! The third type of fear is what we have seen in passages like Prov 1:7; Ex 20:18-20; Ps 33:8; 66:1-2; Mal 1:6; Mt 10:28; Heb 12:28-29; Ps 130:4; 147:11; Phil 2:12-13; 2 Cor 5:11; 7:1; Rom 3:18; 1 Pet 2:17; Rev 14:7. The fear of the Lord is ultimately a fruit of what and of Whom (Jerm 32:39-40)? According to Paul, believers are ministers of what Covenant (2 Cor 3:6)? Christ is the Mediator of what Covenant (1 Cor 11:25; Heb 12:24)? How does 1 Jn 3:9-10 correlate to what Jerm 32:39-40 declared about the fear of God being sovereignly gifted to believers through the gospel? The fear of the Lord and what always go together (Ecc 12:12-13; Deut 13:4; Prov 8:13 cf. Rom 3:18 and contrast with Jn 14:21, 23-24)? How does Rom 11:20-22 help us have a correct and full view of the fear of the Lord? The fear of the Lord involves first a veneration and awe of who God is (Ex 3:5-6; 15:11; Deut 10:17-20; 28:58; Ps 89:6-7; 99:1-3; 130:4; Isa 6:1-6; Ezek 1:18, 28; Lk 5:6-11; 2 Cor 7:1; Heb 11:7). Yet a biblical fear of the Lord will also be mingled with a holy dread and terror for what God has done, can do, and will do (Deut 6:13-15; Ps 2:10-11; 50:3, 16-23; 90:11; 119:119-120; Ecc 12:13-14; Mt 10:28; 2 Cor 5:9-11; Acts 5:11; Phil 2:13-14; Heb 10:26-31; 12:28-29). Two aspects you must get right if you are going to understand the fear of God rightly:

1. The awesome character of God drives us to worship Him humbly and joyfully. This is a focus on who God is in His awe-inspiring character.
2. The severe judgement of God protects and propels us to not offend Him. This is a solemn consideration of what God has done, can do, and will do in his terrifying day of reckoning.

God's awesome character is often seen most clearly in His manifold greatness and goodness and His severe judgments often seen in the manifestation of His holy wrath, righteous judgments, perfect jealousy, and ultimate hatred for sin as seen at the cross. Paul's exhortation in Rom 11:20-22 is so helpful here that believers never forget both the kindness and severity of God. These are both most clearly seen at and on the cross! Fear of the Lord rightly involves both a reverential awe and respect for who God is along with a holy and healthy fear of offending Him!

### **How will the Fear of God Impact my Walk with God?**

~ The fear of God is often directly connected to godly conduct or behavior (Job 1:1)

- The fear of God and \_\_\_\_\_ (2 Cor 7:1; 2 Tim 2:19)
- The fear of God and \_\_\_\_\_ (Ps 5:7; Heb 12:28-29)
- The fear of God and \_\_\_\_\_ (Ps 2:11; Col 3:22-25; Eph 6:5-6)

- The fear of God and \_\_\_\_\_ (Prov 3:7; Isa 6:1-11)
- The fear of God and \_\_\_\_\_ (Ps 67:1-7; 2 Cor 5:9-11)
- The fear of God and \_\_\_\_\_ (Prov 19:23; 23:17)
- The fear of God and \_\_\_\_\_ (Eph 5:21; 1 Pet 2:13-17)
- The fear of God and \_\_\_\_\_ (Lev 19:14; 1 Pet 3:8-12)
- The fear of God and \_\_\_\_\_ (Ex 14:31; Ps 115:11; Prov 3:5-8)
- The fear of God and \_\_\_\_\_ (Prov 14:2; Neh 5:15-16; Job 42:1-6)
- The fear of God and \_\_\_\_\_ (Ps 66:18; Prov 28:9; 1 Pet 3:7)

~ Who God is should determine how we think-speak-live-worship! (Heb 12:28-29)

- The holiness of God should drive us to \_\_\_\_\_ **fear.** (Ex 6:1-6; Isa 6:1-9)
- The omnipotence of God should drive us to \_\_\_\_\_ **fear.** (Ex 14:31; Rev 15:3-4)
- The greatness of God should drive us to \_\_\_\_\_ **fear.** (Ps 89:6-7; Ps 33:1-9; Job 42:5-6)
- The wisdom of God should drive us to \_\_\_\_\_ **fear.** (Ps 139:1-18; Rom 11:33-36)
- The justice of God should drive us to a \_\_\_\_\_ **fear** (Lk 12:5; Acts 17:30-31; Rom 11:20-22)
- The love of God should drive us to a \_\_\_\_\_ **fear** (Ps 130:3-4; Prov 14:27)
- The sovereignty of God should drive us \_\_\_\_\_ **fear** (Dan 3:16-30; Acts 4:23-31)
- The name of God should drive us to \_\_\_\_\_ **fear** (Dt 28:58; 2 Tim 2:19)

- The presence of God should drive us to a \_\_\_\_\_ **fear** (Ps 139:1-24; Gen 28:17)
- The goodness of God should drive us to a \_\_\_\_\_ **fear** (Jerm 33:8-9)

**How do I grow in the fear of the Lord and teach this to others?<sup>1</sup>**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ in correct (biblical) concepts of the \_\_\_\_\_ of God  
~ Who God is!
  - God is majestic in Holiness (Rev 15:2-4; Isa 6:1-3)
  - God is incomprehensible in Immensity (Isa 40:12-26; 1 Kings 8:27)
  - God is unrivaled in Sovereignty (Ps 115:3; Acts 2:23, 4:23-31, 17:22-31)
2. \_\_\_\_\_ with a pervasive sense of the \_\_\_\_\_ of God  
~That God is here and watching!
  - God is powerfully Imminent (Isa 66:1-2)
  - God is personally Omniscient (Psa 139:1-12)
  - God is pervasively Omnipresent (Jerm 23:23-24)  
\*Consider some personal applications  
(Ps 23:4; 2 Cor 6:16-7:1; Heb 12:18-29)
3. \_\_\_\_\_ with a constraining awareness of our \_\_\_\_\_ to God  
~ What God requires!
  - To Love Him Supremely (Mt 22:37-38)
  - To Obey Him Implicitly (Jn 15:14; Acts 5:29)
  - To Trust Him Completely (Heb 11:6; Phil 2:12)
  - To Answer to Him Fully (2 Cor 5:10-11; Rom 15:7-12)
4. \_\_\_\_\_ in awe of the underserved \_\_\_\_\_ of God  
~ What God has done and will do!
  - Rejoice in God's Sovereign Grace (Col 1:13; 1 Jn 4:19; Jn 6:44)
  - Rejoice in God's Rich Mercy (Eph 2:1-5; Titus 3:5)

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<sup>1</sup> See Martin, N. Albert, (2015). *The Forgotten Fear: Where Have all the God Fearers Gone?* Reformation Heritage Books. Helpful section on growing in the fear of the Lord. Some of what I say here taken from that book.

- Rejoice in God's Steadfast Faithfulness (Heb 13:5; Phil 1:6)
- Rejoice in God's Preserving Power and Patience (Jn 10:24-25; 2 Cor 12:10)
- Rejoice in God's Unending Love (Rom 5:1-11; 8:28-39; 1 Jn 4:17-18)

Here are a few points of meditation from what we have learned about the fear of the Lord:

1. A biblical fear of God is delivered as a gift of sovereign grace in and through the gospel.
2. A biblical fear of God is driven by a humble conviction of personal sin.
3. A biblical fear of God is driven by a clear understanding of God's purity.
4. A biblical fear of God is driven by a concrete understanding of God's power.
5. A biblical fear of God is driven by a constraining awareness of God's presence.
6. A biblical fear of God is driven by a compelling embrace of one's obligations to God.
7. A biblical fear of God is driven by an awe of receiving undeserved grace in Christ.