

## The Pursuit of Wisdom – Week 1

### Speaker

Pastor Peter Dubbelman

### Sermon References & Resources

#### **The Fear of the LORD // Proverbs 1:7; 9:10**

*What Does It Mean to Fear the Lord?* by Michael Reeves; it, is a condensed version of Rejoice & Tremble: The Surprising Good News of the Fear of the Lord. Both were published in 2021. Reeves is a master at explaining theological concepts with an engaging and easy to understand style.

*Following Jesus in a Culture of Fear*, by Scott Bader-Saye, is a very practical book with an orientation towards everyday life; its discussion questions after each chapter make it ideal for reading this book as a group. It's very thoughtful, sometimes provocative, and always interesting.

*Triumphing over Sinful Fear*, by John Flavel (1628–1691), who is one of the Puritan fathers. Though a classic on this topic naturally, given this book's roots, portions of it are flavored by Puritanical austerity.

*The Anxiety Opportunity: How Worry is the Doorway to Your Best Self* by Curtis Chang. Curtis shares in this book his own Christian experience on anxiety in a sensitive and practical way.

*How Fear Works: Culture of Fear in the 21st Century* by Frank Furedi; Frank writes as a social scientist and not a Christian with a goal of providing a cultural account of fear. The mature Christian, with a strong Christ centered worldview, will be able to benefit from this book while discarding from it what is contrary to Christ.

#### **Guarding Your Heart // Proverbs 4:23**

*Eat this Book: A Conversation in the Art of Spiritual Reading* by Eugene Peterson. Excellent! If you had to read one book about how to read Scripture on a personal and devotional and prayerful level, it should be this one or the many other ones like it written to on the popular level.

*Praying the Bible: An Introduction to Lectio Divina* by Mariano Magrassi covers about the same ground as Peterson's above book on topic but it's written on the academic level.

*Prayer, Praise & Promises* by Warren W. Wiersbe: three hundred and sixty-five devotional entries from the Psalms.

*Prayers on Fire* by Brian Simmons & Gretchen Rodriguez: three hundred and sixty-five devotional entries from the Psalms.

*Praying with the Psalms* by Eugene Peterson: three hundred and sixty-five devotional entries from the Psalms.

*Psalms by the Day*, by Alec Motyer, is my absolute favorite daily devotional on the Psalms (73 in total). Jonathan Lamb states, “This book is an absolute treasure—a lifetime of godly scholarship, faithful preaching, and pastoral wisdom all in one volume! Alec Moyer’s fresh translation of each of the Psalms, the insightful notes, and the crisp, thought-provoking summary applications, make these daily readings a wonderful way to engage freshly with these rich Biblical songs!”

*Spurgeon and the Psalms* provides one hundred and fifty entries—one for each Psalm—each psalm printed out in the NKJV translation, and one short quote from Spurgeon on that Psalm.

*The Songs of Jesus* by Timothy & Kathy Keller: three hundred and sixty-five entries

### **Names of God // Proverbs 18:10**

*100 Names of God*, by Christopher D. Hudson, provides 100 short daily devotionals on the names, titles, and descriptions of God.

*Lord, I Want to Know You: A Devotional Study on the Names of God* by Kay Arthur

*Praying the Names of God; Praying the Names of Jesus* by Ann Spangler. Both books are designed to be used as a daily devotional.

*Praying Through the Names of God, Praying Through the Names of Jesus, The Power of God’s Names*. All three of these books are written by Tony Evans. On June 9, 2024 (at the age 74), Pastor Evans (in his words) stepped “away from my pastoral duties” due to a “sin” committed a “number of years ago.” Nonetheless, I think these books are still worthwhile.

*Wonderful Names of Our Wonderful Lord* by Charles Hurlburt & T. C. Horton. Three hundred and sixty-five short devotions on various names of our Lord Jesus Christ.

*The Names of Christ* by Luis de León. Written prior to the Reformation during the Golden Age of Spain, this book is considered a classic of western Spirituality. A rigorous read best understood by those with theological training.

*Unwrapping the Names of Jesus: An Advent Devotional*, by Asheritah Ciuciu, helps the Christian reader of it to delight in their “Savior instead of trying to create a picture-perfect holiday.”

# Proverbs

## *The Fear of the Lord*

---

### Scripture

"The *fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge*; fools despise wisdom and discipline -- Proverbs 1:7 (CSB)

"*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom*, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. -- Proverbs 9:10 (CSB)

"*The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life*, turning people away from the snares of death." -- Proverbs 14:27 (CSB)

31 So the church throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and was strengthened. *Living in the fear of the Lord* and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it increased in numbers. -- Acts 9:31 (CSB)

### Contextual Note:

#### *What is the fear of the Lord?*

"It is an ecstasy of love and joy that senses how overwhelmingly kind and magnificent, good and true God is, and that therefore leans on God in staggered faith and praise." - *Michael Reeves*

"The fear of the Lord enables the Christian to "lean towards the Lord," because of God's very goodness." - *Charles Spurgeon*

"The intelligent person recognizes that his or her well-being lies in being in harmony with God and what God is doing in the Kingdom." - *Dallas Willard on the fear of the Lord.*

---

---

## Weekly 7

1. How would you summarize the message of the Scripture from this week and the sermon that accompanied it? What thoughts or feelings did the message provoke?
2. What do we learn about the heart of God in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about humanity?
4. Was there anything in this passage that you found difficult to grasp or challenging to accept?
5. How does this passage call us to respond?
6. How does this passage impact how we do life together?
7. How does this passage compel us to pray?

## Sermon Specific Questions

1. Pastor Peter discussed that proverbs (generally, not just in Christian thought) reflect morals or virtues. How do morals, or virtues, drive decision-making?
2. What does it mean to *fear the Lord*?
  - a. A fear of the Lord is born of the belief that God is real, His word is true, and that His way for us to live is what we were created for. Therefore, we lean on Him, His ways and His word in order to live well and rightly.
3. How does a *fear of the Lord* impact daily decisions?
  - a. Our *decisions* are born from our *desires*. For example, when I make a cup of coffee in the morning, it is because I *desire* caffeine (and apparently bad breath). When I put some money into savings, it is because I *desire* security or something else in the future. When I realize that I am loved by the God of all creation, and choose to follow Him in response to His kindness towards me (as well as His truth and power) then I should be making decisions based on the *fear of the Lord*.
4. In John 14:6, Jesus refers to himself as “the way, the truth, and the life.” Furthermore, the New Testament makes clear that the call for followers of Jesus is to *follow Him* in a way that impacts our daily living. Why does God not just care about what we *believe* but *how we live our lives*?

- 
5. As you can see, *the fear of the Lord* has a lot to do with discipleship to Jesus. Dallas Willard once said this in relation to discipleship:
- a. Take the verse in Colossians 3:17, "Whatsoever you do, whether in word or deed, do it in the name of [The Lord] ..." What does that mean, "do it in the name of"—say the name as I do it? No. It means that I do it in behalf of him. I do it in place of him. So when I walk into a room to give a lecture, I say to myself, "How would Jesus do this?" And I do it on his behalf.

*Discipleship means learning to acknowledge God in all we do*—and it takes a lot of learning. You actually never get done learning because you are always learning, and increasingly you are able to acknowledge him in all of your ways. You are able to do everything you do in word or deed on behalf of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**With this in mind, how are you doing in your discipleship to Jesus?**

- *What is going well, what could be going better?*

As you discuss the "Weekly 7" questions, utilize these sermon specific questions for deeper discussion. It is up to you as the discussion leader to decide when to utilize them within your time as a group.