

The Fear of the Lord

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Benefits of the Fear of God

Our fears reveal our hearts. Since we fear losing the things we love, examining our fears can expose our deepest desires and priorities.

- Do we fear sin more than suffering? Do we fear God more than people?
- The fear of God is not merely an outward show of reverence, but a heartfelt response to the goodness and glory of our Redeemer.

The fear of God gives us knowledge and wisdom (Prov 1:7; 9:10)

- To truly know God is to know Him as both majestic and merciful, Creator and Redeemer. True theology should lead us to wonder and adoration, not pride.
- Knowing God also helps us know ourselves rightly... as creatures, sinners, forgiven and adopted children.
- God does not primarily bless extraordinary talent, but those who fear Him (Ps 115:13)

The fear of the Lord makes us more like God

- It consumes sinful desires and fuels holy desires, causing us to love what God loves and hate what He hates.
- Rather than gloomy or severe, it makes us happier as we delight more deeply in Him.
- It produces generosity and compassion, like Obadiah who “feared the LORD greatly” and protected God’s prophets (1 Kings 18:3-4).
- It makes us jealous for God’s honor, truth, and glory rather than our own reputation.

The fear of the Lord produces humility (Rom 11:20)

- Humility does not come from trying to think less of ourselves, but from marveling more at God until He eclipses self. As God becomes greater in our eyes, pride and self-reliance diminish.
- The fear of God levels the church—we stand together as sinners saved by grace with no room for boasting.

The fear of the Lord frees us from the fear of man (Isa 8:12-13)

- People pleasing, peer pressure, fear of criticism, and fear of rejection all reveal the power that the opinions of others can have over us.
- The biblical answer is not greater self-esteem, but a greater fear of God. As the fear of God grows, it eclipses and consumes our lesser fears.
- The result is a uniquely Christian combination of humility and courage: lamb-like in humility and lion-like in courage.

“As the church grows in the fear of God, believers increasingly reflect the holiness, happiness, strength, and beauty of Christ—becoming “blessedly and beautifully fearsome.”