



FIRST BAPTIST
— CHURCH —
FAIR OAKS RANCH

Day 5: Fear as a Fountain

Proverbs 14:27 *The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, that one may turn away from the snares of death.* (ESV)

DEVOTIONAL

I think that many times we see the fear of the Lord as a fence, a boundary or a rule to follow; however, consider the picture that this Scripture paints. The fear of the Lord is a *fountain*. Whatever else this holy fear is, one thing it is not is a barrier standing still around your life. It is a moving, living, breathing source of life.

The Hebrew word for fountain is *maqor* — a spring, a wellspring, the place where water breaks out of the ground. Ancient Israel drew a sharp distinction between two kinds of water. A cistern *held* water — collected from an earlier rain, still, stored, going nowhere. A *spring* produced water — moving, fresh, new every moment. The Hebrew term for that running water was *mayim chayyim*, literally "living water." Standing water, by contrast, was considered dead water.

Consider the weight of this for our pursuit of purity. Under the law, cleansing rituals required living water. To be purified, a person had to bathe in running water; the ashes for the water of purification had to be mixed with fresh water drawn from a stream (Leviticus 15:13; Numbers 19:17). Water dipped from a basin and left sitting could not make anyone ceremonially clean.

This illustration paints a quiet danger in the Christian life. Often, we try to live on stored reverence and obedience. The awe I felt after a conference years ago or the intentional obedience when no one, but the Lord knew fills our 'cistern' with accomplishment and a sense of holiness. However, reverence that is merely stored is reverence that is quick to become stagnate. Jeremiah named this as Israel's double folly:

"they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water" (2:13).

Remember the manna in the wilderness. It could not be hoarded or kept overnight; it bred worms and stank (Exodus 16:20). That was not cruelty; it was design. God wanted His people to turn to Him and trust Him every single morning. His mercies are "new every morning" (Lamentations 3:23) precisely because He intends us to come and draw anew again today. Charles Bridges once said this holy fear is not our bondage but our security and our happiness, a spring that keeps giving.

Consider what the fresh fountain of fear accomplishes: "that one may turn away from the snares of death." That verb, *sur*, is the very one we met yesterday in Proverbs 16:6 — to turn aside, to depart. Solomon isn't repeating himself; he's showing us the power source. Yesterday we saw *that* the fear of the Lord moves our feet away from evil. Today we see *how*: a soul drinking *daily* at the spring of worship, and awe simply has less of a thirst for the poison of the world. Rules and boundaries do not quench thirst; they incite hunger (Romans 7:7-10). Fresh awe gives life and satisfies the soul. Do not come to this morning with yesterday's water. Come to the spring for fresh water today.

TAKE AWAY

A fountain isn't a fountain because it holds water — it's a fountain because water keeps coming. Yesterday's awe cannot inspire today. Come get fresh water this morning.

PRAYER PROMPT

Ask the Lord for a fresh sense of reverence for today — not stored from a past season, but new as this morning's water.