

Subject: *The Privilege of Fearing God*

Scripture: *Proverbs 2:1-5*

The fear of God is a positive thing, not a negative thing. There is no greater privilege than knowing and fearing God. We learn to fear God as we come to know who God is and what He does. Knowing God is based on knowing His Word and what it teaches us about Him. The Bible is a revelation about God.

1. Fearing God is the distinctive quality of God's people

In our previous message about fearing God we saw in the Bible that God's people feared Him in both the Old and New Testaments. Noah, Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Job, David and other writers of the Psalms and Daniel feared God. In the New Testament the church in Acts feared God. Paul, Peter, and the writer of Hebrews wrote about the fear of God as the foundation of godly character. Most important of all, Jesus taught people to fear God.

***Psalms 33:18** Behold, the eye of the LORD is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy.*

***Psalms 103:11** For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.*

***Psalms 145:19** He will fulfill the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them.*

***Ecclesiastes 8:12-13**¹² Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him:¹³ But it shall not be well with the wicked, neither shall he prolong his days, which are as a shadow; because he feareth not before God.*

2. Fearing God is the foundation of godly wisdom

***Proverbs 1:7** The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.*

***Proverbs 9:10** The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.*

***2 Samuel 23:3** The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.*

***2 Chronicles 19:6-7**⁶ And said to the judges, Take heed what ye do: for ye judge not for man, but for the LORD, who is with you in the judgment.⁷ Wherefore now let the fear of the LORD be upon you; take heed and do it: for there is no iniquity with the LORD our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts.*

3. Fearing God is the result of knowing God

The fear of God is based on the knowledge of God. If you know God, you will fear God.

Psalms 76:7 *Thou, even thou, art to be feared: and who may stand in thy sight when once thou art angry?*

Revelation 15:4 *Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.*

Romans 3:18 *There is no fear of God before their eyes.*

4. Fearing God is the reason for genuine repentance

Proverbs 8:13 *The fear of the LORD is to hate evil...*

Proverbs 16:6 *By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil.*

5. Fearing God is the turning point of conversion

Luke 23:39-41 ³⁹ *And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.* ⁴⁰ *But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?* ⁴¹ *And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss.*

“Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me. I once was lost, but now I’m found; was blind, but now I see.”

6. Fearing God is the basis of real fellowship

Psalms 119:63 *I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts.*

Malachi 3:16 *Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name.*

7. Fearing God is the motive for consistent obedience

Genesis 22:12 *And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.*

Hebrews 11:7 *By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.*

Psalms 112:1-2 ¹ *Praise ye the LORD. Blessed is the man that feareth the LORD, that delighteth greatly in his commandments.* ² *His seed shall be mighty upon earth: the generation of the upright shall be blessed.*

Philippians 2:12 *Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.*

Hebrews 12:28-29²⁸ *Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear:*²⁹ *For our God is a consuming fire.*

8. Fearing God is the atmosphere of genuine worship

Psalms 5:7 *But as for me, I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercy: and in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple.*

Psalms 89:7 *God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him.*

I love our Wednesday evening prayer services because there is such a spirit of reverence and godly fear.

9. Fearing God is the key to overcoming other fears

Proverbs 29:25 *The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe.*

There is the fear of man (peer pressure), but the fear of God will give you courage to stand. Puritan William Gurnall was right when he said: “We fear man so much because we fear God so little.”

There is the fear of failure, but the fear of God will move you into action.

There is the fear of public speaking (one of the greatest fears), but the fear of God will give you boldness.

There is the fear of death, but the fear of God will give you peace in your soul.

Matthew 10:28 *And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.*

In closing, let's remember what the fear of God is. It is the constant awareness that God is near. He knows every thought, word, and deed. He has supreme authority and will hold me accountable when I appear before His throne. I am accountable for my actions, my attitudes, and for my response to the gospel of Christ. What does God expect? I must repent of my sins and submit to Christ as Lord and Savior. That is not a burden; that's a privilege. It's the privilege of fearing God.