

Fear God

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[0 : 00] Fear of God We're talking about fear of God. Fear of God.

And we know in the world that we live today, for the most part, our world does not fear God. The fear of God is a much neglected truth. As a nation also, we have lost the fear of God. It's missing. It's gone.

Likewise, even in the Church of God, in many quarters, the fear of God is gone. No wonder the situation is bleak. And I'd like to impart through this message a deeper appreciation of the fear of God, what it's all about.

And really, we're just scratching the surface, but we'll just take a bit of a journey through some scriptures on that topic tonight. And when I think of the fear of God, I get a sense of danger.

Danger.

If we fail, if we neglect to fear God, it presents a real danger. A danger for our nation, for our people. To neglect to fear God.

[1 : 14] To neglect to fear God. To neglect to honor Him. To neglect to fear God. Is to invite His righteous judgment. Which is rightful judgment. Hebrews 10.31, it says, It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

A fearful thing. God is truly awe-inspiring. To think of the maker of heaven and earth and who He is. To get in that perspective.

And godliness stands out in a stark contrast with what we see going on in the darkness of this Christ-rejecting world that we live in. But as God's people, we have a high view of God.

God is not a great big cosmic buddy in the sky. Not some mystical man upstairs, as some would kind of lightly refer to Him. He is the High and Holy One.

And as a Bible-believing people, we have an appreciation of this. Of the fearful thing that it is. To fall into the hands of the living God.

[2 : 20] To be in danger of His judgment. And this appreciation of the fear of God. It should prompt us. It should move us. It should cause us to have that healthy respect.

That action. As a response to that. The world misses this big time. The fear of God. When we think of what's going on.

Even in current affairs. We've heard all the stories of late. How the mistakenly named education system. Is now spreading this deliberate indoctrination program.

That undermines faith. It undermines morality and decency and truth. And there's this deliberate misinformation campaign going on.

That's undermining what matters. What pleases God. As if that doesn't count anymore. It's not in consideration anymore. And so it's no wonder. That our generation.

[3 : 17] It seems. And I'm talking of my generation. Our generation. It's like this little regard. For the things of God. Little regard for our Lord God. Our Holy God.

And what pleases Him. What honors Him. And so we stand. I put it to you. We stand in a great danger. Great danger. We see as the word tells us. In Romans 3.

Verse 18. It tells that there is no fear of God. Before their eyes. No fear of God. Before their eyes. And we know back in the scriptures.

When there was no king. People just did what they saw was right in their own eyes. There was only fear of God. No consideration of that. And meantime. In our world. In our time. There is this deliberate propaganda machine.

That's churning out. More and more lies. It's lies. To our children. And our grandchildren. Perverting our culture. Spewing out these messages.

[4 : 19] That at the foundation. Are really anti-God. Anti-truth. Anti-Bible. Anti-faith. It's a deliberate propaganda campaign. And meanwhile.

Our society. Swallows it all. Hook. Line. And sinker. Just swallows it. And. Of course. We're public enemy number one. Because we.

Actually say. No. It's not right. And we see these results. In the sick. State of our nation. In the media. What the media is putting out there.

What the TV. And the. News. Channels. Are putting out there. The media. Our people. Are being. Changed. Warped. Corrupted.

And even in the churches. We see this too. This subtle. Slow slide. And it's sad to hear of another church closing. I know. I've. Heard.

[5 : 14] Of late. That. There's a church in Gawler. That's. Going to be a. Liquor store. Outland now. It was. For hundreds of years. A place where people gathered. To hear the word of God.

In Gawler. And. Now it's going to be. A liquor store. And. This is. What's going on. In our. Land. And our nation. Has.

Become. Anything. But. A God fearing people. Our nation's leaders. Should be afraid. They should be. Mindful of the danger. That they are in. Where they're leading our nation.

To great reproach. And great shame. And will be. To great danger. But there's little regard for this reality today. So what does the bible say about this truth.

The fear of God. To fear God. It says. To fear God. This word fear. Is used at least 300 times. I'm told. In reference to God. 300 times.

[6 : 11] In reference to God. This word fear. And there is such a thing as a. Healthy fear. A healthy fear. You know. It's right. And. Proper. And.

Sensible. To have a. Healthy fear. It's just common sense. A society that functions well. Is one where. Criminals. Fear.

The law. And they respect. The police. And the law courts. We've seen. Stories of late. Of some. Pranksters. In the media. Have people seen that story? Yeah.

And. Do they look like. They're shame faced. Being caught out. Being hanged to go to court. No. They're just laughing it off. Like it's one big joke. Just another prank. And we see these hooligans. Just laughing about such things.

Laughing about being in court. It's no laughing matter. There is a healthy fear. That we should have. Of justice. And of the law. And we see. I've seen. The law. And we see. The law.

[7 : 06] The law. The law. The law. We see. I've seen. Some stories of late. Of. The police getting. Mocked. And scorned. And how people abuse police officers these days.

It's like. Something is gone. And. This healthy. Sense of respect. This healthy kind of fear. You know. We do well to fear. You know.

There's times I. I've ridden a motorbike. And. I've ridden a motorbike. And I. I get fearful. That's why. I hardly ever ride one anymore. But. There's a healthy fear. When you step onto a motorbike.

And you're riding along on two wheels. At high speed. It's a healthy fear. When you. Consider the danger. There's a healthy fear. When. You. Put on your seat belt. And. Fear.

Tempts us. To avoid. Being too close. To a hot stove. Or. Taking certain risks. There's good fear. To ham. And. Where a family is led wisely.

[8 : 03] By a godly father. There is a blessing there. From his authority. And because of godly order. We're talking about a godly. Father. When there is a godly father.

And. Healthy respect. That's a good thing. Isn't it? It is good. Now. I think of. When my father got angry with me. As a young boy.

You know. I would. I would be fearful of him. In a good way. Because. In love. He would discipline me. And that was. Rightful. And proper. And if a godly family is functioning well.

There is that reverence. That's an outflow of love. Proverbs 3 verse 12. It says. For whom the Lord loveth. He correcteth. Even. As the father. The son. In whom he delighted.

It's the son. In whom he delights. That he corrects. Because he loves. His son. And so. This. Rightful. Being told off. Boys. When you're told off.

[9 : 00] And you've done something wrong. You should be afraid of your father. And respect your father. Shouldn't you? We should. And so. When a loving. Godly husband. Is at the head of a family. And he has given due reverence.

Then that. Is a good thing. Sadly. That. Off times. But in Ephesians 5. We see. A wife to reverence her husband. The reverence. That fear. It's a good thing.

It's a good thing. When the family is working. As it ought to work. And the Bible talks also about. Paying respect to. Those in authority. Paying respect to our elders. Our older brothers and sisters. And giving honour to them. Now in Leviticus 19. Verse 32. It says that. Thou shalt rise up. Before the hoary head. That was the grey head. And honour the face of the old man. And fear thy God. I am the Lord. It's part of fearing God. Is to respect the older people. We are living in a culture. Where. That which is old.

[9 : 57] Is kind of. Out the window. Who cares what the oldies say. You know. It's a new world. They just ignore. What the older people say. But.

Where is the wisdom. Hopefully. It should be in the hoary head. It should be in those who are older. It should be in the older ones. They should have some wisdom. That we might be able to learn from.

And avoid some mistakes that they have made. So there is. There is. All these things. Of the mother. The father. Of honouring the widows. Of giving honour to the king. In 1 Peter 2. It says. Honour all men. Everyone's got some. Gee respect. We shouldn't. Discount. Anyone. We should love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king. These are true.

Timeless principles. That we can apply. And in now. In the 21st century. And we do well to take heed of them. There is great danger. In disobeying these truths.

[10 : 52] Now we know some of our leaders. It's very easy to dishonour them. Especially when they are. Saying. Things that are. Contrary to.

God's word. But even. In our Lord's day. There was a sense of. Honouring the king. Of Caesar. Of the time. A godless king. And so.

There is need for order. And structure. And reverence. And. And. That. Order. To. Living. That's based on. A healthy kind of fear.

And we see how. Our society. Has become quite dysfunctional. Where these truths. Are ignored. And likewise. There is a real danger. To not fearing God.

Look back in the scriptures. To some of the examples. We could cite many examples. Of. Where men. Did not fear God. They did not fear God. God was just some.

[11 : 48] Something that they treated lightly. Carelessly. And they suffered God's judgment. Through his word. We see for example. Uzzah. He was one. He thought he could.

Have this new car. You know. Everybody was getting on board. To this. New fat car. This new way of transporting. The ark of God. The holy. Presence of God.

As it was. Evident. In this. Vessel. That had to be carried. By the priests. In a particular fashion. But they thought. No. Let's do it. A new fat way.

Let's put the ark of God. On this. Newfangled cart. That we've made up. It's all nice and pretty. And. It's the latest. High tech technology. Of the day. And so. On this.

Cart. And they were moving it along. Out of accord. With God's way. And in 2 Samuel 6 verse 7. It says that the anger of the Lord was kindled. Against Uzzah. And God smoked him.

[12 : 44] Yeah. There for his error. And there he died. By the ark of God. That's 2 Samuel 6 verse 7. We dare not trifle. We dare not be careless. We dare not neglect to fear God.

And so the fear of God should be a foundation. For our lives. For our fellowshiping. For our living. In Acts 5. We see another example. Of Ananias and Sapphira. They thought they could trifle.

With the holy things. Now they did a good work. But they lied about it. They lied about what they had given. And they were struck dead. There's danger.

When we neglect to fear God. Another example is Nadab and Abihu. In Leviticus 10. Nadab and Abihu. Leviticus 10. They attempted to bring strange fire.

Onto God's altar. They disrespected God's command. About the order that he had set. And they went and did their own thing. And instead. They suffered God's wrath.

[13 : 45] His righteous anger. And so there's many examples of the danger that it is. To trifle with this healthy fear of our Lord. That we should have.

This healthy sense of honouring him. Of not displeasing him. And this danger of his judgement. There's a danger aspect.

Secondly. When I think of the fear of God. I think of. The sense of. The delight. That it is. It is truly a delight for us.

To fear God. Every decent society. Has this as its foundation. This honouring of God. Of God's ways.

And this fellowshiping that we have. Our true fellowship with God. Is founded on this healthy fear of God. It's not on our own whims and fancies. It's because we fear God. And we ultimately and absolutely.

[14 : 43] And fundamentally. Want to honour him. In our worship. God has designed us for worship. And there is a delight. A delight in this. In Psalm 147 verse 11.

We read. That the Lord taketh pleasure. In them that fear him. In those that hope in his mercy. It's saying to us here. That God delights in it.

He takes pleasure. When we fear him. And when we honour him. In this way. There's a delight here. God delights in us. And we delight in him. He delights in this.

That we fear him. And so to truly fear God. Is to maintain this closeness. This fellowship. This precious. Closeness to God.

That comes as we fear him. To maintain this. This closeness. This fellowship. This harmony with God. And his will. It's been said.

[15 : 42] If you don't feel as close to the Lord. As you once were. Guess who moved? It's a good question isn't it? If you don't feel as close to God. If things are going. You've kind of grown a bit apart.

Who moved? It's a fair question isn't it? And so let us draw close to God. Let's not draw apart from him. Let us rather draw close to him. As close as we can.

James 4 verse 8. James 4 verse 8. It says. In part draw nigh to God. And he will draw nigh to you. And so I encourage you tonight. Brothers and sisters.

When the going gets tough. That that super glue of faith. Will bind you and hold you. And bond you ever strongly. More strongly. More strongly. By God's grace.

To him. Someone has said. Better to have him. Plus nothing. Than to have everything in this world. Without him. You know. He is the absolute.

[16 : 40] And fundamental. Driving. Reality of our lives. That which really counts. And so the healthy fear of God. Is something that. We should come to know that. To know God personally.

To know that closeness to him. To know him as our friend. As our Lord. As our master. And that healthy sense of. Who he is. And our honour of him. Should mark how we worship.

And get together. And this is how the early church grew. As it was marked by this. In Acts 9. 31. For example. It says. That the churches had rest.

They were edified. They were walking in the fear of the Lord. And in the comfort of the Holy Ghost. They were multiplied. Walking in. The fear of the Lord. And so I put it to you friends tonight.

When the church is walking right. In the fear of God. The Holy Spirit will bring life. And comfort. And blessing. And will be edified. And multiplied. As his people. And the church of God.

[17 : 36] They were edified. They were built up. As they were walking in. The fear of the Lord.

They knew this close fellowship. This blessed grace of God. This was the spirit. That marked them.

The true church of God. Wasn't a church defiled by ungodliness. Wasn't a church that was soiled. By wicked men. Who wrapped themselves up. In priest robes.

And do wickedness. That's not the church of God. It never was. It never will be. It's not now. And it never was the church of God. It's the wicked. Masquerading. Pretenders.

And they've besmirched the name of Christ. As they've masqueraded. As men of God. And that's what the world sees. That's what the media portrays. It's not the true church of God.

It's nothing to do with it. The true church of God. Is marked by a people. Who are set apart. For God's glory. Set apart. For God's praise. Set apart.

[18 : 32] God brought near to God's heart. Made holy. Made a separate people. A church that counts. That this is the pure word of God. Without error. Undiluted. And absolute.

And we're committed to a purity of living. That is beautiful. And God glorifying. There's a delight. A delightful thing. To this fear of God. These are not things to be taken lightly.

Or irreverently. But rather in the fear of God. This is what God does through his spirit. True holiness and separation. It's not an irksome thing.

It's a delightful thing. It's a delightful thing. There's separation from error. It's something beautiful. It's something good. It's something wholesome. Now we could try to dilute things.

And we could try to change things. And accommodate things. But we'll suffer for that.

[19 : 33] Our fellowship will suffer. God's glory will suffer. There's a danger in that. But it's a delightful thing. To maintain that which is God glorifying. That is truly beautiful.

And so may we have this right sense of God. This wonderment. This awe. Of who he truly is. His majesty. Our God and King. Psalm 2.11. Is a psalm about the kingship of our Lord.

And the psalmist says, Serve the Lord with fear. And rejoice with trembling. That's the kind of worship that we ought to have. The worship that Isaiah had.

When he said, Holy, Holy, Holy. As John had. As he saw those creatures flying. Holy, Holy, Holy. Is the Lord God Almighty. And we ought to have that same reverence and honour and esteem of him. That value of him. When we truly fear God. We will honour him. And seek that which pleases him. As our first and foremost consideration. And avoid that which is contamination and compromise.

[20 : 38] It doesn't matter whether everybody else is doing it. Hillsong. Whatever it be. If it's contaminated, we don't want a bar of it. We don't want to touch it. We would rather fear our Lord.

And that means that we'll fear his displeasure. We'll fear his disapproval. We won't want to toy with that which is of question. We would rather delight in our God.

Barnabas demonstrates for us what was the message of the early times. The early church. And we see as they gathered. There was a closeness. There was a blessed spirit there. As the believers gathered. In Acts 11 we see Barnabas declare the message.

And he says this short and sweet message to the church at Antioch. He lays it on the line. He says as he came that he had seen the grace of God. And he was glad.

And he exhorted them all. That with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord. That is the message. That is the message. The take home message today.

[21 : 40] That with purpose of heart you would cleave unto the Lord. That's my prayer for you. That you would cleave unto God. It means to fasten yourself to God. Like super glue.

That you won't accommodate that which is going to separate that fellowship. You won't want to accommodate that which is questionable. You would rather hold on to God. Stay close to God. That you would rather stay true and faithful to God. And cling to him. Be steadfast with purpose of heart. That's my prayer for you. For us. For us as a people. As a church of God.

And our Lord looks to those who fear him. And he commands them for that. He delights in them. As they know that closeness to him. He delights in the purity of his church.

And that's not to say we can't make some mistakes. And we have made some mistakes. I've made some big mistakes. I don't want to make those mistakes.

[22 : 36] Pick me up on it. Search the scriptures. See if these things are so. Exhort me. If you see me going off track. Fire me.

If I'm going into error. Or false doctrine. Please. Sack me. Amen. I dare not stand in this place. In this role.

If I'm deviating. God is a jealous God. He wants his church to be pure. A pure. It doesn't mean we walk around as some holier than thou outfit.

But that we are humbly wanting to follow God. God helping us to. In Psalm 5 verse 7 it says. In thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple.

In thy holy fear. In thy fear will I worship. In thy holy fear will I worship. It's a precious thing isn't it. To worship God in such a way.

[23 : 34] He delights in people who truly honour him. If we can just recapture that. That sense of that. That awe of God. The wonder. The wonderment.

Of who he is. Of what he's done. Of what he's doing. That closeness that he wants with us. That we would wholly cleave unto the Lord with our hearts. That closeness to conform to his image.

To identify with him. That divine indwelling that he wants for us. That empowerment. That deeper life that he wants for us. And so if we certainly and truly want that.

We'll let go of our idols. More so we'll demolish them. We'll smash them. We won't toy with them. There's a beauty and blessing in such worship. And God delights in this.

We see in Psalm 96 verse 9. It says. To worship the Lord. In the beauty. Of holiness. Fear him. Fear before him. All the earth.

[24 : 33] There's a beauty to holiness. It's not. An unpleasant thing. It's not. A burdensome thing. It's a blessed thing.

It's a beautiful thing. To have this. Wonder of God. This. Joy. This. Relationship. This wonder of his majesty. Of his honour.

Of the awe of him. And blessings flow. As we truly know that. And we see the Holy Spirit is very much. In evidence too. In Isaiah 11. We read.

That it tells of the spirit of God. The spirit of wisdom. Of understanding. Of counsel. Of might. The spirit of knowledge. And the spirit of the fear of the Lord. There's the sense of that.

That when the. Real Holy Spirit is working. There'll be the fear of God. There'll be that wonder. That awe. That reverence. That glory. That God is truly here.

[25 : 28] That quality. The fear of the Lord. Will. Make a massive impact. And so. When it is truly evident. Such this fear. That we won't. Accept. That which is. But we'll rather discern.

And prove. And test. And examine. And that the Holy Spirit. Will lead us. Into all truth. And he will help us. To discern. Between truth. And error. You know.

Not everything. That we see. On the shelves. At Kiron. Is good for us. Is good for us. You know. I've got lots of books. That I wouldn't put. In this bookshelf.

Because. It's questionable. In. 1 John 4. We read that. We know. Which spirit are we following?

And if we fear God, we will not want to associate with that which is of error, but only with that which is of truth. I've said this before and people don't like me saying it some people, but I'm going to say it again.

[26 : 57] And Hillsong is just one example, alright? But Hillsong is contaminated. It's put out there by the charismatic movement.

And it's questionable. It's authored by the charismatic movement. It aligns itself with the charismatic movement. It aligns itself with that doctrine, that teaching, that movement.

And so why are we messing with it? Why would anyone want a bar of it? It's contaminated. There's a spirit of truth and there's a spirit of error. Don't toy with the error.

We must be careful and question what is the spirit that we're following. And that's not to say we can question some of the songs in this book and we can do better. We can.

Just by the way someone might want to just put that switch on. We will delight in the truth. That's our prayer. That's my prayer for you. And so we'll recognize error and we'll withstand it.

[27 : 57] We'll speak against it. We'll rebuke it. We'll shun it. And we'll seek rather to bring correction and truth. So I've been saying here today, the fear of God.

It should prompt in us a sense of danger. We don't want to be like Uzzah or Nadab and Abihu or Ananias and Sapphira. There's a danger when we toy with the things of God.

There's a danger. The fear of God brings us to a delight, a closeness of fellowship. It's a beautiful thing.

The beauty of holiness is beautiful. It's God glorifying. It's the purity of his church. There's a closeness of fellowship. There's a delight there. And when I think of the fear of God, it brings to mind another aspect too.

A sense of duty. A sense of duty. Now, sometimes we can shy away from this word duty. It's sometimes a word that we might think, well, oh, he's going to preach works to us now.

[29 : 00] But no, we are under obligation. There is an obligation that we have. And to fear God brings with it a responsibility. It brings with it a sense of responsibility to action.

To not shirk duty, but to engage. And it seems often people shy away from this word duty. As if it's legalistic.

Oh, the pastor's going to tell me to do something. To think that God actually expects something from us. But if we miss this vital truth to fear God, we miss the whole point.

And these are the first principles of life. The fear of God is a foundation stone for a life well lived. We see Proverbs 9 verse 10 where wisdom comes from. It says the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

And the knowledge of the holy is understanding. So just wisdom is captured in this truth of the fear of God. It's where wisdom, true wisdom begins. And it's the whole point of our existence.

[30 : 05] So it should motivate us. The Bible tells us about duty. It says that to fear God, to keep his commandments, is the whole duty of man. You know, it's why we're here.

We've got a duty to perform. To serve God. To serve him. Not out of a forced thing. But as a glad service.

As a gladsome duty. To fear God and to serve him in truth. And where there is a God fearing people, we see God work and bless. What did Noah do?

In Hebrews 11, I touched on that this morning to a degree. When we see in Hebrews 11, when faith was evident, the people got active. They did something.

And in Hebrews 11 verse 7, it says, By faith Noah, being warned of God, of things not seen yet, he was moved with fear. Here he was in this time of the impending judgment as he was building the ark.

[31 : 04] But, and he was moved with fear to warn his family, to reach those that would be reachable. And so he was moved to action. And we can well ask today, where has the reverence gone?

Where has the fear gone? The Lord longs for us to gather unto him. It's our obligation. It's our joy. It's our duty. Because our Lord is worthy of all praise and reverence.

Psalm 89 verse 7, it says, God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints as we have in reverence of all them that are about him. There's a wonderful joy in our gathering.

And we ought to have that sense of, why wouldn't we gather? It's our duty. It's our glad duty. We've lost something when we miss that. When this reverence is missing.

And there's a lacking in us to fellowship and to serve him. And so I exhort you today. Brothers and sisters, we can all find ways to serve him. I was encouraged tonight when these young fellows were helping out here and there.

[32 : 06] The ones that I roped in and pressed gang into helping. I helped with the technology while I was sweating profusely. And then Mark came and saved the day. But we thank God for everyone who placed their part in this church.

Thank God for Rachel stepping in at short notice. And different ones doing things as the Lord enables you to. That's church, isn't it? Well, we've all got something to do for God.

And God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints. To having reverence of all them that are about him. And we as God's people, we take God's word seriously. It's our duty to.

Not to trifle with it. As someone trifle with it. And treat it as if they can just paraphrase it. And just change it. To make it sound a bit more catchy. No, it's not to be trifled with.

This is the word of God. It's the word of God. We don't trifle with that. It's our duty. These are holy things. And the word is not to be trifled with. Or to be taken carelessly.

[33 : 06] And we have a duty to hear it. And to act upon it. In Ezra 9 verse 4 we read that as the people assembled, they trembled at the words. They trembled at the words of God.

And what about us brothers and sisters? We see this in a number of times where the people trembled at the word of God. They took this book seriously such that they physically trembled. They took it reverently, not carelessly.

They took it with godly fear. And so should we. This holy fear. This holy fear should be a motivator in us. To do the right. To live for God. To do our duty to the pleasure and praise of our God.

And when God guides our steps, we'll act in accordance with this book. And we'll do that which is the right. And we'll turn our feet from evil. We will fear the Lord and depart from evil.

We will obey his word. And true blessing is found there. As we recognise God. And that this fear governs our every action and decision. Our relationships and our actions.

[34 : 11] Proverbs 16.6 it says, By mercy and truth, iniquity is purged by the fear of the Lord may depart from evil. You know, God is holding off his wrath for a season.

There's a danger. It's a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. To be caught out without knowing him. That's a fearful thing.

In Jude 1 verse 23, it says that the fear that we have should motivate us to action. And I know there's some soul winners here tonight. There's some people who care enough to go and give out tracts.

There's some people who care enough to go out to the shopping centres and witness for Christ. There's people who care enough to talk to their neighbours, their friends, their workmates, those that they meet.

And the Bible tells us of this. In Jude 1 verse 23 it says, Others save with fear. Pulling them out of the fire. Hating even the garments spotted by the flesh.

[35 : 10] Here's a graphic picture of soul winning. Of rescue. Of pulling people out of the fire. It's a gripping graphic picture, isn't it? You know, you see situations where there is fire.

And what a gruesome thing it can be. What a dreadful thing. And the fear of God should be a motivator for us to be his witnesses. To fearing God's wrath.

To see those saved who will trust him. Saving them out of the flames, as it were, of God's judgement. By pointing them to the sure refuge found in Christ. There's a picture there of the rescue

that we are a part of.

Of course, it's ultimately God who saves. But we are his channels. We are his instruments to whom he reaches others. You know, David Livingstone said this. Fear God and work hard.

That's a good motto, isn't it? Fear God and work hard. In Philippians 2 verse 12 it says, Wherefore my beloved as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling.

[36 : 18] Fear and trembling. This is not some light thing. This is not a take it or leave it kind of carefree kind of, I'll decide to follow Jesus kind of thing.

Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. Of course, he saves us. He does the saving work, but he calls us to put it into our shoes and make it live in every day with fear and trembling. Take it seriously, your salvation. This is no light thing. It's very serious. So we should place him first in his will. Someone asked me, What about those who say they know him, but their works say otherwise?

Point number one, I'm not God. I'm not God. God will judge those that are his. God knows them that are his.

You know, sometimes I wonder those who glibly profess that they're a Christian, yet it seems there's much lacking there. But I have to watch myself, lest I stumble.

[37 : 27] Amen? Amen. You know, if you think someone else is doing it wrong, take heed to yourself, lest you stumble. And I know my salvation is not by works, but because I've been gloriously saved, because I fear God, I will take it seriously, this precious gift that he's given to me.

And we thank God for those working in different ministries in this church, reaching out to their new arrivals through the English language classes, different opportunities and ways that we can witness and minister.

And if you fear the Lord, you will make assembling a priority. You'll make prayer a priority. You'll make the word of God a priority.

And his glad service, the glad privilege that we have. Now there's a story told in Luke 17, some that our Lord spoke of as a picture of serving him.

And some came to the time of acknowledgement. And as they came, our Lord says to them, When you have done all those things which I commanded you to do, say, we are unprofitable servants, we have done that, which was our duty to do.

[38 : 40] Now when we get to glory, there's not going to be some kind of fleshly praising of men, but we're all unworthy servants.

We're all unprofitable servants. We're all just doing what it's our duty to do. It's the least that we can do. For him, he's done everything for us. And so we can't claim credit and brag about anything we've done down here, as if we're somehow going to get some fleshly kind of recognition.

Of course there'll be crowns, but we're not doing it for that. We're doing it because it's our duty. We're doing our duty. It's a bit like, who's over there in the Boy Scouts, do my duty to God and the Queen.

But rather, do your duty to God. It's a good thing to do such. And so, let's develop a healthy fear of God, to walk in His way and to do His will. And it motivates us to seek His pleasure.

In 2 Corinthians 7 verse 1, it says, Having these promises therefore, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

[39 : 57] Holiness comes through the fear of God. Why? Because there's a healthy fear of God. Not an irksome thing, where it's a, we're under the thumb kind of thing, under some kind of burden of man, that we've got to do such and such good works, or attend so many meetings, or as if the Jehovah's Witnesses, they've got a certain number of hours that they've got to fulfil.

It's nothing like that. But there's a healthy fear of the Lord that motivates us, that, wow, we're His servants. We have something to do for Him.

He's called us into His service, in whatever capacity, and He'll equip us with what He wants us to do. And there's a healthy fear in that. So let's rather perfect holiness in the fear of God.

It motivates us to walk strong, to serve God acceptably, as it says in Hebrews 12, with reverence and God we fear. For our God is a consuming fire.

Friends, just to close with this, with these thoughts now, to think of the fear of God. And the fear of God is not something that we need shy away from.

[41 : 09] It's not something that is for a time gone by. It's for now. It's for here and now.

It's for you and me. For us, here in this place, in this community, in the 21st century. And so we should think of the fear of God in these three aspects I put to you. To sense the danger. The danger for our nation. Our God is a consuming fire. God's judgment, God's wrath is about to be poured out on this planet. And those who are not in that sure refuge of Christ are in great danger, great peril.

And the fear of God should strike us as something that we should take seriously. And as believers, we have the glad joy to enter into the delight of relationship with God.

That fear of God actually draws us closer to him and his heart. And who he wants us to be. How he wants us to live. And there's a delight there. It's a delightful thing.

[42 : 12] And there's a blessing. There's a beauty of holiness. And it prompts us joyfully to respond in worship, that delight in our God.

And thirdly, we see that this fear of God prompts us too, to this wonderful privilege that we have. To be active now, while we have time.

This wonderful privilege that we have. As we fear God. To take on the tasks that he puts on our hearts to do. As he gives us those glad burdens that he prompts us to serve him.

This awesome duty that we have. Is our glad privilege to his praise and glory. And so I urge you today to think on these things.

That we will be prompted to a greater appreciation of the fear of God. That healthy fear that we need to have. Let us pray. Let us try.