

# The Fear of the Lord

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[ 0 : 00 ] As we start in Acts 9.31. Acts 9.31. At times we like to project the words, but I don't have that prepared. But if there's Bibles there, you might like to follow along.

Grab a Bible if you'd like, if you'd like one. And we can walk through this message together. Acts 9.31. Just as you turn there.

My message tonight is the fear of the Lord.

The fear of the Lord. And in Acts 9.31 we see how the New Testament church had this vital factor. Acts 9.31. It says, It says, What do church growth experts tell us about?

[ 1 : 30 ] The fear of the Lord. Sadly, it's a vital missing ingredient in many places around the world today. The fear of the Lord.

It's a vital factor in the church. Through the Word of God. We see the fear of God. Right through the Word of God. We've got many scriptures here. We'll just try to touch on.

A little bit of a topical view of the fear of the Lord. Scripture summarises the chief cause of sin and crime is that there is no fear of God before their eyes.

We see the people went astray when they had no fear of God. There was no fear of God before their eyes. As if they hadn't got anyone to reckon to. But we all have to give account, don't we?

Unto our God. For the Lord. Someone has said there are four great impelling motives that move men to action. Four great impelling motives.

[ 2 : 30 ] Faith, hope, fear and love. Faith, hope, fear and love. Someone said the greatest of these motives is fear.

As far as a motivating factor. You know, Julie was telling me just this afternoon she saw a snake. I said, oh, where was it?

That's the big question. I don't want to go anywhere near that snake. You know, the fear of snakes is a healthy fear, isn't it? If you know there's a snake in your garden, you want to know where is it? So you can keep right away from it.

The fear of God should move us too, shouldn't it? That should be a motivating factor, shouldn't it? The fear of God. So many churches and Christians lack this fear of God.

It's like it's not something they're mindful of. And yet it's so evident in the Word of God that it's a very important truth.

[ 3 : 30 ] It's like they have what Jeremiah 23, 32 says. A lightness. It's just light. You know, when you go and you get light Coke, don't you?

Or light, what's some other things you can buy that's light? Light milk. You know, it tastes like coloured water, doesn't it? You know, it's light.

It's just light. And there's a litmus there in some quarters where there's a flippancy, there's a carelessness. There's a disregard of God. Really, the opposite of the fear of God is this flippancy, this carelessness, this couldn't carelessness, this worldliness that can at times overtake us.

Because that's what the world is, isn't it? That affects us. We're constantly saturated and bombarded with the carelessness of our world. Yet we're called to the fear of the Lord.

That's something precious and motivating in a good way. And we see through the Word of God, through the Scriptures, the men and women of God, the prophets of old, through the Scriptures and then through the time of the Inquisition, we see that people were motivated more by the fear of the Lord than by the fear of men.

[ 4 : 52 ] Or the fear of the flame in the time of the Inquisition. People feared God such that they were willing to endure the wrack, the torture, the shame, the imprisonment, the suffering and the flame.

I know Julie and I, in our once-in-a-lifetime trip to London, went in a recreation of an old-time dungeon.

And it was called the Clink, which apparently was the old-time name that it had, the Clink. Was that right? Or there was another one? But we went into this recreated dungeon, down into this dark, dingy, damp dungeon.

And we saw there all kinds of instruments of torture and suffering. And the guide was telling us that where this Clink was in this dungeon was actually, at times, below the water level of the River Thames.

So that at times the water level would come up and the prisoners would just have to stand there and just hope that the water didn't go so deep that they drowned in their dungeon. This was the horrific conditions they were held in.

[ 6 : 15 ] And we think, we know men and women of God. In fact, I think the guide was telling us that there was some famous Christian that was treated with such a place, with such a suffering.

And yet they feared the Lord more than the fear of man, even the fear of death. They feared God more. I put to you some reasons why we should fear the Lord.

Why should we? What's the reason? What's the reason? What's our motivation? Why should we fear the Lord? And we see, I'm just touching, I know it's a bit hard to read some of those verses, but just to travel through some of these scriptures together.

Why should we fear the Lord? What's the reason? What's our motivation to fear God? I put to you, number one, the jealousy of the Lord. Jealousy. We see the jealousy of the Lord.

In Deuteronomy 6.13. Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve him, and shalt swear by his name, you shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the people which are round about you.

[ 7 : 35 ] For the Lord thy God is a jealous God among you. Lest the anger of the Lord thy God be kindred against thee, and destroy thee from off the face of the earth.

Thou shalt fear the Lord, and serve him, and not go after other gods, small g. Don't go after the other gods.

In Exodus 34.14. Similarly, it says, For thou shalt worship no other god. For the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God.

It's one of his names. God is jealous. He is a jealous God. In other words, he deserves our total commitment.

Our complete faithfulness. And friends, I put to you that God is jealous. And he deserves that rightful honour, and that devotion, that he alone is worthy of that.

[ 8 : 43 ] Not the gods, the other gods, the small g gods of this world. They are many. There's the almighty God, as some would worship. There's the ego self. There's the idols of society all around us.

And popular entertainment. You see, some swept away with things, not that I'm that conversant with it, but things such as modern day cartoons can be quite shocking.

I've heard of the South Park, for example. It's one worldly cartoon that's full of swearing and cursing and mocking of that which is good and rightful.

And it's a shameful thing. And so they're training the kids up to watch cartoons like that. It's no joke. It's serious stuff. But we can't receive that.

It's against God. And we're living in a world where iniquity abounds. We're told in Matthew 24, 12 that the love of many shall wax cold.

[ 9 : 45 ] It shall grow cold. There's a coldness, a lacking of love towards God and the rightful things. So jealousy. God's jealous.

He's a jealous God. We should fear the Lord because he is a jealous God. We see another reason is judgment.

Judgment. The judgment of the Lord. Luke 12, 4 it says, Our Lord says, One day we have to deal with God.

Face to face. One to one. Psalm 119 verse 120 it says, My flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments.

The psalmist said, My flesh trembles for fear of him. I am afraid of thy judgments. 1 Peter 4, 17 it says, For the time has come when judgment must begin at the house of God.

[ 11 : 08 ] And then Romans 14, 12 it says, So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God. Now of course if you're a saved man, a saved woman tonight, justice has been done.

Judgment has been vented. At the cross, his wrath was poured out on the Son of God. In the bleeding form of the Son of God. Your very sin.

It says, In his own body, On the tree. It was nailed there. When they nailed the nails, It was my sin in that body on that tree.

It was nailed for me. It was nailed there. It was judged there. And there's no judgment for my sin any longer. Thank God. We can have that joy, that glad, knowledge, that certain hope and trust that our sin has been paid for.

But yet, if we're outside of God, then judgment threatens. And we should fear God. Fear him. Fear him who can cast into hell.

[12:13] Fear him. And judgment must begin at the house of God. We need to get right. We need to get it right before him. Every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

I can't give account for you. You can't give account for me. This man here has got to give account for this man's sin. This man's stand. Thank God I can say, Jesus paid.

Jesus paid for me. Of course, we know there is a reckoning for our works. And we want to serve wisely. Judgment.

It's reason to fear God. Neurologists say that the human brain contains a permanent record, like a film strip of the past. It's like a... It's in there.

In that grey matter. What's left of it up here. There is that film strip. There's that record of the past. That we'll one day be open.

[13:15] Everything will be laid bare, it says. And we'll face his scrutiny, his examination. What is our stewardship like? The fear of the Lord. It should be a motivating factor.

Not that we're serving him out of an irksome duty, like we've got some big, heavy burden on our back that's crippling us, and slavishly serving him because we're afraid of him in a slavish way.

Not that. But that sense that he is the judge. You know, I've been to court. I've been in court.

Thankfully I wasn't in the dock.

But I was in the jury. And that was serious enough too. To actually evaluate. Had this man done this sin?

It was a sin. It was a gruesome thing. It was a gross thing. And it was a very difficult thing. To be in the jury.

[14:21] And to make a decision about this man's guilt. And we know that the judge, we will face him. So let's fear him in that rightful way.

And honour him as the master, as the one we'll have to reckon with. And another aspect of the fear of the Lord, and this is a good one now, it's a glad one, is the joy of the Lord.

We've seen the judgment, now the joy of the Lord. The fear of the Lord, again, it's not something that is an irksome thing.

There's a genuine joy. To know our God. To know him. There's a link there between the fear of the Lord and the joy of the Lord. There's a connection.

Because we can actually find real joy, and fulfilment, and gladness, and blessing, in fearing God. Because it's how he's wired us.

[15:21] It's how he's made us to be. That without that fear of God, we're incomplete. The fear of God goes hand in hand with worship, and rejoicing. It's connected.

There's a link. We find our true freedom, and satisfaction, in fearing God. For example, Psalm 2, verse 11. It says, Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

They're connected. Serve the Lord with fear, that's the fact. And rejoice with trembling. Psalm 22, verse 23.

It says, You that fear the Lord, praise him. All ye that, the seed of Jacob, go from him, and feed him. All ye, the seed of Israel. So our worship, should be, connected with fearing God, with that holy awe, with that holy reverence, with the holy honouring, and worshipping.

[16:20] Fear and praise are connected. Revelation 14, 7. The creatures were saying, with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgment is come, and worship him, that may heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

Twofold. Fear God, and glorify him. Worship him. Connected. Hear the Lord, it says in Psalm 115, verse 13.

It says here, speaking of the Lord, We'll bless them, that fear the Lord, both small and great. So there's a blessing, in fearing God. There's a completeness there.

It's how he's made us to be, to fear him. Bless, he will bless them, that fear him. So, as some of us try to paint it, you know, they will try to picture Christians, as being dull, and boring, and miserable,

and, you know, walking around, with so many senses, and with, with a miserable, slavishness, of a duty, of law.

It's the opposite of what the Bible is saying. And there's a gladness, in serving God. There's a rejoicing. There's a jovialness, that is, linked with the fearing of him.

[ 17 : 45 ] Now, the shortest verse in the Bible, who knows what that one is? Jesus read. Jesus read. Now, we don't like to go on, about the Greek in this church, but, some of us reckon, that the shortest verse, in the Greek, is 1 Thessalonians 5, 16.

Still two words, but apparently, it's short because of the, the length of the words. And, 1 Thessalonians 5, 16. Here's your memory verse for tonight. Rejoice evermore.

Rejoice evermore. Amen. So, you know, we can, we can rejoice now, and we're still going to be rejoicing, in 10 million years from now. Amen. Rejoice evermore.

Evermore. And the Christians, joy, flows from that, grace of God, that Jesus worked for us. And we can rejoice, evermore. So, really, you can argue, what the shortest verse, in the Bible is.

1 Thessalonians 5, 16. Rejoice, evermore. We've seen, why? What's the reason? We serve a jealous God. You can't, two-time God.

[ 18 : 51 ] He must be honoured, first and foremost, and above all. Our devotion, must be absolute to Him. And He is rising that. He is due that worship.

That fear, that He is a jealous God. Don't mess around. Don't, don't two-time God. Don't play with other gods. Don't follow other gods. But He devotes, wholehearted, unto Him.

His judgment. We're going to face Him. Let's get things right, here below, so we'll be ready, to face Him, in judgment, and know our sins are forgiven. Our home is in heaven.

If we trust in Christ, there's no reason, for a concern, because He has saved us, by His grace. And then we see the joy, that comes from fearing God.

There's a rejoicing, with trembling. It's connected. So we've seen the line, no, how? How should we fear God? How should we fear God? We put, some scriptures here, Ephesians 5.21.

[ 19 : 53 ] I put to you, that the fear of the Lord, leads to some things. It leads to some things. So, firstly, salvation. Salvation.

Now, sometimes, submission is a bit of a dirty word, because to some, at some times, some pastors can be, like that.

You're under their thumb, and do what I say, or, you know, float or go. I've heard that for it. You know, float or go.

And that's one of the things, I've heard. Oh, my way of the whole. Yeah, I mean, we're not talking about that, where, the pastor calls all shots, and he's sunk on a man, on a pedestal, that people bow down, and worship, and, pastor, pastor, pastor.

You know? No. It's not in the word. It's not like that. You know? And I don't want it to be like that.

[ 21 : 08 ] Amen? Ephesians 5, 20 minutes, it says, submitting yourselves, one to another. Submitting yourselves, one to another, in the fear of God.

Submission, it leads to, fear leads to, the fear of the Lord, leads to submission. Humility, in other words, is another way of putting it. Humility.

Humility. And, I could use some humility, I don't know about you, I know, Julie Polishes, a humility badge every day, but, you know, we need humility, don't we?

We're meant to be servants of God, we're meant to be brothers, and sisters, and Christ, submitting yourselves, one to another, in the fear of God. And, keep me humble, that will help me, to grow.

And we see, you know, in Psalm 103, Psalm 103, it says, of our Lord, like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them, that fear him. For he knoweth our fame, he remembers that we are dust, as for man his days, are his grass, as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth, for the wind passeth over it, and it is gone, and the place thereof shall know it no more.

[ 22 : 22 ] But, the mercy of the Lord, is from everlasting, to everlasting, upon them that fear him, and his righteousness, unto children's children. What is it saying here?

It says, the Lord pities, he, he, has compassion, on them who fear him. Why? He knows our fame, he knows we are dust. You know, I'm just one little speck of dust, in this cosmos, and I'm just a little worm, on this planet.

And, he knows our fame, he knows we're just dust. And, he knows we're like grass, and like a flower, and like the wind blows it away one day. You know, the petals fall, and it just becomes, a bit of, uh, grass, blowing in the wind.

But, the mercy, of the Lord, is from everlasting, to everlasting. He knows our place, he knows our frame, he knows, who you are.

You can't put on, airs, and airs before him. He knows, we're here, we're, we're, just vessels. And let's get that attitude, of submission, onto him.

[ 23 : 29 ] To serve him. He knows our frame. He, he blesses, as we fear him. And we see another scripture, Proverbs 3, verse 7, it says, Be not wise in thine own eyes, fear the Lord, and depart from evil.

Don't be wise in your own eyes. You know? Oh, you know, I've got some people that say, oh, I've got a certificate in this. You know, I've been to Bible school. I'm qualified.

You know? No. You know, there was a time, I was going to be a doctor, you know, I've got, the level underneath doctor, that, you know, some people just want to be called doctor.

It's just got that, honour about it. No, we're just a brother. You know, let's not get so high and mighty that we will be the reverend doctor, whatever it be, the archbishop, whatever.

No. Senior pastor. Who is the senior pastor? The senior pastor? The chief shepherd? The great shepherd?

[ 24 : 40 ] It's Jesus. Not me. I'm just his servant. God helping me. So let's have that right spirit. We see Proverbs 8, 13.

It says, the fear of the Lord is to hate evil. Pride and arrogancy in the evil way, and the forward or perverse mouth do I hate. The fear of the Lord is to hate evil.

Pride. Arrogancy. Arrogancy. Let's not get proud. I have my moments when I veer in that direction, and I think, you know, when someone disagrees with me, I say, I sort of think, well, when he gets to glory, the Lord will straighten him out, and he'll believe just like me.

No. We're all just humble. We're all just vessels. And we're all just on the journey together. The Lord hates pride and arrogancy.

I'm still learning. Let's have that heart attitude. Then we see Proverbs 22, 4. It says, By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches and honour and life.

[ 25 : 50 ] Notice that connection again? Humility. By humility and the fear of the Lord. They join together. And we need to recognise our position. Who are we?

We're just dust. He knows our frame. He knows me just like a flower that vanishes and blows away. You know, 19 years of ministry, I've seen people pass away. I've seen people pass away.

I've been at funerals. I've presided at funerals. I've stood in front of an empty casket. Well, a casket with a body in it. Of a brother, of a sister. And when it boils down to it, life is a vapour, isn't it?

Let's not take, let's not take those opportunities for granted. To love one another. Love one another.

We need to recognise our position before a holy God, not a bragging or a boasting, titles and positions.

You know, sometimes I kind of steer away. I know it's been a bit of a hot topic in times past, of saying, oh, this one's a deacon. You know, now, I'm not discounting.

[ 26 : 58 ] There are scriptural roles and positions. But when a position becomes a title, oh, where's my name badge? I wanted to say deacon. Look at my name badge.

Deacon. It's that kind of attitude. It's a big problem, isn't it? When someone becomes a deacon, and it goes to the head.

They think they're somehow, super deeper, they're sort of in that, that kind of hierarchy now. As if they've somehow been elevated, to some position. They're the one who cleans the carpet.

They're the one who, who wipes the dishes. They're the one who, who helps the, the little children, and find the crows. They're the one who, who helps someone, in a wheelchair, to get through the door.

That's the deacon, the servant. Not a position, that we can boast about, and brag about. Some title. We are nothing but his servants. It's been said that, only the smaller birds sing.

[ 27 : 59 ] Some of us reckon, you never hear a note from the eagle, or the turkey, or the ostrich. You might hear a little, gabble, gabble, or gobble, gobble.

But, no, you hear from the canary, and the ring, and the lark, the little birds sing. And the sweetest music comes, from those Christians, who are small, in their own estimation, and before the Lord.

Let's be small before him, so he can be magnified. I must decrease, he must increase. Let's be like John the Baptist. So we see, that humility, that submission.

And then we see, another reason, another reason how, another aspect, that the fear of the Lord, should lead us to, is sanctification. Now, it's a bit of a big word, but I'm sure some of you, might know what it means.

It means holiness. When we fear God, there's a sanctification, which means, that God is making us holy. He's making us like himself.

[ 29 : 04 ] We see that, for example, in Psalm 96, verse 9. It says, I worship the Lord, in the beauty of holiness, fear before him, all the earth. We worship God, in the beauty of holiness.

Holiness isn't something, that's a dread, dreary, thou shalt not. Holiness is thou shalt. Holiness is, worship the Lord, in the beauty of holiness.

Worship him. Fear before him, all the earth. Of course, there's some things, thou shalt not. Of course, I'm not negating that. But the emphasis, is on, serve the Lord, with gladness.

It's sanctification, it's holiness. We see 2 Corinthians 6, verse 17, through 7, verse 1. It says, Wherefore, come out from ye, among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and I will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

Having these promises, therefore, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves, from all filthiness, of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness, in the fear of God. What does it say?

[ 30 : 16 ] Perfecting holiness, in the fear of God. As we fear God, he will make us holy. As we fear God, we want to be bright. As we fear God, we want to be clean.

As we fear God, we want to get rid of the filthiness, of the flesh and spirit. It's not that it becomes, a forced thing, it's a glad, it's a glad, glorious thing.

It's a glad response, to his working within us. To be separate, and touch not the unclean thing.

Because we don't want to be unclean. You know, it's like, when you make a lovely meal, you get rid of all uncleanness, don't you?

You want that, you want everything to be spick and span, and everything just, nice and clean and tidy, because you want it to be clean. You want it to be fit. And it's like that, when we serve our almighty God, and his glory, and wonder, in the majesty of who he is, when we truly fear him, and how clean he is, we don't want to be unclean before him.

Because we honour him. We see Proverbs 9 verse 10, it says, The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the holy is understanding. The knowledge of the holy is understanding.

[ 31 : 32 ] Do we know the holy? To know the holy, the fear of the Lord, the knowledge of the holy, is understanding. Holiness is prompted, as we fear God, we'll have a sense of the holiness, that he wants for us.

Now, this is an American illustration, that, it's said that, you can find the world's shortest sermon, on a thing, traffic signs.

Of course, in Australia, it's keep left, but in America, it's keep right. Keep right. So, in a way, that's a nice short sermon, isn't it?

Keep right. Keep right. With God and men. Holiness. Keep right. Now, we know, the reality is, it's hard to measure up, isn't it?

I know for myself, I'm sure, for none of you, but, I know for me, I always, lack, and, for sure, really, of what, God's standard, true it is.

[ 32 : 35 ] Of course, we know it says, we've all come short, of the glory of God. And, there was a teacher one day, checking some, uh, understanding, with a little child, a little boy, and, she was, testing him, on some, of those familiar proverbs, that people say, and she said, to the young boy, she said, claim the earth, is next to, what?

Godliness, is next to, what? Godliness. The small boy, with real feeling, he said, impossible.

Cleanliness, is next to, impossible. And, he was right, wasn't he? Because, really, how can we be truly, clean? There's always some, you know, if you hear the microscope out, even after you've washed your hands, I mean, we know, it's next to impossible.

Sin, is something to deal with, isn't it, as believers? Because we love our God, we want to get right, to keep right. As someone has said it, for a gardener, it's not enough that they love flowers, they must also hate weeds.

You know, you might have a lovely garden, full of beautiful plants, and flowers, but we've got to deal with the weeds, don't we? And likewise, in the Christian life, we've got to deal with sin. Ask God to

deal with it.

[ 34 : 03 ] Let him convict, and draw, and touch, and minister to you. So we're saying, that, the fear of the Lord, will lead to a submission, will have humility, before God.

The fear of the Lord, will lead to, a sanctification, will have holiness, before God. And lastly, the fear of the Lord, will lead to service, will be clean vessels, for him to use.

What are we going to do, about the fear of the Lord? To fear of God. You know, we might fear God, and have our doctrine, just down pat, and everything just right, and you know, we've just got everything aligned, and just, everything in the right boxes, and think, okay, I've got it made, I've got my doctrine just right, and I'm bound for glory, on the glory train, and I just sit back, and enjoy the ride.

Just, just waiting for glory. Glory. Next stop glory. Just, just sit back, enjoy the ride, and just be nice, comfortable, snug, smug, satisfied Christian, because you've got it all right.

Rather, we fear God. It should motivate us, to be out, and, out and out. It should motivate us, to be salt. The fear of God, should motivate us, to be the shining light, in our street, in our neighbourhood, to live it out, our faith, to apply it, to put it into action.

[ 35 : 30 ] When we fear God, it makes us want to do something, to be something for God. We say that in Hebrews 12, 28. Hebrews 12, 28. It says, therefore, we receiving a kingdom, which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God, acceptably, with reverence, and godly fear.

Serve God, acceptably, serve, with reverence, and godly fear. So, hand in hand again, is if we fear God, He'll put us into His service.

He'll put us into His, use. We see, in Deuteronomy 10, verse 12, it says, and now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all His ways, and to love Him, and to serve the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul.

Friends, we've seen, just some, brief overview, of the fear of the Lord. It's right through the pages of Scripture, from Revelation to, from Genesis to Revelation, and from Revelation to Genesis.

It's right through the book, amen? It's, it's in the book, and, it says that churches were walking in the fear of the Lord. It was a characteristic.

[ 36 : 59 ] The people of God, had that factor, of the fear of God. It was something precious, and the church was built up, when it had it. Why should we fear the Lord?

It's a driving, motivation for us. We should fear the Lord, because He is a jealous God. Give Him your whole hearts of devotion. Give Him your whole heart.

The judgment of God, we will face Him, every one of us shall give account. There's joy in, knowing His, His, goodness.

There's joy in, praising, and glorifying Him, and serving the Lord with fear, and rejoicing with trembling. What should it lead to? Submission.

We should love one another. We should be brothers and sisters in Christ. We should have a submission, to one another. Me to you. You to me.

[ 37 : 56 ] We to the other. In the fear of God. In the fear of the Lord. In the fear of God. Because we're just dust. And one day we will be dust.

We'll be in the ground. Let's make today count. To have that heart of humility and love. Holiness is that wonder of who God is.

To know the holy. The knowledge of the holy. And to cleanse ourselves. So we're fitting. We're vessels clean. Fit for the Master's use.

Vessels of honour. And we'll serve Him. Because we can serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. If you truly fear God with that love, that honour, that devotion, that reverence, that awe of Him, then nothing else matters, does it?

Nothing else matters. And we want to serve Him and love Him. And we'll tell you, friends, what is your decision? What is your decision?

[ 39 : 06 ] We can learn this and know this and know about this, but not have the application of it. And friends tonight, we can be hearers of the word but not doers of it.

And that would be a sad missing out, wouldn't it? To change the theory, the concept, the theology of it without the action and without the decision.

Now, Joshua 24, there's a familiar one where Joshua stood and he called the people to a decision point. And in Joshua 24 from verse 14, I don't have that list here.

Joshua 24 verse 14, Joshua implores the people. He says, Now therefore, Fear the Lord and serve Him. Therefore, fear the Lord and serve Him in sincerity and in truth.

And put away the gods which your father served. He's a jealous God. Put them away. Don't play around with God. Put away the other gods, so-called, that your father served.

[ 40 : 16 ] And serve you, the Lord. And if it has been seen evil to you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom you will serve. Whether the gods which your father served, which were on the other side of the flood or the gods of the Amorites in His land you dwell, but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

Let that be your decision tonight. Serving with gladness, serving with joy, serving with reverence and godly fear, there's gladness there, there's fulfilment, there's a desire that can fulfil your world heart to know Him, to know Him with your heart, to have that new sense of the fear, that deeper walk, closer walk.

Be encouraged tonight. Now, let me close with just one final comment. I'm preaching to Christians here and I trust you are all believers here tonight.

But if you don't know the Saviour, this can do you no good. You can try to be holy, you can try to fear God, but it's got to come to the place where you actually say, Lord, I surrender to you.

I come and I give my heart. I yield my will. I trust that you died on the cross for my sin and pay for it there so that I need not fear judgment. I need not fear your wrath and anger against my sin because everything was paid for.

[ 41 : 49 ] If you can put your trust in him tonight, put your trust in him, then your eternity changes forever and I trust you will do that. Seek prayer if you'd like more counsel on that.

It can encourage you further. Let's pray.