

The Fear of God

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[0 : 00] The fear of God. The fear of God. Proverbs 1 verse 7 might be a good one to start with Proverbs 1 verse 7 but we will have quite a few scriptures tonight and we're not going to have time to likely flick to each of them in our Bibles but Proverbs 1 verse 7 it says the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Now the song we just sang said sing to the Lord with cheerful voice him serve with fear his praise forth tell. Fear. A sudden clap of thunder. An erupting volcano. A dramatic earthquake. These are things that strike fear in people's hearts. When we face such powerful things how do we react? Do we stand by board? Unmoved?

Or do we fear? If I was to cry out the house next door is on fire. How would we react? Would we be motivated? Would we be gripped with the fear? With that sense of fear would we be motivated?

To do something? To do something? To do something? To take some appropriate action?

Especially if there's someone in that house. Fear. It's a powerful emotion isn't it?

And what is more powerful than the greatness and majesty of our God? What is a more awesome thing than that? The greatness of God. His power and his might. His majesty.

[1 : 37] And believers here tonight we are in the presence of the Lord God. The Holy One of all the earth. How are we to respond in the light of that? That he is with us.

Of course he is with us not just when we gather. But really all the time. There's that sense of as we gather he's promised to be with us. To meet with us.

And we are in his presence. The presence of the Lord. The almighty God. The creator of the universe. The Holy One. The almighty. What is more powerful than that? Really there's nothing that compares.

What do we fear? People fear all kinds of bad things. Now I fear dentists sometimes. I know there's people from the dental profession here.

You know the bad kinds of fear. We sometimes have fear of people's opinions of us. What is someone thinking of us or saying about us? Or fear about sickness? You know what's going to happen next? What's the next thing that's going to go wrong with me?

[2 : 39] Fear of poverty. Fear of poverty. That job that is a bit shaky at the moment. The fear of death. That we know it's only a step away the Bible says.

The fear of pain. You know I hate needles. Injections you know. There's all sorts of negative fears isn't there? Things that we're afraid of. Bad things.

Of sorts. You know things that bring us discomfort and difficulty. But the fear of the Lord is not a bad fear. It's a good thing. It's not a negative thing. It's a good thing for us to have the fear of God.

To fear the Lord. And the truth is we often don't fear the Lord as we should. I put to you. But this fear is absolutely essential for us.

It's essential that we fear God. Because the word is replete with references to fearing God. To the fear of God. The fear of the Lord. It's absolutely essential for us as we live the Christian life that we have this sense of the fear of God.

[3 : 44] So what is the fear of God? Number one. What? What is the fear of God? It means someone has defined it as being afraid to offend God in any way.

Being afraid to offend God. In any way. It means a great awe. A reverential trust. A deep respect. The fear of God.

What is the fear of God? It's being afraid to offend Him. The fear of God is important. It's an important truth.

It says in Proverbs 15 verse 16. Better is little with the fear of the Lord than great treasure and trouble there with. Little with the fear of the Lord is better.

It's important for us. It's good for us. It's healthy for us. It's precious. It's important for believers to honour and revere God.

[4 : 42] To respect and to love Him. It's important for us. The Bible shows us very much so. that the fear of God is important for every believer. The fear of God is wisdom.

In Proverbs 1 verse 7 as we've read, the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. It's where it begins. But fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Job 28 verse 28. It says, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom. And to depart from evil is understanding.

You know, we might go to university and get all manner of letters after our name and we might spend a lifetime in university. Some people do course after course and never end up getting a real job.

But we know that you can be highly educated and yet miss this. The beginning of wisdom is the fear of the Lord. Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom.

[5 : 46] Job 28 verse 28. So if we respect God, we trust that He knows what is best for us. That's wisdom. That's understanding.

It's important. It is wisdom. The fear of God is to hate evil. There's another definition. Proverbs 8 verse 13 it says, The fear of the Lord is to hate evil, pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, or perverse speech, in other words.

Do I hate? Evil, pride, arrogancy, the evil way, that kind of corrupt speech. Do I hate? The fear of God is to hate evil.

In Proverbs 16 verse 6 it says, By the fear of the Lord men depart from evil. It's a natural follow on. As we fear God, we depart from evil.

One follows on from the other. When we fear the Lord, we want to live in a way that pleases our God. We won't want to live in a way that is openly disobeying him.

[6 : 52] So we've seen what is the fear of the Lord. Not wanting to offend God. Why? Why should we fear the Lord? Number two, why? Why should we fear God?

We fear God. Why? Because of God's holiness. He is the only holy God. We see in Isaiah 6 when we saw Isaiah before the Lord and the angels cried, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God.

And Isaiah was just shocked by this awesome sight. The holy God. We fear God because of God's holiness. We fear God because of God's jealousy.

Our God is jealous. The Bible says he is jealous. He is a jealous God. He won't two-time us, as it were. We've got to make that entire love, that whole love towards him.

Our God is jealous. He can't have us play around with other gods where we're just playing the fool, really, not that wholesome devotion.

[7 : 58] Our God is jealous. We know through the word we see accounts where he killed people when they disobeyed him. And he encourages his people to fear him.

We shouldn't take it lightly or carelessly, the fear of God. We see back in the word how Israel constantly disobeyed and kept getting into strife.

For example, Exodus 32, when the very Ten Commandments were given to Moses in Exodus 32 on Mount Sinai. And they were announced to Moses with a voice like a trumpet.

And Moses was on the mountain for 40 days. 40 days. And while he was up there, the people down below forgot about God. And they thought, well, let's invent our own God.

So they melted some gold and made a golden calf. And they worshipped it instead of God. They worshipped this golden molten calf.

[9 : 02] And then as the Lord showed himself again, they only returned to the Lord after being punished.

God showed them his great power. And fear motivated them to obey. So God's jealousy is a very real truth. God's greatness is another reason why we should fear the Lord.

God's greatness and his wondrous works should cause us to fear him. And we just consider the awesome creation and who he is and what he has done for us.

God's greatness, his wonderful works. It's important. And it's right that we fear him because it's God's perfect plan for our lives. In Proverbs 19.23, Proverbs 19.23, it says, The fear of the Lord tendeth to life, and he that hath it shall abide satisfied.

He shall not be visited with evil. The fear of the Lord tendeth to life. It's his life purpose for us. That fear of God, it produces life. It tends to life.

[10 : 09] It is needed. Think of today. As we're seeing in our world today, we have children killing children. We see some of the crazy, awful stories about killings going on around our world.

We have adults killing unborn children, even just days before they're due to be born. It's a gross, vile thought as to what is going on today.

And potential presidential candidates are supporting this such that a baby can be just hours away from being born and is savagely killed within the womb.

And this is what people justify and think is an okay kind of thing. We have need of the fear of God, don't we? The fear of God. When we see homes filled with images of violence and irreverence, we see what the, you know, the sewer pipe that's connected to many lounge rooms is spewing into families, into thinking, into imaginations.

And we are truly a perverse and crooked generation. Why is this? Romans 3.18 says, there is no fear of God before their eyes.

[11 : 25] Romans 3.18, there is no fear of God before their eyes. People do not fear the Lord in our day. And so we're seeing this abounding corruption and sin.

It's a desperate need today. In our world, the fear of God is missing. And in our churches too, it's missing. The fear of God in our worship, in our ministry. The modern church has lost that sense of the fear of God, of the power and majesty and glory of our great God.

They don't seek God in fear, in reverence, in honour of Him. They don't live lives that are producing God-honouring fruits. And so, I urge us, each one of us together, to consider this truth and make it real.

You know, if we truly respect someone, we would be careful about what we say and about how we treat them. And yet, that's lacking today, isn't it?

how children treat parents, how teachers are treated by students, how the police are treated on our streets, how the government is lampooned and disrespected.

[12 : 38] And we see much that is lacking in terms of authority, in terms of what is rightful and proper, in terms of holiness.

Think of those holy creatures as they were above the very throne of God in worship and praise. It says that they hid their faces with one third of their wing power.

They had six wings and they covered their faces with two of those wings. And yet, we come, it seems, at times before the Lord in a half-hearted devotion.

And we give less than our very all to the one who's given us everything, what he has done for us.

Do we consider that? We should fear the Lord because of his great goodness to us, because of his grace and his love.

In Jeremiah chapter 48 verse 10, it says in part, Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully. Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully.

[13 : 42] Now, you could say even slothfully or lazily. Now, there's a curse there for those who are doing the work of the Lord in a half-hearted, lazy, slothful way, in a careless way.

And yet, how many times do we come to church with our hearts divided or careless as we do not render to the Lord what he truly deserves? And we need to have that heart that truly yearns to honour and please our God and not to be careless.

It says that we should praise and pray to God in fear of him and rejoice with trembling. Psalm 2, verse 11, it says we should rejoice with trembling. There's that sense where our worship should be in awe of him, in a reverence of him, in that outpouring of ourselves before him, our great God and King, our Master and Lord.

And we need that fear of God to keep us away from sin. when we have that true dimension, that true realisation of who he is and what he has done for us and oughtn't we to fear his name.

In Psalm 86, verse 11, the psalmist cries, unite my heart to fear thy name. Unite my heart to fear thy name. Let me have that, that one heart that wants to fear your name, to know him in his grace and his mercy, to know his forgiveness, to put aside my slackness and to unite my heart to fear his name.

[15 : 11] So why should we fear the Lord? God's holiness, God's greatness, because it's needful, because it's lacking and because it's commanded, it's commanded that we fear the Lord.

It says in 2 Corinthians 7, verse 1 that our Lord commands us to perfect ourselves in righteousness in our Christian life. We should be perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

We see that as we do fear the Lord, he promises blessings to us. He promises blessings in the lives of those who walk in the fear of the Lord.

Here's some more scriptures. I know there's lots of references here, but it's just to paint the picture that really there's much ground we could cover and this is really only just scratching the surface, but some of the blessings that come to our lives for those who fear the Lord, who walk in the fear of God.

It says God's promises and blessings are promised to us. It says in Psalm 128, verse 1, Blessed is everyone that feareth the Lord and walketh in his ways.

[16:17] Acts 9, 31, it says the churches had rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria and were edified and walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost were multiplied.

So God's promised a blessing blessing for those who fear the Lord. Blessed is everyone that feareth the Lord and walketh in his ways. And what's blessing?

It means God's real joy. We're not talking about necessarily a joy that is a happiness that's based on happenstance and what happens to us, but a joy that's deep residing within.

That blessing, that fulfillment of that blessing of a life blessed by God. We see the blessing of God's protection for us. In Proverbs 14, 26, it says, In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence and his children shall have a place of refuge.

The fear of God is a strong confidence. There's protection there. We have a place of refuge. In Psalm 34, verses 7 through 9, in part it says, The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him and delivereth them.

[17:31] There's protection there in the fear of God. He's promised that. There's a sense of pleasing God that comes as we fear him. In Psalm 147, verse 11, it says, The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him in those that hope in his mercy.

The Lord takes pleasure. He's pleased with those who fear him. And so there's that sense where we're delighting in God and he is delighting in us. And our lives can be pleasing to God.

And that gives us a joy deep within. In Psalm 145, 19, it says, He will fulfill the desire of them that fear him. He also will hear their cry and save them.

He'll fulfill the desire of them that fear him. Psalm 103, verse 11, it says, For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward who?

Them that fear him. His mercy is great toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.

[18:42] Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. So he's like this father who has pity, he has compassion, he shows mercy unto his children.

Likewise is our father God to them that fear him. We see that God hears those that fear him. In Isaiah 66, verse 2, it says that our Lord will pay attention to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit and trembleth at his word.

In Psalm 145, 19, it says, The Lord hears those who fear him as they pray. So, for our prayers to be powerful, for our prayers to be effective, we are to fear him as we pray.

Psalm 145, verse 19. We see the blessing of power to live holy. In Proverbs 14, 27, it says that we have power to live holy.

It says, The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life to depart from the snares of death. It's a pure fountain, a fountain of life. It gives us power to live a holy life.

[19:53] Proverbs 3, verse 7 and 8. It says, Be not wise in thine own eyes, fear the Lord and depart from evil. It shall be health to thy navel and marrow to thy bones.

Fear the Lord and depart from evil. So, just to recap this part here, God's blessings, we see he's promised blessed is everyone that feareth the Lord.

He's promised protection, the angel of the Lord. He's promised that we'll have the joy of pleasing him and he wants our lives to please him. We have the blessing of God hearing our prayer.

We have the blessing of having power to live holy, to do right. And so, when we respect our Lord, it will show in how we live. And we cannot live a holy life without his help.

You know, sometimes we can try in our own strength and try as we might, we'll fall short. But we can live through his power, through his enabling and we can depart from evil.

[20:57] Stay away from that which is wrong. Stay away from it. Friends, God will judge those who do evil and will not turn from it.

His loving call is extended to all who will hear. And these people today who think they can get away with wrong have every reason to dread that day, that day of his wrath.

It says in 1 Thessalonians 5 verse 9 though that those who are in Christ are not appointed to wrath. We're not appointed to wrath, we're not appointed to God's anger and judgment if we are in Christ. So we need to make sure of that. David teaches the fear of the Lord in Psalm 34 verse 11. He says, Come, come ye children, hearken unto me, I will teach you the fear of the Lord.

What man is he that desireth life and loveth many days that he may see good, keep thy tongue from evil, thy lips from speaking guile. In other words, falsehood.

[22 : 07] Depart from evil and do good, seek peace and pursue it. He says, he wants to teach us the fear of the Lord and it's got that corresponding action, keeping your tongue from evil, of not speaking lies, of departing from evil and doing good.

God calls us to become more like him, to be more like Christ, to be more holy, to be pure and holy and understand and know the fear of God.

So what we've seen thus far, we've seen the fear of God, what it is, why we need it. Now, thirdly, how? How do we cultivate this fear? How do we cultivate the fear of God?

One way is through the word of God. In Deuteronomy 31 from verse 10 through 13, it says that the children of Israel were to gather every seven years, seven years, to read and hear the word.

Now, they were called together for this gathering that they would have the word read in that public way, the word of God read, that they may learn to fear the Lord.

[23 : 15] That was the purpose, that they may learn to fear the Lord. You know, as we read the word of God, as we take it seriously, as we treasure these precious pages and the truth contained here, the word of God helps us to learn to fear the Lord.

That's a good thing to know, the beginning of wisdom. How do we cultivate this fear? We cultivate it by fellowship. It says in Psalm 89, verse 7, God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints.

As we have, in reverence of all them that are about him. So, God is to be greatly feared in the assembly. As we get together, we can spur one another on. We can exhort one another.

We can be exhorted. We can encourage one another. So much the more as we see the day approaching and we see the fear of God is fostered and it's encouraged as we gather in the assembly, God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints.

How do we cultivate this fear? In praise. In Revelation 19, 5, it says, And a voice came out of the throne saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants and ye that fear him, both small and great.

[24 : 33] There was a command out of the throne, Fear God. Fear him. True praise or worship is founded in the fear of the Lord.

And the whole context there, as we see the saints in heaven, as we see the creatures in heaven, the fear of God was there and the true praise and worship was there. The true praise and worship wasn't some fleshly make-believe, some manufactured emotional experience per se.

It was motivated by the fear of God. We worship a holy, majestic, awesome God. And so it's cultivated in our praise.

It's cultivated in devotion. The fear of the Lord is devotion. When we truly love God, we'll fear him, we'll honour him and we'll serve him. In Hebrews 12, 28, Hebrews 12, 28, God is served acceptably with reverence and godly fear.

With reverence and godly fear. That should be part and parcel of how we serve God. We don't serve God flippantly and carelessly because it's how we might feel to do something, but we do it out of reverence and godly fear because he is worthy of our service.

[25 : 46] And so it acknowledges also how weak and unworthy we are. That when we serve him, we don't big note ourselves and get prideful and arrogant. We are just unworthy servants, unprofitable servants.

We've just done that which is our duty to do. And as we fear God, we realise how weak and unworthy, inadequate, how lacking we are, and we just want to see his will fulfilled in our lives, to do our best, to seek his will for our lives.

How do we cultivate this fear? In obeying God. In Ecclesiastes 12, 13 it says, let us hear the whole conclusion of the whole matter. Fear God. The conclusion of the whole matter is this, two words, fear God and keep his commandments.

For this is the whole duty of man. As we obey God, as we take him seriously, as we fear God, as we obey what he spelled out, his commandments, this is the whole duty of man.

You might think, why am I here? What's my purpose on planet earth? This is the whole duty of man. Right there in Ecclesiastes 12, 13, fear God and keep his commandments.

[26 : 59] And as we truly respect our Lord and his rule and his reign, as we come under his control and his loving control, then we know we want to please him.

We want to honour him in the reality of these darkening days of judgment looming. Let us be like Noah.

Noah, it says, he respected God's rule and authority and he wanted to please and obey him. And Noah, it says, had godly fear and submission. It motivated him.

Hebrews 11, 7 says that it motivated him to prepare an ark for the saving of his household. Noah was moved by the fear of God.

We see that Paul told the church of Philippi, therefore 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.

[28 : 03] Paul says to the Philippians, Philippians 2, verse 12, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. Again, it narrows it right down, doesn't it, to the nub, the key things that Paul counted as critical here.

Now people would rather hear about God's love and mercy and we do want to hear about that. But let's not neglect to hear about God's wrath, his judgment, holiness, of getting ready for the coming of Christ and not settle for being apathetic and careless.

How do we cultivate this fear? Just to recap just now, the word of God, fellowship, praise, devotion, obeying God, holiness. The fear of God means holiness.

If we do not fear God, we are ungodly. And we're not talking about a kind of godliness that's a manufactured thing as some would think.

It's going to Rome and climbing stairs on our knees and saying multiple Hail Marys and coming before some priest in some dark little closet and confessing your darkest secrets to some man or having holy smoke blown over you and some kind of rituals and ceremonies and such things.

[29 : 29] To think that you can manufacture holiness by such antings and such ceremonies of men. Holiness is about taking God seriously.

It's fearing God about who he is and how he wants us to live a life that's clean before him and we want to please our God. And the word teaches us to live right, to cleanse ourselves, it says, from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit.

So carnal thinking, fleshly living, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. These things we should take very seriously and not carelessly.

So we should be in awe of him, in awe of his awesome presence, and I put to you that we need this new sense of who God is. Who is he? You know, what if you were to step into a room where there was someone from the royal family or someone of great esteem and honour in your country and you would take that moment seriously, I'd put to you.

And, you know, I had that occasion where I was at some meeting and I briefly met the Prime Minister of the Day, which was Bob Hawke, so it was a long while back.

[30 : 50] And, you know, he just happened to be the Prime Minister of the Day. And what an awesome thing it was to meet someone, a famous person, not necessarily someone I'd see eye to eye with at all, but yet it was someone who was regarded and respected for the office that he held and likewise meeting John Howard just very briefly again and shaking his hand.

And, you know, when we meet someone who has that esteem, has that office that he holds or she holds, that there's a certain esteem there, there's a certain honour there.

And likewise meeting someone of royalty. What if you were to step into the presence of some famous person? And even if they're someone that just has worldly fame and honour, there's that sense of a fear and trepidation that you might feel.

You might have some kind of, a sense of, wow, this is a real moment in my life to meet such a person and to experience such a meeting. And yet, how flippantly do we have the attitude towards our Lord when we meet with Him?

And how shallow and casual and superficial we don't take Him seriously at times, I put to you. And rather, let us bow in adoration and trust and devotion.

[32 : 19] Let's take Him at His word. Let's take this book seriously in what He's telling us and what it says to us to do, to take it to heart, to hold Him and His ways in awe.

For He is the King of kings, isn't He? He is the Lord God Almighty. And He's not someone that we treat carelessly as just our buddy-buddy.

You know, it's in some quarters it's like, Jesus, Jesus, it's like, our mate kind of thing. and yet He is the Holy One. The fear of God should be that burning presence in our lives that His holy presence should subdue our egos and burn up our sin into ashes.

It should cut to the very core of us this Holy One with whom we have to deal. And we must give Him our all, our plans, our priorities, our possessions, our money, our comfort, our needs.

Or don't we take it seriously, this Holy One whom we have to deal with. And so we see what it is, the fear of God. Do we want to offend Him?

[33 : 29] Or do we want to regard Him? Why do we need it? The Word tells us many reasons why. How are we to cultivate it? We've seen these things. And so lastly, just to close with this thought, when do we need this fear?

When do we need the fear of God? When the Lord comes as the judge of all the earth, oughtn't we to fear Him? It tells us in Revelation 14, 7, the angel cried out, fear God and give glory to Him for the hour of His judgment is come.

God's coming judgment is a good reason. It's a good time to get a sense, to get a refreshed sense of the fear of God. Fear God and give glory to Him for the time or hour of His judgment is come.

And what will that hour look like? It says that nothing in all creation will be hidden from His sight. It says everything will be uncovered. You know, if you've got emails, you can smash that phone but they'll be revealed.

You know, whatever you're trying to hide, whatever you're trying to cover up, whatever you're trying to keep quiet, keep secret, it says everything is going to be exposed.

[34 : 47] There's going to be nothing, there's going to be nothing hidden from His sight. And it says everything will be opened before the eyes of Him to whom we must all give account.

That's Hebrews 4, 12 through 13. Hebrews 4, 12 through 13. And in 1 Corinthians 4, verse 5, it says, He will bring to light what is hidden and He will expose the motives of men's hearts.

So judgment should motivate us. Why do we need, when do we need this fear? As we think of the looming judgment to come. And of course, as believers, we know our judgment happened 2,000 years ago.

The judgment for our sin fell upon Him. That our judgment for our sin, if we trusted Him, it was paid for back then at Calvary's Hill where He paid it all, all of our sin.

For believers will face a judgment for our works, but the judgment for our sin has happened. But yet, as the world moves closer and closer to judgment day, we ought to be moved with fear as Noah was.

[35 : 59] As we talked earlier, as Noah was moved with fear, he prepared an ark to the saving of his house and by which he condemned the world and became an heir of righteousness which is by faith.

In contrast, we see Ananias and Sapphira at the time of judgment, they were not moved in the fear of the Lord and they were killed. Ananias and Sapphira, they did not move in the fear of God.

So rather be a Noah than an Ananias and Sapphira. Amen? They're being moved with fear. To be rightfully moved, to want to please God, to obey, to follow Him.

So in closing, the Bible is clear about the fear of God. It's a very evident theme. It's right through your Bibles. From cover to cover, we see to fear God.

And we see that our Lord disciplines those in whom He delights. In Hebrews 12, 11, it says, My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord, neither be weary of His correction.

[37 : 02] For whom the Lord loveth, He chasteneth, sorry, for whom the Lord loveth, He correcteth, even as a father, the son, in whom He delighteth. Now we know earthly fathers show kindness and help and love, and that can mean necessary discipline.

The father shows his love by appropriate discipline, loving discipline, discipline that comes out of love, out of wanting to develop and grow that child.

And it builds love and esteem for the father. The father's discipline and fear of incurring his wrath can keep the child from much evil.

And yet later, it's more that we don't want to disappoint our father. We grow into that sense of we want to please our father for our good. And the Christian life is like that where we have the fear of God that He is awesome and we have to deal with Him.

We understand His righteousness, His holiness. We understand His discipline if we're disobedient. And when our little children obey us because they're afraid to get in trouble, we are pleased.

[38 : 18] But we look forward to that day when they begin obeying us because they love us and they want to please us. And it's like that with the Christian life, isn't it? There's that sense where we fear God because He is the ultimate judge but we fear Him and we want to love Him, we want to please Him.

There's that positive sense of the fear of God that we begin to want to obey Him and honour Him because we love Him and we honour Him and we want to please Him.

as we grow in our Christian life, we'll be motivated by loving and wanting to please our God.

And so, it's needful that we fear God, I put to you tonight. And God cares very much about how we live and about this truth.

The fear of God The fear of the Lord is clean. The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. The fear of God is the whole duty of man is to fear Him.

[39 : 28] The most essential thing in our lives. Now, really I'm preaching to Christians here in this message and the vital truth for all is that you know Him.

That you know Him. for Him to know is life eternal and we can't take that for granted. We can't think that that's something that we're born into or that we somehow gravitate into.

It's got to be that definite moment in time when we've trusted Him and when we know Him as our Lord and Saviour and when we know we've laid our life into His hands. And I urge you tonight to make that peace with God, to know that penalty paid for your sin as you've trusted in Him and received His gift.

You've stopped going your own way and you've done that U-turn and headed in His direction.

You've trusted Him. You've laid hold of God and He's laid hold of you and He's tracked you down and He's brought you into His family.

adopted you as sons and daughters and what a joy, what a privilege it is. And for us that know Him as Heavenly Father, as our Father, there's a sense of discipline, of His chastening, of that discomfort of being out of His will and of being in rebellion and disobedience and yet there's that delight in pleasing Him, the delight in honouring Him, that blessing that comes as we fear God rightly and truly and we make it such that our lives are lived in the light of that, that our lives are lived in that light of the fear of God and it motivates us, it drives us and it brings blessing every day as we draw closer to Him and He draws closer to us.

[41 : 31] Let us pray. Lord God, we thank You that Your Word is very clear about these truths. Lord, we pray help us to fear You, to love You and honour You in that love that doesn't want to offend You but rather wants to please You, that we don't want to incur Your judgment, Your chastening, Your discipline but yet we want to find that pleasure that You find in us that our lives can be lived to Your good pleasure and to Your praise and as a result our lives will be filled with that blessing, that deep inward joy that comes to know that we're in Your will and we're following Your plan.

Lord, help us to live as such people, we pray. Help us to fear God and depart from evil. Help us, Lord, to make those clear-cut decisions that we need to make about those things that we know we need to deal with.

Lord, help us to be such a people. To Your praise and glory, we pray. Amen. Amen. Amen.