

Fear God

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[0:00] Music Proverbs 9, it's really about basic instruction tonight.

! It's something vital, a vital truth, simple yet absolutely vital and critical.

Something that makes a person wise. So it's something very valuable, something very esteemed, something we should yearn for and search for. And we see it there in Proverbs 9, verse 10.

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 fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy is understanding.

The fear of the Lord and the knowledge of the Holy.

[1:24] Critical, vital, essential truths. To know the Holy. Do you know Him? Him who is holy. He who is the Holy.

The Holy One. Do you know Him? Do you know Him? Whom to know is life eternal. The fear of the Lord is a vital truth.

Now, today we live in a world where there's all kinds of fears. Now some of these, I'll read you some unusual fears. Some unusual fears.

And some people are already laughing because they're not. I'm going to pronounce them wrong.

Because I don't know how to pronounce some of these words. But I'll do my best. Now this, now, if you've got this fear, you might, you might be afraid of me.

Because it's paladophobia. Say that again. It's paladophobia. Fear of boldness and lord people. Now I'm getting there.

[2:23] So if you've got paladophobia, then I'm sorry tonight. Aerophobia. It's the fear of draughts. So if you're sitting near the door, you might want to move away if you've got aerophobia.

Porthyrophobia. Porthyrophobia. Fear of the colour purple. Catophobia. Fear of hairy people. Levophobia.

Fear of objects on the left side of the body. Dextrophobia. Fear of objects on the right side of the body. Caliphrophobia. Fear of obscure meanings.

Thalasophobia. Fear of being seated. Stabissa. I'll say that again. Stabissbassifophobia. Is the fear of standing and walking.

Odontophobia. Is the fear of teeth. Graphophobia. Is the fear of writing in public. Phobophobia. Is the fear of being afraid.

[3:22] For. That just about colours everything, doesn't it? And so there's lots of fears that are around about. Some people have such fears. Genuine things. Researchers at a university 30 years ago.

Checked out some children. Young children. And these young children said the greatest fears they had. Was the fear of animals. You know. I know that when I was a youngster.

I was on a big slide one day. And there was a big Alsatian dog at the bottom. I'm still a bit worried about dogs sometimes. But my little dog doesn't worry me. But some people have got a fear of animals.

Another fear is the fear of being in a dark room. Of high places. Of strangers. Of loud noises. Now they did this survey again. And this is what they found that kids today are afraid of.

Divorce. Nuclear war. Cancer. Pollution. Being mugged. Fears have changed over the centuries, haven't they? Over their decades, rather. Fears have changed.

[4:18] People talk of all kinds of fears. But what about the fear of God? The fear of God. The Bible talks much about the fear of God.

This fear is something that will do you good. It's good to have the fear of God. That's a healthy thing to have. For some it is true today that there is no fear of God before their eyes.

See the world around us? There's no fear of God before their eyes. It's like God doesn't get a mention. It's not even in their conception, in their thoughts. For some that is true today. What it says in Romans 3. From verse 16 it says, Destruction and misery are in their ways. And the way of peace have they not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes.

What a dread state to be in. To not fear God. To not have regard to the eternal. In this post-modern culture that is Australia today, we see rampant divorce.

[5:16] We see escalating juvenile delinquency. We see perversions of all kinds. Homosexuality. Immorality. Abortions are routine. This is Australia today.

There is no fear of God before their eyes. And it's something that we've lost in some measure within the church today. It's been lost in some measure.

Yet it was a feature of the early church. We see that, for example, in Acts 9 verse 31. It says, Then had the churches 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.

They had rest. They were edified or built up. And they were walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit. Acts 19 verse 17.

It says, again, of the early church, when there was some wonders, when there was some magic going on and a man was dealing in the dark arts, as it were, and then in that context they burnt some magic books and fear fell on them all.

[6:35] Acts 19 verse 17. And the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. God moved. People feared. And the church grew. It's interesting, isn't it?

In some ways today, the fear of God is a lost doctrine. It's a lost teaching. It's absent. It's missing. Yet it is something that could be, as I've heard it expressed, it could be described as the main emphasis of the entire Bible.

You could say that this doctrine of the fear of the Lord is the main emphasis of the entire Bible. In Ecclesiastes 12 verse 13 it says, Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter.

Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.

So let's look together at the fear of the Lord. What is the fear of God? Number one, what is it? What is this thing that we're talking about today? What is this theophobia, if you like?

[7:51] This fear of God. And why is it a good fear to have? To fear God, it means to have reverence for Him. It means to honour Him. It means to stand in awe of Him.

It means to seek a right relationship with Him. To fear God, it includes the idea of loving Him, of knowing Him, of wanting to please Him, of wanting to honour Him.

The fear of the Lord is something to take very seriously. It's taking God seriously. You know, today, as I say, the fear of God, there's no fear of God before their eyes.

And people just flippantly use the name of Jesus, or God, or Lord, as some kind of swear word, some kind of curse word, that falls lightly from their lips.

They've lost the fear of God, if they ever had it. The fear of God, it means a deep felt reverence towards a pure and holy God.

[8:48] God is almighty, and God is holy, and God will judge unrighteousness. And so, we ought to have a healthy fear of God.

And to fear God, it means knowing Him, to know Him with a heartfelt awe, with a sense of His wonderful majesty, of His great holiness. What is the fear of God?

It's all of that. It's to know Him. To know Him. To know Him. To have relationship with Him. In right standing with Him. Secondly, why? Why should I fear God? Why should we fear God?

We should fear God, because God is totally awesome. The word awesome is another kind of buzz word, that's very popular today, and used very loosely. But really, God is awesome.

He's awesome. He's full of awe. In Psalm 33, verse 8, it says, Let all the earth fear the Lord. Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him.

[9:50] Stand in awe of Him. We should fear God, because why? Because God tells us to fear Him. He tells us to fear Him. In the word of God, it says, Fear God.

There was an angel flying in Revelation 14. What was his message? The message of the angel was saying with a loud voice, it was in a way, one of the last gospel calls in your Bible, towards the back of your Bible.

In Revelation 14, 7, the angel was crying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment is come.

And worship Him, that made the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. Why should you fear God? Because He says to. He says fear Him.

He tells us to. He commands us to. Psalm 2, verse 11, it says, Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. We should fear God, because as we come reverently and humbly to Him, God gives us real life.

[10:54] He gives us life. He's the source of life. He's the creator of life. He's the sustainer of life. The fear of the Lord brings life. In Proverbs 14, 27, it says, The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.

Proverbs 19, verse 23, it says, The fear of the Lord tendeth to life, and he that hath it shall abide satisfied.

The fear of the Lord tendeth to life. The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life. Why should we fear God? We should fear God, because when we truly fear the Lord, we will know His blessing and His care.

Psalm 128, verse 1, it says, Blessed is everyone that feareth the Lord, that walketh in His ways.

Psalm 128, read the whole psalm.

It'll tell you what a blessing it is to fear God, and what blessings come to those who will fear God, who will walk in His ways. Read the whole psalm. Psalm 128, make that your homework.

[12:07] There's a blessing from being in a right relationship to an awesome God. In Psalm 103, verse 13, it says, Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him.

Our fear of our heavenly Father is the fear of a loving Father. Now, I fear my dad still. I don't want to get him upset. You know, I joke around with him now and again, but I fear him in a healthy way. He's senior to me, and sometimes he's wiser than me. Most of the time he is. He'll probably tell me off afterwards. But my Father is someone that I have a healthy fear of, and it's not a fear of a dastardly kind of Father.

Our heavenly Father is a Father who pities us. He has compassion upon us. He's a loving Father, and we should fear God because He pities His children.

He cares and has compassion upon His own. Why should you fear God? Because He makes provision for us. Psalm 34, verse 9, it says, I fear the Lord, ye His saints, for there is no one to them that fear Him.

[13:22] The young lions do lack and suffer hunger, but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing. Fear the Lord. God will provide if you fear Him.

You should fear God because if you fear God, He will look to you. God looks to the one who fears Him. He looks to the one who trembles at His holy word.

In Isaiah 66, 2, it says, For all these things hath mine hand made, talking about creation, all these things have been, saith the Lord, but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my word.

To this man will I look, to him who is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my word. God will look at you if you fear Him.

Come to Him. Come and take His word. Take it and obey it. Come with a contrite spirit. Next one, What will the fear of God mean?

[14:26] What will it mean? There's some things that the Bible says that if you have the fear of God, it will bring some things into your life. In Psalm 19, verse 9, If we fear God, it will bring cleansing.

Cleansing. Who likes to be clean? I'm sure. But if you don't like to be clean, you need to be clean. But we all need to be clean. We all need to have a cleansing. But most of all, that inward cleansing, that inward cleansing, the fear of the Lord is clean.

enduring forever. And the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. Psalm 19, verse 9, The fear of the Lord is clean. In 2 Corinthians 7, verse 1, it says, Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord, in the fear of God.

Friends, the Word of God says that the fear of God will bring cleansing. Another thing that the fear of God will bring, the fear of God will bring confidence. 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 the Lord is a fountain of life to depart from the snares of death. We can have confidence in our God. You know, there's some people that don't, they've got a God that they don't even know whether that God's going to save them or not.

[15:56] Some very devout people like, like we heard Pastor Kim talk about the Buddhists and so on. We know of many other religions today. They don't have an assurance of an eternal life.

But our God gives us an assurance. Our God says, this is the record that you may know that you have eternal life. It's not a hope so, a think so, it's a know so.

You can know for sure tonight. If you don't know now, you can know tonight, before you leave this place. You can know that you know that you know, that you're heaven bound by claiming the Word of God and its promises.

You can have a confidence. Another thing you can have with the fear of God in your life is that you can have a connection to other believers. And that's a good thing to have, to have a connection with other believers.

It says in Ephesians 5, 21, submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. It's good to have a church. It's good to have a church around you. It's good to have an assembling together, a gathering together of like-minded believers, to have that connection, that mutual submission and accountability.

[17:07] And the fear of God makes that happen. Next we see, how can we fear God? When we boil it all down into practical terms, I know Julie's one to ensure that I don't miss this in a message that I bring.

something that you can take home in your kit bag and actually do something with what I'm talking about here tonight. This is something practical. Something, how can I have this? How can I find this?

How can I experience this? How can I fear God? What does it look like in practical terms for me to fear God? If we fear God, we will ask Him to teach us.

We will want to be teachable. We will want to have Him teach us. In other words, we'll go to the instruction book. We'll go to the Bible school, textbook. Amen?

The Bible. Psalm 86 verse 11, Teach me thy ways, O Lord. I will walk in thy truth. Unite my heart to fear thy name. Ask God to teach you the fear of God.

[18:11] Ask God to help you learn to fear Him. One of the biggest problems of our day is biblical illiteracy. People are not searching out God's truth. They're getting blown around with various winds of doctrine.

They don't have a heart to search after God. We need to go to the book. Go to the book. Ask Him to teach us. How do we get this fear of God?

If we fear God, we will deal with sin. We will deal with sin. We won't brush it under the carpet. We'll deal with it. We'll ask God to help us with sin. In Proverbs 3 verse 7, it says, Be not wise in thine own eyes.

Fear the Lord and depart from evil. Fear the Lord and depart from evil. The Word assures us there's an answer for sin. There's an antidote for sin.

There's a cleansing for sin. And there's a freedom from sin that God can help us to get victory over sin. And we can get there as we fear the Lord, we will depart from evil.

[19:12] They go hand in hand. It's an evident connection. As we fear God, we'll depart from evil. We'll hate it. We'll hate it. We'll hate evil. We'll hate pride.

We'll hate arrogance. In Proverbs 8 verse 13, it says, The fear of the Lord is to hate evil. You know, there's lots of talk about love. And thank God, He is a God of love.

In fact, God is love. You can't get it clearer than that. But there's also hate. God hates the wicked. He hates sin. He hates evil. And we should hate evil too.

And we should love those who are outside of Christ enough to tell them of His saving message. Friends, the fear of the Lord is to hate evil.

And another question is, another aspect tonight to consider is the great danger of not fearing God. It's a dangerous place to be not fearing God.

[20:15] And some will harden their hearts. They'll harden their hearts against God. No matter how much God is trying to get a hold of them and get their attention, they will still not fear God.

Their hearts will still harden. Moses saw that when he challenged Pharaoh in Exodus 9 verse 30. When one time after another of various evidences of God's judgment against the nation came Pharaoh's way.

Yet he hardened his heart each time. In Exodus 9 verse 30, Moses says, As for thee and thy servants, I know that ye will not yet fear the Lord God.

No matter what God had sent Pharaoh's way to get his attention, he still wouldn't fear God. And even then to the destruction of the firstborn of Egypt.

Acts 5.11 we see the church of God was marked by fear. There was a fear there and it was a healthy fear. It was a fear about sin.

[21:20] In Acts 5 verse 11 we see Ananias and Sapphira they lied to the Holy Spirit. They told a bold faced lie about something they had done and judgment came and they fell to their deaths at the instigation of the Holy Spirit.

They were slain by the Spirit strictly put to death in judgment. And great fear it says came upon all the church and upon as many as heard these things.

Church discipline. Talk about that. Bang! They laid them out dead and then the wife came in and was carried out three hours later.

Why? Because sin had to be dealt with. Sin was in the camp and great fear came upon all the church. The fear of God came because judgment came because sin was dealt with.

And in the early church there was a terror there was a dread of disobeying God of taking things lightly and carelessly the holy things are not to be treated carelessly they are to be treated reverently.

[22:28] And the reality is friends tonight in Romans 11 22 it tells us that there is both the goodness and the severity of God. Romans 11 22 they go hand in hand the goodness and the severity of God.

God is not mocked. And both of these aspects are at play and they're happening in each of our lives today. And friends if you're outside of Christ the severity of God will fall upon you at judgment day. It'll be too late then when you breathe your life your life's last breath there'll be no second chance. The severity of God will mean God's judgment will be poured out against you against your sin that is not paid for.

But then there is still time there is still opportunity now there's the severity of God but there's the goodness of God and the goodness of God means that Christ is paid that awesome price.

Christ is paid by his life's blood for your sin for the penalty of it for the judgment against you if you will but receive it by his grace through his mercy calling in faith you can find that tonight in that moment in that instant of belief in that instant of trusting him of turning from your own way of living and receiving his brand new life you can have eternal life now and forever you don't have to wait till you die you can have eternal life there's people here tonight if not most here today who have that life even now present tense and friends the bottom line is that the fear of God is something very vital and essential today God is against the backslidden church and there is a judgment in the land a crisis is imminently seen in many quarters a falling away a a a a that strikes me in in speaking to you if I'm trifling with God if I'm trifling with holy things what judgment will fall upon me if that is the case and it's a dangerous thing to mess around with God to play games to play church to play

[25:06] Christianity to play the Christian card when you're not really a Christian it's a dangerous thing to trifle with God and so it says in the word of God Philippians 2 verse 12 wherefore my beloved Paul urges them I love you he says my beloved he says as you've always obeyed not as in my presence only but now more in my absence work out your own salvation with

fear and trembling treat it seriously treat salvation seriously treat the holy things treasure them treat them with love with reverence with respect and consider our God consider our God consider how awesome he is the creator of the of the galaxies the creator of every cell in your body he is God and he is awesome and we ought to give him our deepest reverence and regard for him and for his word we ought to tremble at it not take it lightly not trifle with it he says to this man will I look the fear of the

Lord leads us to wisdom to the man who will be poor and contrite and will tremble at his word and the fear of the Lord will lead us to wisdom wisdom beyond anything that a university can grant you that any letters after your name can give you any credit to the wisdom that is from above the wisdom that is from God the fear of the Lord is the beginning of it it's the very starting point you haven't got to the starting blocks if you haven't got that sense of who he is or that fear of him it leads us to wisdom and it says in Psalm 2 verse 11 serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling friends just I'll quickly recap the fear of God taking him seriously deep felt reverence why because God is totally awesome because God tells us to fear him because God gives us real life we don't know life outside of him he cares for us he blesses us he looks to us the fear of God will bring cleansing to your life if you're feeling foul come to him the fear of God will bring confidence and assurance it will bring that connection in that accountability to others who love him and who follow him with you how can we fear

God ask him to teach us deal with sin come to him come to his word in practical terms the fear of the Lord is to hate evil and consider that danger of not fearing him great fear came upon the church consider the severity and the judgment of God and consider how can I work out my salvation with fear and trembling not that you work for your salvation it's already a done deal it's already a finished completed work it was completed 2000 years ago everything that had to be done was done at the cross it was done for you when he bled when he expired when he it is finished when he was thinking of you there he was thinking of you as he bled and died and then he rose again you don't work for your salvation but you work it out work it out work it out with fear and trembling don't trifle with God let us pray heavenly father we thank you that we can catch a glimpse of your glory as it were in your word so full of your awe your awesomeness dear lord we thank you that you are awesome you strike us with awe with reverence and dear god we pray help us to treat your word not triflingly or carelessly not flippantly lord take it to our hearts and apply it help us lord to have hearts that yearn that long for a closer walk with you draw us to yourself dear lord we pray if there is any present who have yet to trust you that even in this simple way they might call out and cry out from the bottom of their heart and they might see their sinfulness they might see their lost estate that each one might know what it is to trust you as the living god as the one we can come to as a loving father who cares for his children as you adopt us into your family you take us out of the devil's family and you put us into your family forever adopting us as your sons and daughters we thank you for that in Jesus name amen a