

The Fear of the Lord is a Fountain of Life

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 21 May 2017

Preacher: Dave Nannery

[0 : 00] our God, we approach your throne, and we approach your throne boldly, not because it is a small or a simple thing to approach your throne.

We come to you only because our Lord Jesus Christ has made a way for us, because he has made an end to all of our sin, because his blood has given us access to you so that we are not only able to enter your presence, but we are welcomed and beckoned into your presence.

I pray this morning that as we, once again, return to the subject of the fear of the Lord, that this sense of fear, the sense that we have of your power and significance may be a source of joy and life to us.

Increase this in us, Lord, we pray. Amen. Well, let me ask, since we're going to be talking about fear for the third Sunday in a row, the third and final Sunday, how many of you are, we've talked about the fear of man, how about the fear of spiders?

How many here are afraid of spiders? Show of hands. Show of hands. Okay. Pretty significant. Okay. So, how many of you who raised your hands, how many of you would wish your fear of spiders on other people?

[1 : 25] No hands. Okay, we got one. We got one back there. I want other people to know how I've suffered. You know, I want them to know my sheer terror, right?

I mean, is there anyone in this room who wants to be afraid of spiders? Who thinks, yeah, that's what I really want for myself. Right? We don't usually think of fear as something desirable, as something that we want.

I decided to do a bit of a test of this on Friday. So, I just did, so, because I'm lazy, I did the laziest possible test you can do, which is I ran a Google search on the phrase, how to be more afraid.

How to be more afraid. And so, these are the results of my search. The top five results did not match what I was looking for. They didn't tell me how to be more afraid. Instead of that, here's what they told me.

First result, how to stop being so afraid and start feeling powerful, alive, and worthy.

Second result, how I got over my fear of confrontation and learned to speak up.

[2 : 31] And most unhelpful of all, fourth result, how not to be afraid of anything ever again. Well, that's quite a promise, but you know it's coming from a trustworthy source.

Pick the brain, right? On that first page of results, only one of them told me how to be more afraid. And so, this one result, that second one from the top there, promised me 10 reasons you should be more afraid of lightning than you already are.

So, there you go. So, based on my quick study here, people want to be more afraid of lightning and less afraid of everything else. Turns out the fear is super unpopular.

Who knew? One of the reasons for the unpopularity of fear, I think, is this. That in our culture, we use the word fear in a rather narrow sense.

In those search results, scanning through several pages worth of them, fear was identified as caution, cowardice, anxiety, fright, and terror.

[3 : 36] But as we've learned these last two weeks, God's word, the Bible, uses fear, the word fear, in a broader sense.

Fear includes not only those things, caution, cowardice, anxiety, fright, and terror. Fear also encompasses awe, wonder, devotion, admiration, respect.

It's this big blanket term that covers all of this broad range of human experience. Broadly defined, the experience of fear is this. It is the inescapable sense that someone or something else is great in power and significance.

Someone or something else is great in power or significance. So you are always going to fear someone or something.

You are always going to fear someone or something. Everyone does. You and I are made to fear. Fear is inescapable for a human being. It's who we are.

[4 : 37] We've also learned that our tendency as human beings who have sinned, who have turned our backs on God, on the God who made us, our tendency as human beings who have tried to pretend that God is small, that he's not a big deal, that I don't have to listen to him, I don't have to follow him, I don't have to obey him, our tendency is to fear the creature rather than the creator, to fear other people instead of fearing the Lord.

And so we treat other people as though they are our ultimate source of or ultimate threat to security, favor, or justice. Other people are our ultimate source of or ultimate threat to security, favor, and justice.

And the Bible gives this sort of fear its own psychological label. It calls it the fear of man. The fear of man.

It's the fear that, we've talked the last two weeks about, this fear of man is a three-fold fear. The fear that people will see me, people will harm me, or people will reject me.

People will see me, people will harm me, or people will reject me. And we've learned that the only way to truly overcome the fear of man is by replacing it with a greater fear.

[5 : 58] By fighting fear with fear. You overcome the fear of man by learning the fear of the Lord. You must learn to believe, to know, to feel, that the Lord is great in power and significance.

That the Lord is the ultimate source of security, favor, and justice. Now maybe you're thinking, okay, alright, that makes sense. That makes sense to my mind.

But you know it's one thing for you and me to say, yeah, I agree, I intellectually assent to something that God has told me. It's another thing entirely for you and me, not only to assent to the fear of the Lord, but also to desire it.

To desire it. It's not enough simply to confess something is true, to say it. We have to function out of a heart that is saturated with that truth, that longs for it.

That's the question that we're taking up today. How do we desire it? We learned two weeks ago that the fear of the Lord, it overcomes the fear of man. We learned last week how the fear of the Lord overcomes the fear of man.

[7 : 17] And now this week, we want to learn how to desire the fear of the Lord that overcomes the fear of man. We want to see how desirable it is. How good it is.

Here's the thing about how our desires work. we desire whatever we judge to be good for us. We desire whatever we judge, whatever we assess to be good for us.

The converse to that is that we don't desire, we don't want anything to do with things that we perceive, people or things that we perceive to be bad for us.

To be bad for us. Let me demonstrate this from Genesis chapter 3. This is where the first human beings that God created, they found themselves judging and desiring something differently than they should.

God had forbidden, I mean, we could get into the back story of this, but short story, God had forbidden them from eating the fruit from a particular tree. But Adam and Eve, they assessed the situation differently than God did.

[8 : 21] Here's what, here's how they assessed it. when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise.

She took of its fruit and ate. And she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. So notice the movement here, notice this. First thing, what did the woman do?

She saw. She saw. Now this is, it's not like she's never seen this before. It's not like she was blind up until this point. This is more than just physical sight.

This is not just seeing. It is also assessing. It is also judging. The same way that in the beginning, God, as he was creating his world, he saw over and over again, he saw that it was good.

He saw that it was good. He judges and assesses that it is good. By the way, this is why we are afraid that people will see us or expose us.

[9 : 29] We're afraid not merely of their gaze. We are afraid of their judgment. We're afraid of their assessment.

So in this verse, what does the woman see? Well, she sees, she assesses three things. That the tree is good, it is a delight, it is to be desired.

The goodness, that inherent desirability of the tree, that's what attracts her to it. Her perception of that. But when you and I, when we call something good, what we're doing is we are often leaving unspoken what we really mean, which is that something, that what we are calling good is good for something.

It is good for something. So for example, Michael Jordan is good for playing basketball. A Toyota Corolla is good for fuel economy and reliability.

Brussels sprouts are good for the compost heap. When we say that something is good, we mean that it's good for something or good for someone.

[10 : 44] So the woman in Genesis chapter 3, she sees that the tree is good for what? For food. It is a delight to what? To the eyes.

It is to be desired for what? To make one wise. The tree will benefit her. That's her perception. The tree is going to benefit her. It's going to bring good to her by sustaining her, by satisfying her with beauty, by making her wise.

It's going to be good for her body, good for her sense of beauty, her desire for beauty, good for her desire for wisdom. That's what she thinks and so she desires it.

And she takes its fruit for herself. and your heart and my heart, they work the same way.

The reason that you don't desire something is because you don't perceive, you don't apprehend it as being good for you. And when you do perceive the benefit of something, when you see that it is good for you, then you desire it for yourself.

[12 : 00] So the root problem of our desires is a problem of perception. and so if you and I, if we come to believe, if we come to recognize, if we come to perceive that the fear of the Lord is good for us, and it's good for you, it'll benefit you, then it becomes delightful to you, becomes desirable to you, becomes compelling to you.

So the Lord is urging you to ask him this question. How does the fear of the Lord bring good to me? How does the fear of the Lord bring good to me? Now there are many, if we were to try to cover all the possible response to this question, the sermon would be, you know, I don't know, four hours long now.

We've got nice new chairs, so we could probably stand that, but the children's ministry workers would kill me. So we're not going to do that. We've encountered some possible responses though in the last couple weeks, but I think we would be well served by starting with a new passage, with Proverbs chapter 14 verses 26 through 27.

Turn there with me. That's page 538 of the blue Bibles that our ushers provide, Proverbs chapter 14 verses 26 through 27. Here's one of the answers that God the Holy Spirit gives to you and me when we ask him the question, how does the fear of the Lord bring good to me?

In the fear of the Lord one has strong confidence and his children will have a refuge. The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life that one may turn away from the snares of death.

[13 : 48] Okay, so how does the fear of the Lord bring good to me? Well, these two Proverbs tell us how. Here's the answer. It secures me from harm and supplies me with life.

It secures me from harm and supplies me with life. The first half of that answer comes into focus in verse 26.

In the fear of the Lord one has strong confidence. Now, we might make a mistake here. We might at first think that this is describing the way that the fear of the Lord makes you feel.

confidence. Well, it sounds like, you know, it's just saying the fear of the Lord makes you feel confident. It makes you feel confident. Well, that's something, honestly, you don't have to have the fear of the Lord to feel confident.

That's what all those Google search results were for. That's what all the self-help books and counselors out there can offer you. You don't need the fear of the Lord to feel confident. The truth is that sometimes we don't, the truth is that sometimes we just settle for that feeling.

[14 : 53] Look, to feel confident, we need real confidence, real world confidence. Sometimes our confidence is misplaced, isn't it? You ever been confident in something or confident in someone and it didn't come through?

They didn't come through? Your confidence was misplaced, wasn't it? What you and I need, what's truly good, what's truly desirable for us, it's not a mere feeling of confidence.

We need an object, confidence. That's what the fear of the Lord offers, that none of those Google search results are going to offer you.

That's what's good about the fear of the Lord, that is good about nothing else. It doesn't merely make you feel confident, it does that, but it doesn't merely make you feel confident, it gives you someone who is worthy of your confidence.

It gives you the Lord, it gives you the only true God, the God of the Exodus, this God who is great, who we've encountered over this last year as we've been studying the book of Exodus, who we're going to continue to encounter over the course of this year, this God who is great above all human authorities, great above any other so-called gods.

[16 : 11] When I talk to people who aren't Christians, when they learn I'm a pastor, you know, a lot of times I found that they often speak approvingly, maybe they're just trying to be nice to me, but they speak rather approvingly the value of having faith.

They say, oh yeah, it's good that you have faith, it's a good thing. They seem to think that faith is valuable because of the internal sense of confidence it gives you.

Well, you know what, I don't agree. I don't think faith is necessarily a valuable thing. It's not because it's not good to have faith in someone who's unfaithful.

it's not good to trust someone who is untrustworthy. It's not good to have confidence in someone who is not true.

But in the fear of the Lord, one has strong confidence because the Lord is great, he is trustworthy, he is faithful, he is true.

[17 : 16] A second line of this proverb in verse 26, it takes the saying and it extends this even further. Not only is it true that in the fear of the Lord one has a strong confidence, but it's also true that his children will have a refuge.

His children will have a refuge. Now, a bit of an interpretive issue here. At first glance, it is not clear whether his children is referring to the children of the Lord, the New King James Version seems to suggest that, or whether it's referring to the children of the person who fears the Lord.

The New International Version, New Living Translation, that's what they suggest. And unfortunately, you can't really resolve that by looking at the original language because it's ambiguous. Both are possible responses.

I would put forward to you, I think that second option is most likely. These are the children of the person who fears the Lord. Those are the ones who will have a refuge. The reason I think that is because that word son or child, within the book of Proverbs, we're just talking about just within the book of Proverbs, it's not used to describe one's relationship with the Lord.

Not used directly, except by analogy. It is elsewhere in scripture, but not here. I think what's likely is that this verse is saying that the true real-life security that comes with fearing the Lord is something that can be passed on to one's children.

[18 : 48] Now, I want us to keep that in mind, because we are going to come back to that at the end of the sermon. This verse, though, is significant for all of us.

It's not just significant for those of us who are parents. But for now, I do want to think of parents specifically. Moms and dads, I know you put a lot of thought, I know you put a lot of effort into what you want to pass on to your children.

You want them to develop good character. You want them to get a good education. You want them to enjoy many life experiences and challenges. You want them to learn important life skills.

You want to make sure they have the relationships and the resources they need to succeed. All of this is your inheritance to your children. But there is a much better inheritance that you can give to them.

The best inheritance you can give to your children is the fear of the Lord. In the fear of the Lord, your children will have a refuge. They will know, they will believe in the great God of the Exodus.

[19 : 57] They will have confidence if they fear the Lord. They will have confidence in the Lord who is true. They will trust the Lord who is trustworthy. They will have faith in the Lord who is faithful. That is the best thing that you can pass on to your children.

Now there is no sure formula for this. You can do everything right and your child may still walk away from the Lord. Sometimes that happens. But we're still called to pass on the fear of the Lord, to make every effort to do that.

If you're wanting to know how can I do this in a way that's suitable for my own family, well, myself or our other elders, Carl or Doug, we're eager to help work with you.

That would be our joy. We'd love that to help work with you on ways to pass on the fear of the Lord to your children. A few weeks back, as an example, I shared the New City Catechism.

I shared that with our church's Facebook group. I'd be happy to lend you a copy or to tell you where you can find it for yourself. Because the rich memory work of a catechism, I think it's a lot like this thick, fertile topsoil that you lay on the ground.

[21 : 05] And out of that topsoil, a relationship with God can grow and thrive. I'm happy to direct you that way. I can also recommend to you resources that will help guide you in thinking, help guide you in constructing regular habits, rhythms of disciple-making in your families.

This is vital for those of us who are parents. Because the point of having children, the whole point of having children, as we're going to see later on, is to fill the world with disciples of Jesus Christ.

That's the whole point. if your priority as a mom or a dad is to pass along the fear of the Lord to your children, then you know what? You are fulfilling your purpose. You are fulfilling your mission as a parent in its entirety.

That's what you're supposed to be doing. Now let's get back to that question. How does the fear of the Lord bring good to me? How does the fear of the Lord bring good to me?

The preliminary answer we gave was that it secures me from harm and supplies me with life. Now we've seen the first half of the answer how it secures me from harm. And then in verse 27, getting back to Proverbs chapter 14 and then verse 27, we see there the second half of the answer is going to come into focus there.

[22 : 21] The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life. The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life. Now, in verse 26 we thought of the fear of the Lord as being a refuge.

That was our picture. It's like this place of safety. It's this stronghold that's built high in the rocky cliffs that the enemies can't get to. It's a city surrounded by high walls, mighty gates that the enemy army can't knock down.

But here's a problem in the ancient world that you have to resolve if you want to hide in a fortress, if you want to hide in a refuge. Those cliffs or walls that would keep the enemy at bay, they would do their job, but then what?

You're inside of the walls. How are you going to last? How are you going to survive this siege against your soul? Because you've got shelter. But where is your food and where is your water going to come from?

And of those two, water especially, that is the most critical. You can survive a few weeks without food, you can only survive a few days without water. water is life.

[23 : 33] Without water, you have misery, you have death. Secure walls alone are not going to protect a city.

Rocky cliffs alone are not going to protect a stronghold if they don't have within them a spring of water, a fountain of life. So what this verse is saying is that the fear of the Lord does more than just provide refuge, provide protection, provide security.

The fear of the Lord ensures a real, true, lasting refuge because it also provides life to us. That's why the second half of the verse says that one may turn away from the snares of death.

You don't have to abandon the refuge. You don't have to go sneak out and try to go somewhere else for life giving water only to be ambushed by the enemy. The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life.

Now last week we learned this in Proverbs chapter 15 verses 30 through 33. There we read how the fear of the Lord brings life to us. The light of the eyes rejoices the heart and good news refreshes the bones.

[24 : 49] The ear that listens to life giving reproof will dwell among the wise. Whoever ignores instruction despises himself that he who listens to reproof gains intelligence.

The fear of the Lord is instruction and wisdom and humility comes before honor. Now in those first two lines there is good news there that brings joy and refreshment that brings happiness and health.

And then we discover in the third line what this good news is. Plot twist it's life giving reproof. Life giving reproof. Correction. Rebuke. It's not what we would expect.

Those whose ears are attentive are open to this reproof. Those whose mouths drink in this life giving water.

They find their home in the refuge. In the stronghold of the wise. this stronghold this refuge is the fear of the Lord.

[25 : 54] It humbles you it corrects you it reshapes you with reproof so that you can have life.

And it all comes from knowing the Lord. It all comes from beholding and experiencing the greatness of the Lord. The Apostle Paul writes in 2 Corinthians chapter 3 verse 18 We all with unveiled face coming face to face beholding the glory of the Lord are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

You become what you behold. You take on the shape of what you look at. This good news this life giving reproof it comes from beholding the glory of the Lord.

We are transformed by God the Holy Spirit as we encounter him and especially if we're talking about encountering the Holy Spirit we encounter him in his word in the words of scripture that he wrote.

we encounter the Holy Spirit especially in the family of God the temple of the living God where his Holy Spirit dwells the company of believers who have gathered together in worship.

[27 : 25] That's how we come to know our fearsome God. Those are the primary ways. And that's why Jesus prayed to God his father in John chapter 17.

This is eternal life. life. That they know you. That they know you.

The only true God and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. Life is found in knowing God. This is the good news.

That place of refuge that place you call home that is also the place where you find life. joy.

That means that you don't have to run to the Lord for safety and security and then run somewhere else to find the life, the joy, the happiness, the vitality that you're aching for.

[28 : 23] Don't we do that? God help me with this situation that's threatening me or that's hard for me. Okay, situation solved. Alright, time to go out and have a good time. Time to find joy somewhere else.

Trying to find happiness somewhere else. The fountain of life isn't found in a lifestyle of pleasure and recreation. The fountain of life is not found in that fulfilling relationship you long for.

The fountain of life is not found in other people who can love and affirm and approve you. The fountain of life is the fear of the Lord. The fear of the Lord turns you away from the snares of death.

Verse 27. Two weeks ago we learned from Proverbs chapter 29 that the fear of man lays a snare.

The fear of man is what's laying the snare. But if you fear the Lord, you are now free. You are now freed from being controlled by the shameful fear that people will see me.

[29 : 26] You are now freed from being controlled by the cowering fear that people will harm me. You are now freed from being controlled from the needy fear that people will reject me.

You are free. Set free from your slavery to these bad, these cruel masters. You are free to drink from the water, the fountain of life, to experience the good life, to experience eternal life.

And when other people wonder, how does, you know, as you talk about the fear of the Lord and they wonder, why would I want that? How does the fear of the Lord bring good to me? Here's what you can tell them.

It secures me from harm and supplies me with life. But you know what? The fear of the Lord does even more than that. Because it is a fountain of life.

The funny thing about fountains is the whole point of a fountain is the water can't stay in one place. water can't escape. It escapes. It flows. It can't be contained within you. It spills out of you into the lives of everybody around you.

[30 : 37] That's why Jesus said in John chapter 7, if anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Find life there. Whoever believes in me, as the scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.

That could be you. Some of you, that is you. I know it is. I've seen it. You are life-giving.

Life flows from the Lord into you. And then you take on the shape, not of a cup or a tank that pools all that water for yourself and makes yourself feel loved.

You take on the shape of a channel. A channel of life. Bringing that renewing work of the Holy Spirit to those around you. Becoming an agent of God's blessing.

Now that is a compelling image. That's a good idea. That feels good. But what does that mean in the real world? What does that mean in the nitty-gritty of daily life? You may be asking this.

[31 : 45] How does the fear of the Lord bring good to others through me? How does the fear of the Lord bring good to others through me? Well, to answer this, we're going to return to a passage of Scripture that we've looked at the last two weeks.

We're going to return to Luke chapter 12, to the teaching of Jesus Christ that we've been examining. Now, as we've seen, Jesus has just warned, Jesus warns his disciples in Luke chapter 12, verses 4 and 5, not to fear other people who can kill their bodies, who can kill them physically, but to fear God who has authority to cast into hell.

And Jesus immediately follows those words of fear, those words of terror and judgment. He follows them up immediately with words of blessing and love, because Jesus says in verses 6 and 7, are not five sparrows sold for two pennies?

And not one of them is forgotten before God. Why, even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not. You are of more value than many sparrows. God even cares about every last little sparrow that you wouldn't even pay a penny for.

And if God values it, how much more you? How much more you? He counts every single hair on your head. So first, for those of you who are Christians, those of you who are believers and disciples of Jesus Christ, Jesus is blessing you with these words.

[33 : 30] In your bulletin, you should, I forgot to check to make sure, but you should have a working definition of the word blessing. A blessing is an authoritative and effective pronouncement of approval, goodwill, and favor.

It's an authoritative and effective pronouncement of approval, goodwill, and favor. What that means is a blessing is more than just well-wishing.

Blessings on you, blessings on you. It's more than just this feeble well-wishing. And blessing is more than just affirmation. I think people in our culture who are craving affirmation, maybe it's you like it is me, we're settling for so much less than we could have.

Why be affirmed when you can be blessed? An affirmation can come from anyone. Blessing is affirmation from one who speaks with authority, from one whose pronouncement has real effect.

And in these verses, Jesus promises the children of God, you have his approval. You have his goodwill.

- [34 : 42] You have his favor. This is a blessing of approval. It's approval for those of you who fear being seen or exposed. It's a blessing of goodwill for you who fear being harmed.
- It's a blessing of favor for you who fear being rejected. This blessing frees you, it frees me in two ways. First, the blessing from our fearsome God frees you from shame.
- The blessing from our fearsome God frees you from shame. It frees you and me from that sense of guilt, that sense of inadequacy, from the sense of self-hatred that you might have.
- It frees you from shame. not by offering you what the world offers you, not by offering you shamelessness and mere self-esteem. It frees you from shame by replacing your shame with God given honor.
- God given honor. God's pronouncement, his authority. And it frees you from your demand for affirmation and approval, trying to get that out of other people.
- [35 : 55] It frees you by replacing these demands. with the ability to bless others and to love others instead. Instead of demanding to be loved, you start loving them.
- And that's the second way God's blessing frees you and me. The love of our fearsome God frees you to love others. The love of our fearsome God frees you to love others.
- It frees you and me from the need to protect ourselves from other people. Now, one thing that I have often heard is people saying, look, yes, you do need to love others and serve others, but make sure that you protect yourself, make sure you take care of yourself, try to form a balance there.
- But look, real biblical love doesn't find a contradiction there, doesn't find two opposite things that you need to balance. real biblical love takes you beyond mere self preservation, beyond mere self care.
- This God given, God fearing love is different. It's not the doormat love that lets other people walk all over you. Why?
- [37 : 09] Because God given, God fearing love is willing to get tough. It's the sort of love that recognizes, look, if I let someone walk all over me, I'm just enabling their sin, I'm enabling a sinful lifestyle and a sinful mindset, you know what?
- I'm going to have the courage to push back, to push the other person toward righteousness and toward responsible living, and not just to wilt in front of them.
- This God given, God fearing love, it's not this exhausting love that says yes to everything and yes to everyone and you run yourself rag at doing everything. this sort of love says, look, I need to be a vessel, a channel of God's blessing and mercy, and to do that, I need to take time to rest, I need to take time to refresh myself.
- I'm not doing this just to take care of myself, I'm doing this because I want to love others, because I want to serve others, that's what's driving my rest. I need to be renewed so that I can get right back to loving and serving other people.
- So how does the fear of the Lord bring good to others through me? It frees me from shame and frees me to love. It frees me from shame and frees me to love.
- [38 : 35] And what that means is this frees you and me to become who we were meant to be. To become who we are meant to be. Because when God created the first human beings, God gave them their purpose, our purpose, their mission, our mission in this world.
- In Genesis chapter one, we read, God created man in his own image. In the image of God, he created him. Male and female, he created them.
- And God blessed them. And God said to them, be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.

So what this means is that the purpose of all human beings, that includes you and me, the purpose of all human beings is to bear the image of God, to exercise authority on the Lord's behalf over his created world, to care for it as he would.

And God gave the first man and the first woman, he made them male and female, to give them the ability to do that, so that they could be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth with his image bearers.

[39 : 54] Now that blessing continues. God renews and he sharpens this blessing with his servant Abraham in Genesis chapter 12. God promises Abraham, I will make of you a great nation.

He's multiplying. And I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you.

And him who dishonors you, I will curse. And in you, all the families of the earth shall be blessed. So that means that everyone from the lineage of Abraham now carries out this mission of bringing the Lord's blessing, bringing his goodness to the world.

And this mission is being accomplished through the one man, that singular descendant of Abraham, Jesus Christ our Lord. Jesus Christ feared the Lord God and him alone.

He was not controlled by anyone's attempt to expose him or harm him or reject him. Jesus lived a life of perfect fear. And you and I have failed to do.

[41 : 01] He lived it for our sake in our place. Jesus died on a cross in obedience to his father. Jesus bore the hell that every Christian should have endured for our rejection of and our disobedience to God.

Oh, believe in him and believe this, that Jesus was raised to life. And then he told his disciples that that great blessing, this purpose, this mission that had been passed down to him, he is now sharing with them.

He says in Matthew chapter 28, all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.

And behold, I am with you always to the end of the age. to have dominion. Jesus says it's been given to me.

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Jesus. Jesus, our Lord, is great in power and significance. I am with you always.

[42 : 22] Jesus, our Lord, is with us. God is great. God is with us. God is good. So, you and I can pass on the life-giving news.

That God is good. That the fear of the Lord is a fountain of life. A fountain whose waters are channeled through each one of us.

We're here to exalt Jesus as King, equip his followers for ministry, and engage the world with the gospel. We're here to make disciples. Remember way back in Proverbs chapter 14, earlier in the sermon, we talked about the person who fears the Lord.

Remember that proverb that says, his children will have a refuge. I want to let you know this morning, this is not meant merely for biological parents.

It's for spiritual parents as well. You don't have to be married. You don't have to have children for this to be true. It's for people like the Apostle Paul, who mentored Timothy, who called him my true child in the faith.

[43 : 35] My true child. You're the real thing. Any biological children I would have had, they would have just been shadows of the reality. You're my true child. Because you're following the footsteps of fearing the Lord.

