

TO LOVE GOD IS TO FEAR HIM, TO FEAR HIM IS TO LOVE HIM!

Please turn to Deut 10. YOU CANNOT LOVE GOD WITHOUT FEARING HIM, AND YOU CANNOT FEAR GOD WITHOUT LOVING HIM

And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God ask of you but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in obedience to him, to love him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. (Deuteronomy 10:12)

Loving and fearing God are like two sides of the same coin. You really cannot understand one without the other. You cannot understand God's love fully if you do not fear him, and you cannot understand the fear of the Lord, in its proper context, if you do not love him.

Therefore, we need to grow in our knowledge of God.

"Fear" here in the Hebrew is "yaw-ray" (יָרָא) and means "to fear, revere, be afraid." It can also mean "awe" or "dread" and also to "terrify."

When Adam said he was afraid and tried to hide from God in Genesis 3, it is this word. When Sarah, Abraham's wife, was afraid when the angel of the LORD called her out for laughing at the prophecy that she'd be holding a baby in a year..it is this word. When Lot was afraid and in his fear left Zoar to live in a cave with his two daughters, it is this word. When God told Abraham to not fear, that God was his shield and very great reward, it is this word. When God comforted Hagar when she was cast out of Abraham's camp by Sarah with her infant son Ishmael, he told her to not fear. Again, this word. And in another almost 320 instances in the scriptures.

So here we are told God asks us to fear him. Why? Well consider what manifests when we fear God? Walking in obedience. Loving God. Service with all our heart and soul to God.

When we fear God, "Yaw-ray" these things manifest in our lives.

Obedience: Struggling with your purity? With your evangelism? With your discipleship? With commitment to meetings of the body? With confession - when was the last time you confessed sin?

Love: Do we love God? Time with him. Prayer, bible study, church? Is church a chore or a chance for you to love God? Love what he loves? Worship him?

Service with all your heart and soul? Lateness happens, but sometimes it is because of a lack

of heart. Do you want to serve in the children's ministry? Do you want to usher? Do you want to lead a bible talk?

Do we want Jesus to serve us o'er and o'er again on the cross, all the benefits but none of the self-denial and self-sacrifice of true discipleship? Do we want a "religion" that works for us (convenient, feeds into entitlement), or a relationship we work at with all our heart and soul? Need to see, TO LOVE GOD IS TO FEAR HIM, TO FEAR HIM IS TO LOVE HIM!

Well, what about the God of the New Testament? I mean, didn't he get baptized or something and is like, nicer now? Please turn to Isaiah 11:1. And Let's talk *a little bit* about Jesus. You all understand of course that the bible that Jesus taught from, the bible that his disciples lived by and taught about the messiah from throughout the first century was the "Old Testament." Scholars believe the first NT book written was James' letter in 45 AD, then likely Galatians in 49 AD, and John Mark did not pen his gospel until 50's AD and Matthew likely in the late 50's and 60's. You realize that the Pentecost, the first "official gospel sermon" in Acts 2 occurred in 29 AD. So for the first 20-30 years of discipleship and the church in the first century they used the Old Testament to teach people about Jesus Christ, the messiah.

This is why in the book of Acts, chapter 8, the Ethiopian Eunuch / official was reading from Isaiah the prophet and Phillip used that passage (and others in the "scroll" of Isaiah) to explain to him the Gospel of Jesus Christ. But we digress. Isaiah 11:1-3...

A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; From his roots a Branch will bear fruit. The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him - the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the Lord - and he will delight in the fear of the Lord. (Isaiah 11:1-3)

Jesus here is described in his ancestry as a shoot from the stump of Jesse. Jesus is described as having the Spirit of the LORD resting on him. This is the same Spirit of wisdom and understanding, of counsel and might, the Spirit of Knowledge and the fear of the LORD. And he will delight in (all the people getting baptized...all the love in the church...all the mercies of the gospel...) no. He will delight in the fear of the LORD.

Do we delight Jesus? Is the fear of the LORD in us?

To delight in something is to enjoy it enormously. I sometimes delight in having a good slice

of pizza. I particularly like a good chezburger. So, does my wife Amy – and we are fired up to go to Inn-n-Out. Once it comes, we delight in it, as we a good burger with our whole heart! Jesus delights in the FEAR of the LORD – so should we! God wants us to fear him for our own good. The fear of the Lord saves us from death, and we need this fear.

#1 DELIGHT IN THE FEAR OF THE LORD

Please turn to Isaiah 33...

[Isa 33:5-6 NIV] 5 The LORD is exalted, for he dwells on high; he will fill Zion with his justice and righteousness. 6 He will be the sure foundation for your times, a rich store of salvation and wisdom and knowledge; the fear of the LORD is the key to this treasure.

This prophecy about Jesus speaks about how Jesus *will fill Zion (Jerusalem)* with his justice and righteousness. It teaches that Jesus will be the sure foundation for our times, a rich store of salvation, wisdom, and knowledge. How do we unlock these riches, this treasured foundation from Jesus, the Messiah?

The Fear Of The LORD is The Key To This TREASURE!

Psalm 112:1, 7

Blessed are those who fear the Lord, who find great delight in his commands... They will have no fear of bad news; their hearts are steadfast, trusting in the Lord.

Don't find comfort in the world. Netflix, gaming, etc.

Take time with God. Extra time in prayer. Extra time in the scriptures. Depth to face difficult things.

Fearing God...insulates us from fearing "bad news." You believe in the total sovereignty of God. Romans 8:28

What did Jesus himself say about the FEAR of the LORD? (Please turn to Luke 12:4-7) The God of the OT is the same God of the NT, the covenant has changed and is through Christ, but our God is consistent in what he wants and in his teaching of us.

I tell you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that can do no more. But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear him who, after your body has been

killed, has authority to throw you into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him. Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten by God. Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows. (Luke 12:4-7)

Mankind can only take your physical life – that's their worst. God, however, can not only take your physical life, but has the authority to throw you into hell.

Simplest way to understand hell = eternal separation from God.

Hell, Gehenna or Gehenna of Fire – “Hell is the place of the future punishment called “Gehenna” or “Gehenna of fire”. This was originally the valley of Hinnom, south of Jerusalem, where the filth and dead animals of the city were cast out and burned; a fit symbol of the wicked and their future destruction.”

It is where the filth of the city, the sewer repository, was – and they burned everything there that was unclean and dead.

God has the authority to do this, no one else. Fear him. Respect him. Revere him.

This image is fitting indeed. Jesus taught about hell some 11-12 times and as did James and Peter. Revelation clarifies it as the second death, the destiny of Satan, his minions, and all who follow him.

#2 FEAR GOD AND NOTHING ELSE

Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father's care. And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows. (Matthew 10:28-31)

Don't fear any person. Fear God who can destroy both soul AND body in hell!

Do not fear God because he tracks and cares for the sparrows, which we are worth far more than. He cares so much about us, he know the numbers of hairs on our heads.

If we fear God we have nothing else in this life to fear.

BECAUSE: THE FEAR OF THE LORD TAKES AWAY YOUR OTHER FEARS

We fear all kinds of things. Finances (economy, political issues). Health. Loss (of life, family, job). Crime. Traffic. Loneliness. Work or school failures, infidelity.

[Psa 19:9-14 NIV] 9 The fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever. The decrees of the LORD are firm, and all of them are righteous. 10 They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the honeycomb. 11 By them your servant is warned; in keeping them there is great reward. 12 But who can discern their own errors? Forgive my hidden faults. 13 Keep your servant also from willful sins; may they not rule over me. Then I will be blameless, innocent of great transgression. 14 May these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer.

Electricity – not walking around terrified if it is going to shock me all the sudden. However, I still have a healthy fear of electricity. It is a force more powerful than I, and I would never put my finger, much less my tongue, in the electric socket. In light of that, I am careful with it. With God, we need to be the same way. We need not go around thinking that God wants to send us to hell, but we do need to understand that God is, dare we say, a force that is a lot more powerful than us. If you do not mess with him, he will not mess with you. It is good to have a healthy fear of the Lord!

#3 THE FEAR OF THE LORD IS THE KEY TO HOLINESS

[Psa 19:9 NIV] 9 The fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever. The decrees of the LORD are firm, and all of them are righteous.

To purity. (Boundaries) If you are not pure, understand this, you do not fear the LORD nor what he can do.[Eph 5:3-7 NIV] 3 But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. 4 Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. 5 For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person—such a person is an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. 6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient. 7 Therefore do not be partners with them. Deal with greed radically.

[Mal 3:6-10 NIV] 6 "I the LORD do not change. So you, the descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed. 7 Ever since the time of your ancestors you have turned away from my decrees and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you," says the LORD Almighty. "But you ask, 'How are we to return?' 8 "Will a mere mortal rob God? Yet you rob me. "But you ask, 'How are we robbing you?' "In tithes and offerings. 9 You are under a curse—your whole nation—because you are robbing me. 10 Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it.

Robber vs. Thief? Utterly disrespectful to God. Testing his restraint. He will curse you. Nothing to God for weeks? Shameful. Shame.

Return to me? You're announcing your departure and your need for restoration. Nothing to missions, really? How unholy, untrusting, and ungrateful. Improper. Repent and return to God. It is all about God and having "The Fear of the LORD"

Look at this promise - Psalm 34

[Psa 34:9 NIV] 9 Fear the LORD, you his holy people, for those who fear him lack nothing.

[Psa 34:10, 12-16 NIV] 10 The lions may grow weak and hungry, but those who seek the LORD lack no good thing. ... 12 Whoever of you loves life and desires to see many good days, 13 keep your tongue from evil and your lips from telling lies. 14 Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it. 15 The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, and his ears are attentive to their cry; 16 but the face of the LORD is against those who do evil, to blot out their name from the earth.

To seeking God. To honesty. To loving life and seeing many good days. To making a difference in many people's lives and their eternities instead of making many excuses as to why you can't do bible studies, can't do missions, or can't do evangelism. Let's do God's will.

[Pro 1:7 NIV] 7 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

[Pro 2:1-6 NIV] 1 My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you, 2 turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding— 3 indeed, if you call

out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, 4 and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, 5 then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God. 6 For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.

[Pro 10:27-29 NIV] 27 The fear of the LORD adds length to life, but the years of the wicked are cut short. 28 The prospect of the righteous is joy, but the hopes of the wicked come to nothing. 29 The way of the LORD is a refuge for the blameless, but it is the ruin of those who do evil.

When we cling to our life, our way, our opinions and our feelings *over God's word*, we will find ourselves the victim in the Kingdom. Our footing is unsure when we do not fear the LORD.

[Pro 14:26-27 NIV] 26 Whoever fears the LORD has a secure fortress, and for their children it will be a refuge. 27 The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, turning a person from the snares of death.

Life.

[Pro 15:16-17 NIV] 16 Better a little with the fear of the LORD than great wealth with turmoil. 17 Better a small serving of vegetables with love than a fattened calf with hatred.

Love

[Pro 16:6 NIV] 6 Through love and faithfulness sin is atoned for; through the fear of the LORD evil is avoided.

Avoidance of evil.

[Pro 19:22-23 NIV] 22 What a person desires is unfailing love; better to be poor than a liar. 23 The fear of the LORD leads to life; then one rests content, untouched by trouble.

Unfailing love. Real contentment.

[Pro 22:4 NIV] 4 Humility is the fear of the LORD; its wages are riches and honor and life.

Humility IS the fear of the LORD. Pride is it's complete absence. How is our humility

tonight? What wages will our humility earn us? What wages pride? Are we critics?

[Pro 23:17-18 NIV] 17 Do not let your heart envy sinners, but always be zealous for the fear of the LORD. 18 There is surely a future hope for you, and your hope will not be cut off.

Do we have hope in the Kingdom of God? Do we know the future God holds for his faithful ones – those that fear him?

Fearing God is tied to recognizing consequences. For example, adultery, speeding tickets, jail time, failing out of school or college, getting fired...but it is not the same.

Recognizing there are consequences, fearing them, is not the same as fearing God. This is “healthy” to a degree, we should have the sense to fear consequences, they should help us “pump the brakes” and think twice. But this is where matters of fearing God should *start*. Fearing losing my relationship with God is not the same as fearing God. Losing my relationship with God is a healthy thing to fear though. This is a much better “fear” than merely fearing the consequences. Who would like to hear “...the only reason I did not sleep with my co-worker(s) is because I did not want you to leave me for it.” Wouldn’t we agree, “I did not sleep with that other person because I knew how much it would hurt you, and that I really want to repair and rebuild our relationship because it means so much to me.” This is not the same as “I did not sin with that person because I know what you would do to me if I did such a thing.”

Fearing God is...fearing *God*.

Fear of God = Love of God / Love of God = Fear of God

In Light of Giving to God

[Ecc 5:5-7 NIV] 5 It is better not to make a vow than to make one and not fulfill it. 6 Do not let your mouth lead you into sin. And do not protest to the temple messenger, “My vow was a mistake.” Why should God be angry at what you say and destroy the work of your hands? 7 Much dreaming and many words are meaningless. Therefore fear God.

Reverence

[Ecc 8:12-13 NIV] 12 Although a wicked person who commits a hundred crimes may live a long time, I know that it will go better with those who fear God, who are reverent before him.

13 Yet because the wicked do not fear God, it will not go well with them, and their days will not lengthen like a shadow.

[Ecc 12:13-14 NIV] 13 Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the duty of all mankind. 14 For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil.