

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO THE FEAR OF GOD?

The Reverence for God

(Ecclesiastes 12:13)

“He who fears God has nothing else to fear.” (Charles H. Spurgeon)

- I. DEFINING the Fear of God (Prov. 1:7)
  - A. “The CONTINUAL awareness that I am in the presence of the HOLY, JUST, and ALMIGHTY God, and that every THOUGHT, WORD, and ACTION is OPEN before Him and is being JUDGED by Him” (Heb. 4:13)
  - B. “Begins when we realize that our LIVES are in HIS HANDS and that He is FREE to do with us as He PLEASES.” (Rom. 11:36)
    1. Includes a “REVERENTIAL AWE” that comes from RECOGNIZING who He is
    2. Produces a heart attitude of “WORSHIPFUL SUBMISSION” to Him
  - C. “Recognizes that our lives REVOLVE around HIM, not OURSELVES”
  - D. “Is the starting point for EVERY ASPECT of our relationship with God”
  
- II. DEVELOPING the Fear of God
  - A. Focus on GOD’S WORD (Prov. 2:1-5)
    1. Revere the UNIVERSAL, non-OPTIONAL principles of God’s Word (Deut. 17:19)
    2. Relate the CONSEQUENCES of SIN to the HOLINESS of God (1 Cor. 9:27)
    3. Consider the WORDS He uses for how we SHOULD respond
      - a. DREAD (Isaiah 8:13)
      - b. TREMBLING (Ps. 4:4; cf. Dan. 5:5-9; Matt. 28:3-4)
      - c. DISMAY (Jer. 17:18; Dan. 10:8-11; 18-19)
      - d. TERROR (Mark 4:41; Luke 8:37; 24:36-37)

- B. Focus on the RISEN CHRIST (Rev. 1:12-17)
  - 1. He is the OMNISCIENT JUDGE
  - 2. He is the OMNIPOTENT KING
- C. Honor God with the “FIRST FRUITS” of your INCREASE (Deut. 14:22-23)
  - 1. Recognizes that God is in CONTROL of our FUNDS
  - 2. Demonstrates confidence that He will REWARD our FAITH
  - 3. Understands that if we REFUSE to give, the “DEVOURER” is allowed to CONSUME our resources (Mal. 3:8-11; cf. 2 Cor. 9:6)

### III. DEMONSTRATING the Fear of God

- A. Leads to personal HOLINESS (Prov. 3:7)
  - 1. Fear His DISPLEASURE for DISOBEDIENCE
  - 2. Learn to HATE the sin that CORRUPTS us
- B. Promotes LONGEVITY (Prov. 10:27; 14:27)
  - 1. Avoid BEHAVIOR that is self-DESTRUCTIVE
  - 2. DISOBEDIENCE can bring the CHASTENING of God
- C. Produces a LEGACY (Prov. 14:26)
  - 1. God-fearing PARENTS can rear God-fearing CHILDREN
  - 2. Society has DIMINISHED the parents’ POWER of INFLUENCE
  - 3. The FLESH is ATTRACTED to a less DEMANDING god
- D. Generates HUMILITY (Prov. 15:33; 1 Pet. 5:5)
  - 1. SUBMITTING to God’s AUTHORITY
  - 2. DEFLECTING personal GLORY (Luke 18:14; Phil. 2:3)
- E. Causes CONTENTMENT (Prov. 19:23)
  - 1. Requires a proper response that leads to a CLEAR CONSCIENCE
  - 2. Drives out all OTHER FEARS that would steal our PEACE
- F. Results in a life of HONOR (Prov. 22:4)
  - 1. Engenders a RESPECTABLE life
  - 2. Engenders a PRODUCTIVE life