

Huddle

The Fear of God
February 23, 2014

If you were to describe God in a couple sentences, what would they be?

Recent years have seen an increase in teaching that emphasizes God's love, forgiveness, and intimate presence with His people. These truths are important to hear; especially when people feel lonely, isolated, guilty, and insignificant. But has the pendulum swung too far?

Do you feel there has been a loss of respect for God's authority and holiness in recent years? Why or Why not?

Today, we will talk about the balance of the heart of God. A God who loves and forgives is also a God of holiness, righteousness, judgment, and who is to be feared.

Deuteronomy 10:12-13 "And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God require of you, but to **fear the Lord your God**, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments of the Lord and His statutes which I command you today for your good?" NKJV

Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: **Fear God** and keep His commandments, For this is man's all. For God will bring every work into judgment, Including every secret thing, Whether good or evil. NKJV

Let's Get Real!

What images come to mind when you hear "fear God"?

Pastor Phil shared that fear can be positive or negative. The Old Testament words meant to fear; morally, to revere, dread exceedingly, reverence. The New Testament words meant frightful, terrible, to be in awe of, afraid, exceedingly fearful, terror, reverence.

Fear can be a godly emotion, feeling of reverence, awe, and respect toward the Almighty; or an unpleasant emotion caused by natural circumstance of supernatural assault.

The Scriptures declare that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge" (Prov. 1:7) as well as "the beginning of wisdom" (Prov. 16:16)

How did your relationship with God change as you began to both love Him and fear Him?

Proverbs 3:7-8 Do not be wise in your own eyes; **Fear the Lord** and depart from evil. It will be health to your flesh, And strength to your bones. NKJV

Luther refers to the fear that a child has for his father or mother when he has tremendous respect and love for them and he dearly wants to please them. He has a fear or an anxiety of offending the one he loves, not because he is afraid of torture or even of punishment, but rather because he is afraid of displeasing the one who is, in that child's world, the source of security and love.

How have your parental relationships impacted your view of God?

Paul David Trip, Age of Opportunity - To fear God means that my life is structured by a sense of awe, worship, and obedience that flows out of recognizing Him and His glory.

He becomes the single most important reference point for all that I desire, think, do, and say. God is my motive and God is my goal. The fear of God is meant to be *the* central organizing force in my life.

Do you share his perspective? Why or why not?

William Gurnall said "We fear men so much, because we fear God so little. One fear cures another. When man's terror scares you, turn your thoughts to the wrath of God. "

Colossians 3:22-23 Bondservants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God. And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men.

How do you personally balance fear of man vs fear of God?

Romans 6:1-2 Well then, should we keep on sinning so that God can show us more and more of his wonderful grace? Of course not! Since we have died to sin, how can we continue to live in it?

How does fear of God protect you from sinning?

The fear of God brings temporal and eternal benefits:

1. "The secret of the Lord is for those who fear Him, and He will make them know His covenant" (Ps. 25:14).
2. "The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear Him, and rescues them" (Ps. 34:7).
3. "The Lord has compassion on those who fear Him" (Ps. 103:13).
4. "The Lord favors those who fear Him" (Ps. 147:11).
5. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (Prov. 1:7; 9:10).
6. "The fear of the Lord prolongs life" (Prov. 10:27).
7. "The fear of the Lord leads to life, that one may sleep satisfied, untouched by evil" (Prov. 19:23).
8. "The reward of humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, honor and life" (Prov. 22:4).
9. As David says to the Lord, "How great is Your goodness, which You have stored up for those who fear You" (Ps. 31:19).

Walk it Out

Fear - focus on the holiness of God
Eschew evil - evade, elude, escape, avoid
Accountability
Repentance, repent

What choices can you make to receive all the benefits of a balanced relationship with God?