

The Fear of God

- I. Our God is love (**1JO 4:8**) but also a consuming fire (**HEB 12:28-29**) Who “...ought to be feared” (**PSA 76:11**).
- A. The fear of God was implied before sin entered the world. **GEN 2:17**.
 - B. Adam was afraid of God after sin entered (**GEN 3:10**) but this fear could not prevent judgment.
 - 1. Had Adam's love of God been perfect, this latter fear would not have come. **1JO 4:18; 3:21**.
 - 2. Such is the consequence of not loving God above all as we should. **MAT 22:37**.
 - C. Adam chose to not fear God when he chose to sin.
 - 1. This is the pattern of our failures.
 - 2. In that moment when we choose to sin, we stifle the fear of God by convincing ourselves of the superior seasonal value of the sin (**HEB 11:25**) and/or that God is blind, forgetful, or doesn't mean what He says. We believe a lie rather than God.
- II. fear: The emotion of pain or uneasiness caused by the sense of impending danger, or by the prospect of some possible evil.
- A. See **ISA 8:13**.
 - 1. dread: Extreme fear; deep awe or reverence; apprehension or anxiety as to future events.
 - 2. This apprehension of the future should extend beyond temporal judgment. **LUK 12:5**.
 - B. God does truly represent an impending danger or prospect of evil.
 - 1. His wrath is revealed from heaven against ALL ungodliness and unrighteousness. **ROM 1:18**.
 - 2. The “evil” (per fear's definition) is trouble or judgment for sin viewed as evil from man's perspective. **2KI 22:20; JON 3:10**.
 - C. The *love* of God is a powerful incentive to live righteously. **2CO 5:14-15; GAL 2:20**.
 - D. The *fear* of God is also a powerful incentive to live righteously. **HEB 10:26-31**.
 - E. We are to behold both “...the goodness AND severity of God...” (**ROM 11:22**).
 - 1. The goodness of God may persuade men to repentance. **ROM 2:4**.
 - 2. The terror of God may persuade men to repentance. **2CO 5:10-11**.
 - 3. Some are saved by compassion, others by fear. **JUDE 1:22-23**.
 - 4. The God of election and grace is also the God of holiness. **ROM 6:1-2; 2TI 2:19**.
 - F. A neglect of the fearful aspect of God leads to an unbalanced Christianity and worldview.
 - G. Consider the nature and works of God and fear.
 - 1. He plunged the creation under judgment because of one man's single sin. **ROM 5:12**.
 - 2. He destroyed the world with a flood because of wickedness. **GEN 6-7**.
 - 3. He visits the iniquity of the fathers unto subsequent generations. **EXO 20:5**.
 - 4. He will by *no means* acquit the wicked. **EXO 34:7**.
 - 5. His eyes see all. **PRO 15:3**.
 - 6. He shall judge and punish His people in time. **HEB 10:30**.
 - 7. He shall judge and punish the wicked in time and eternity. **ACT 17:31**.
- III. The fear of God presupposes an acknowledgment of God.
- A. Where God's existence is denied, there will be no fear of God.
 - B. The hellish doctrine of “goo-to-you” evolution is nothing but a denial of God.

- C. If there is no God to be feared, there is no absolute law to answer to.
 - D. Without an absolute standard of right and wrong, morals become relative.
 - E. Relative morals change according to societal whim, trend or bias.
 - F. Utopian schemers envision a perfect society without God. This is a fool's paradise. **PSA 14:1.**
 - G. The "perfect" God-free society eventually degenerates to chaos which invites tyranny to restore order.
 - 1. "When liberty destroys order, the hunger for order will destroy liberty."
(Will Durant)
 - 2. Beware of any who promote unlimited liberty. **2PE 2:19.**
 - H. In the place of the fear of God, the fear of the State comes. The State becomes a pseudo-God.
 - I. In times like these, the godly must make tough choices. **EXO 1:17-21.**
- IV. The lack of the fear of God is at the basis of all sin and crime. **PSA 36:1; MAL 3:5.**
- A. Abraham feared for his life because of a perceived absence of the fear of God in Gerar. **GEN 20:11.**
 - B. The fear of God is the ultimate restraint of evil.
 - C. The belief that there is a Supreme, all-seeing Judge from Whose eyes iniquity cannot be hid, Whose justice cannot be escaped, and Who has power to cast into hell is the best deterrent to evil. **1TI 5:24-25; HEB 4:13; JOH 5:28-29.**
 - 1. Job feared God AND eschewed evil. **JOB 1:1.**
 - 2. Joseph's fear of God made him do likewise. **GEN 39:9; 42:18.**
 - D. The fear of God properly regulates all human relationships. **LEV 19:14; 25:17, 36, 43; 2SAM 23:3; 2CH 19:6-7; NEH 5:15.**
 - E. The brazenness of sinners is proportionate to their lack of fear of God. **ISA 3:9; JUDE 1:12-13.**
 - 1. The deferral of their judgment encourages their sin. **PSA 55:19; ECC 8:11.**
 - 2. God's payday is not every Friday, but it shall certainly come.
 - 3. In the long run, he that fears God always wins out. **ECC 8:12-13.**
- V. The fear of God is alien to depraved man under sin. **ROM 3:18.**
- A. The fear of God must be taught.
 - B. It is taught inwardly by grace, as with Cornelius. **ACT 10:2.**
 - C. It is taught outwardly by Scripture. **PRO 2:1-5; DEU 17:19.**
 - D. It is characterized by the hatred of evil, pride, arrogancy, etc. **PRO 8:13.**
- VI. Consider the importance of the fear of God to the believer.
- A. It is the beginning of knowledge. **PRO 1:7.**
 - B. It is the beginning of wisdom. **PRO 9:10.**
 - C. It prolongs days. **PRO 10:27.**
 - D. It is the basis of personal repentance and holy living. **2CO 7:1.**
 - E. It is the basis of our mutual submission in the church. **EPH 5:21.**
 - F. God's mercy is on them that fear Him. **LUK 1:50; MAL 3:16.**
 - G. The fear of man brings a snare; the fear of God delivers from it. **PRO 29:25; 14:27.**
- VII. "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil" (**ECC 12:13-14**).