
NO FEAR

Part 1 - Godly Fear

Fear: a distressing emotion aroused by impending danger, evil, pain, etc., whether the threat is real or imagined; the feeling or condition of being afraid.

A life of fear is a life of torment. Fear is not God's will for us. Fear is crippling. In other words fear will cause you to stop, to become unable to do what you need to do. Fear is paralysing.

Fear Paralyses Purpose

When we fear what might happen or fear what people think - we paralyse our purpose. There is no greater paralysing of our faith than the fear of people (Proverbs 29:25). We so worry about what will please other people that we forget what pleases God!

God personally designed each of us and has destined us for greatness - but fear will rip us off from our destiny. Fear is a trap. Fear makes us do dumb things and make bad choices. Fear of people can even cause us to compromise our integrity.

Fear makes us want to give up and get out of the race. Fear is torment. However, fear is meant to be overcome. More than one hundred times the Word of God commands us to not be afraid. There is hope that we don't have to live with fear. There is a promise that fear can be overcome.

When we shift our minds from our overwhelming fear to God's overwhelming faithfulness, everything changes. This enables us to enter deeper waters with bold faith. Uncertainty becomes clear conviction with boldness and confidence. No fear of people or the enemy but a holy fear born out of love.

Deeper Waters

We have been talking about setting sail and going into deeper waters, where we have our sail hoisted for the wind of His Spirit to fill our sails and

take us into deeper waters. People have looked both inside and outside the four walls of this building, looking for opportunity to declare and demonstrate God's love to those around us. We have been:

- + Going Deeper as a Family
- + Experiencing His Presence in a Deeper Way
- + Looking to show a Deeper Expression of God's Love to the World

When Jesus began His ministry, He sought out people who would follow Him and help Him in His mission to set the captives free from the depths. Time and time again, Jesus would say and throughout the Bible God or His messengers say, "Don't be afraid". He knows we are going to be afraid but there are options to not live in fear.

Whatever deep looks like for you – don't let fear hold you back from the call into deeper waters.

A Different Type of Fear

Our consumer culture makes the "fear of God" seem like an antiquated and irrelevant idea. But we will only grow as God's people when we both love God more intimately and fear Him more reverently.

The fear of the Lord isn't about being afraid of God; it's about revering Him above all else. When we do that, we position ourselves to receive all the benefits that come with putting God first in our lives. The fear of the Lord is a holy fear, a holy reverence, because God is an Almighty and awesome God (Proverbs 9:10; Acts 9:31).

In Isaiah we read that the fear of the Lord is his treasure (Isaiah 33:6) and his delight (Isaiah 11:3). The fear of God frees us from the slavery of the fear of people. Proverbs 29:25 says, "The fear of man brings a snare".

But the fear of God brings life and satisfaction (Proverbs 19:23). It brings victory against temptation (Proverbs 16:6). It leads to freedom and joyful obedience (Jeremiah 32:39-40). The fear of the Lord is a good gift from a good Father. Solomon said it is everyone's duty (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

What Does It Mean To Walk In The Fear Of The Lord?

It means for us to:

- + Regard God with my highest respect
- + Be yielded to Him in absolute submission
- + Completely trust Him with all of my life
- + Love Him supremely above all others

"You shall walk after the Lord your God and fear him and keep his commandments and obey his voice, and you shall serve him and hold fast to him. Deuteronomy 13:4 (ESV)

The only time you could legitimately be afraid of God in the earthly sense of fear would be if you are living in sin. Because the Lord God says the wages of sin is death. If you're not living in right relationship with God then you have a right to be afraid of what is to come (Matthew 10:28).

It does not mean to be scared of God as of someone evil who means to harm us. But the word "fear" does mean to be afraid – but in this very specific sense:

- + Afraid of wronging or hurting the one we dearly love and who has loved us so much
- + Afraid of the danger if by disobeying God we put ourselves in the hands of our enemy.

Benefits of Fearing the Lord

- + **God's Provision.** "Fear the Lord, you his saints, for those who fear him lack nothing." (Psalm 34:9)
- + **God's protection.** "The fear of the Lord leads to life: then one rests content, untouched by trouble." (Proverbs 19:23)
- + **God's love.** "For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him." (Psalm 103:11)
- + **God's grace.** "How great is your goodness, which you have stored up for those who fear you, which you bestow in the sight of men on those who take refuge in you." (Psalm 31:19)
- + **God's abundance.** "Humility and the fear of the Lord bring health and honour and life." (Proverbs 22:4)

- + **God's response.** "He fulfils the desires of those who fear him; he hears their cry and saves them." (Psalm 145:19)
- + **Freedom.** "Through the fear of the Lord a man avoids evil." (Proverbs 16:6) God has His mystery. He doesn't mean concealing it from us, but wants us to explore it by drawing close to Him. "The Lord confides in those who fear him; he makes his covenant known to them." (Psalm 25:14)

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Discussion Questions

1. Has fear ever paralysed God's purpose for you in life. Share in pairs.
2. What is the deeper water God is calling you to? Is there a fear that could deter you from entering deeper water.
3. Why is the fear of people such a big deal for most people?
4. What does fearing God mean to you after reading the related passages? Do you fear God? Do you submit to Him, do you revere Him, does your life and lifestyle demonstrate that you trust Him and serve Him?
5. Do you need to make an exchange of fear for God's peace and certainty?
6. Pray for one another.