

Scriptures and Doctrine :: The Fear of God

The Fear of God - posted by dougkristen (), on: 2004/6/18 14:18

What is the fear of God?

How do we get the fear of God?

It is good or bad?

Why should we have the fear of God?

Grace,
Doug ;-)

Re: The Fear of God - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2004/6/18 15:45

Proverbs 8:12 tells us that the fear of the Lord is to HATE evil.

So, to fear God we are to hate all sin, as sin destroys the intimacy we have with God. If I were to break into your house at night, and try to take your spouse from you, you would loathe that, and do everything in your power to keep that from happening. So it must be with us and God. We must hate sin, repudiate sin, and not sin. That is the fear of the Lord. The fear of the Lord takes no delight in evil.

Re: The Fear of God - posted by DelightedInU (), on: 2004/6/18 17:36

That is very true, KingJimmy!

To add to that, I think to fear the Lord means to have respect and reverence for God. It's not a fear like God's going to punish us or hurt us. It's like when you don't do something cause you know your dad would ground you if you got caught. It's a healthy respect and acknowledgment that he has authority and power over you. We are to fear the Lord, and if we do this we will be less likely to go out and commit the sins we want to do, cause we know God is watching us. If we fear the Lord, we won't want to do those sins, cause we know God detests them. We will actually hate those sins like KingJimmy was talking about before. The fear of the Lord is a good thing.

Re: Fear of God - posted by Matthew2323 (), on: 2004/6/18 18:14

Here is a tape series from Richard Owen Roberts on the Fear of the Lord:

In Isaiah (8:13 and 66:2) God declares, "It is the LORD of hosts whom you should regard as holy. And He shall be your fear, and He shall be your dread... But to this one will I look, to him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My word." Throughout the Bible one finds copious references to the fear of God. Strangely though, most modern pulpiteers seem reluctant to urge this essential and fundamental matter upon their congregations. In these messages, Mr. Roberts explores three intrinsic aspects of the fear of God and how they should affect us.

FOG.1 - The Fear of God, The Beginning of Wisdom (Psalm 111:10).

FOG.2 - The Fear of God, The Only Preservative against Evil (Exodus 20:20).

FOG.3 - The Fear of God, The Only Guarantee of Justice (Nehemiah 5:15).

FOG.4 - The Fear of God, It's Nature.

FOG.5 - The Fear of God, It's Necessity.

FOG.6 - The Fear of God, It's Notable Effects.

(<http://www.intl-awaken.com/tapelist.htm#Fear>) Order

Re: fear of God - posted by moreofHim (), on: 2004/6/18 18:18

My first thought is that the fear of the Lord brings WISDOM. I have counted over 48 verses so far that have "fear the Lord" or "fear of God" in them. I am sure there are more. With that many verses, it must be very important! Most of the church today has lost this fear of the Lord- Which is why they don't obey Him.

Wisdom-

And he said to man, 'The fear of the Lord--that is wisdom, and to shun evil is understanding.'" Job 28:28

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow his precepts have good understanding. To him belongs eternal praise. Psalms 111:10

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline. Proverbs 1:7

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. Proverbs 9:10

The fear of the LORD teaches a man wisdom, and humility comes before honor. Proverbs 15:33

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. Isaiah 33:6

To Be Kept From Sin-

Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid. God has come to test you, so that the fear of God will be with you to keep you from sinning." Exodus 20:20

The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, turning a man from the snares of death. Proverbs 14:27

Through love and faithfulness sin is atoned for; through the fear of the LORD a man avoids evil. Proverbs 16:6

The fear of the LORD leads to life: Then one rests content, untouched by trouble. Proverbs 19:23

Good Life-

Oh, that their hearts would be inclined to fear me and keep all my commands always, so that it might go well with them and their children forever! Deuteronomy 5:29

These are the commands, decrees and laws the LORD your God directed me to teach you to observe in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess, so that you, your children and their children after them may fear the LORD your God as long as you live by keeping all his decrees and commands that I give you, and so that you may enjoy long life. Deuteronomy 6:1, 2

The LORD confides in those who fear him; he makes his covenant known to them. Psalms 25:14

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. Psalms 31:19

But the eyes of the LORD are on those who fear him, on those whose hope is in his unfailing love, Psalms 33:18

The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him, and he delivers them. Psalms 34:7

Fear the LORD, you his saints, for those who fear him lack nothing. Psalms 34:9

Surely his salvation is near those who fear him, that his glory may dwell in our land. Psalms 85:9

For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; Psalms 103:11

As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him; Psalms 103:13

But from everlasting to everlasting the Lord's love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children's children-- Psalms 103:17

He provides food for those who fear him; he remembers his covenant forever. Psalms 111:5

You who fear him, trust in the LORD-- he is their help and shield. Psalms 115:11

he will bless those who fear the LORD-- small and great alike. Psalms 115:13

A song of ascents. Blessed are all who fear the LORD, who walk in his ways. Psalms 128:1

Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and shun evil. Proverbs 3:7

The fear of the LORD adds length to life, but the years of the wicked are cut short. Proverbs 10:27

Humility and the fear of the LORD bring wealth and honor and life. Proverbs 22:4

Yet because the wicked do not fear God, it will not go well with them, and their days will not lengthen like a shadow. Ecclesiastes 8:13

They do not say to themselves, 'Let us fear the LORD our God, who gives autumn and spring rains in season, who assures us of the regular weeks of harvest.' Jeremiah 5:24

"Did Hezekiah king of Judah or anyone else in Judah put him to death? Did not Hezekiah fear the LORD and seek his favor? And did not the LORD relent, so that he did not bring the disaster he pronounced against them? We are about to bring a terrible disaster on ourselves!" Jeremiah 26:19

I will give them singleness of heart and action, so that they will always fear me for their own good and the good of their children after them. Jeremiah 32:39

I will make an everlasting covenant with them: I will never stop doing good to them, and I will inspire them to fear me, so that they will never turn away from me. Jeremiah 32:40

His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation. Luke 1:50

Then the church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria enjoyed a time of peace. It was strengthened; and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it grew in numbers, living in the fear of the Lord. Acts 9:31

By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that comes by faith. Hebrews 11:7

and there are many more....

Mike Yaconelli: "I would like to suggest that the Church become a place of terror again; a place where God continually has to tell us, "Fear not"; a place where our relationship with God is not a simple belief or a doctrine or theology, it is God's burning presence in our lives. I am suggesting that the tame God of relevance be replaced by the God whose very presence shatters our egos into dust, burns our sin into ashes, and strips us naked to reveal the real person within. The Church needs to become a gloriously dangerous place where nothing is safe in God's presence except us. Nothing--including our plans, our agendas, our priorities, our politics, our money, our security, our comfort, our possessions, our needs.

"Our world is... longing to see people whose God is big and holy and frightening and gentle and tender... and ours; a God whose love frightens us into His strong and powerful arms where He longs to whisper those terrifying words, 'I love you.'"

In Him, Chanin

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2004/6/18 18:32

There is a hymn we frequently sing in our meetings written by Wesley which begin with the words Thee will I love, my strength, my tower.... It includes the phrase 'filial fears'. (see verse 6)

6 Give to mine eyes refreshing tears,
Give to my heart chaste, hallowed fires,
Give to my soul, with filial fears,
The love that all heaven's host inspires;
That all my powers, with all their might,
In thy sole glory may unite.

Wesley distinguished between 'filial' meaning 'of a son', and 'servile' meaning 'of a slave'. His writings make reference to filial fear, filial faith and filial love. I think he was right in this. The 'fear' of the Lord is not 'servile' but 'filial'. It is the same kind of 'fear' reflected in Peter's first letter; In like manner, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, even if any obey not the word, they may without the word be gained by the behavior of their wives; beholding your chaste behavior coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be the outward adorning of braiding the hair, and of wearing jewels of gold, or of putting on apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptible apparel of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner aforetime the holy women also, who hoped in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection to their own husbands: as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose children ye now are, if ye do well, and are not put in fear by any terror. (1Pe 3:1-6 ASV)

It is "fear without terror". "filial fear not servile fear".

The sense is captured in the Lord's quotation from Deuteronomy in Matthew Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. (Mat 4:10 KJV) The original in Deuteronomy has Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God, and serve him, and shalt swear by his name. (Deu 6:13 KJV)

This transposition from 'fear' to 'worship' is very instructive. All true 'worship' has 'awe' in it and the 'fear of the Lord' leads not to terror but to willing surrender.

just my thoughts.

Okay I see - posted by Jimm (), on: 2004/6/18 18:33

Philologus

I just read your post which you must have submitted seconds before me...thanks

James

Re: Okay I see - posted by philologos (), on: 2004/6/18 18:43

Quote:

I just read your post which you must have submitted seconds before me...thanks

Hi James

I have just added another little piece to it.

Fear=worship - posted by Jimm (), on: 2004/6/18 18:55

Philologos

I think I am beginning to come to grips with the term "holy fear". If fear is the same as worship, we can fear in spirit and in truth. Is fearing in Spirit what makes it Holy?

James

Re: Fear=worship - posted by DelightedInU (), on: 2004/6/18 19:13

Hey Jimm,

I suppose you could say that. I've never really thought about it like that. But I guess if you're living your life obeying God, hating sin, loving Him, respecting Him, then wouldn't that be a life of worshipping Him?

Hmmm...So maybe when God says to "Fear Me!" He could also be saying to "Worship Me!" That could make sense.

Re: - posted by crsschk (), on: 2004/6/19 0:08

Chanin, once again you find the greatest things.

This is worth repeating:

Mike Yaconelli: "I would like to suggest that the Church become a place of terror again; a place where God continually has to tell us, "Fear not"; a place where our relationship with God is not a simple belief or a doctrine or theology, it is God's burning presence in our lives. I am suggesting that the tame God of relevance be replaced by the God whose very presence shatters our egos into dust, burns our sin into ashes, and strips us naked to reveal the real person within. The Church needs to become a gloriously dangerous place where nothing is safe in God's presence except us. Nothing--including our plans, our agendas, our priorities, our politics, our money, our security, our comfort, our possessions, our needs."

"Our world is... longing to see people whose God is big and holy and frightening and gentle and tender... and ours; a God whose love frightens us into His strong and powerful arms where He longs to whisper those terrifying words, 'I love you.'"

Will never forget watching an episode of a well known 'Christian personality', one of his guest's an older gentleman was discussing how he had been in prayer and sensed that 'The Lord was sad' or something to that effect and that 'I asked Him, what is wrong Lord? He told me that His children were being disobedient, so I said 'Lord, I will stay here all day and comfort You'

and of course they all oohed and aahed...

And I just cried and tried to hold down the repulsion in my gut.

Re: - posted by crsschk (), on: 2004/6/19 0:57

Job 23:15

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Therefore am I troubled at his presence - The doctrine of divine purposes and decrees "is fitted to impress the mind with awe." So vast are the plans of God; so uncertain to us is it what will be developed next; so impossible is it to resist God when he comes forth to execute his plans, that they fill the mind with reverence and fear. And this is one of the objects for which the doctrine is revealed. It is designed to rebuke the soul that is filled with flippancy and self-conceit; to impress the heart with adoring views of God, and to secure a proper reverence for his government. Not knowing what may be the next development of his plan, the mind should be in a state of holy fear - yet ready to submit and bow in whatever aspect his purposes may be made known. A Being, who has an eternal plan, and who is able to accomplish all that he purposes, and who makes known none of his dealings beforehand, should be an object of veneration and fear. It will not be the same "kind of dreadful fear" which we would have of one who had almighty power, but who had "no plan" of any kind, but profound veneration for one who is infinitely wise as well as almighty. The fear of an Almighty Being, who has an eternal plan, which we cannot doubt is wise, though it is inscrutable to us, is a fear mingled with confidence; it is a awe leading to the profoundest veneration. His eternal counsels may take away "our" comforts, but they are right; his c

oming forth may fill us with awe, but we shall venerate and love him.

When I consider - When I endeavor to understand his dealings; or when I think closely on them.

I am afraid of him - This would be the effect on any mind. A man that will sit down alone and "think" of God, and on his vast plans, will see that there is abundant occasion to be in awe before him.

Albert Barne's Notes on the Bible

Re: Fear=worship - posted by philologos (), on: 2004/6/19 5:32

James

Quote:

----- Is fearing in Spirit what makes it Holy?

No. Godly fear, resulting in worship, is the human response to God's unchanging character. Nothing that humans 'do' can ever 'make' God anything. God is Holy because He is Holy not because of our reactions. Fear=worship is not what I was trying to say. The New Testament is both a commentary and definitive interpretation of the Old Testament. The Holy Spirit inspired the gospel-recorders to use the Greek word for 'worship' to capture the truth contained in Deuteronomy in the phrase 'fear the LORD your God'.

Notice that the Old Testament used the word 'LORD' (all in upper case) this is the proper name for God as He revealed Himself to the people to whom He joined Himself in covenant. The point is that this was not the 'fear of a stranger' or the 'terror caused by something utterly beyond our understanding'. This is the reverent awe experienced in the presence of the LORD 'your' God, but it is 'awe' nevertheless.

The link is not between 'fear' and 'worship', but 'the fear of the LORD your God' and 'worship'. In the context of our 21st century with its superficiality and slick methodology for Christian 'worship' it is a call to spend less time in 'worship seminars' and to get on our faces a little more.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2004/6/19 10:02

Quote:

It's not a fear like God's going to punish us or hurt us

Indeed. A boogy-man type fear of the Lord is an improper type of fear. Such a fear can be seen in 2 Kings 17, where the Assyrians after they had transplanted Israel, were living in the land of God's people, and God sent lions amongst them and ate them. They thought of the Lord as any of the other idols of the nations who sought appeasement, so they sought out a former priest to teach them the laws of the God of Israel. They had the wrong type of fear. It was a boogy-man type of fear. And because they only had a boogy man type of fear, the Scriptures make a powerful statement: "they feared the Lord and served their own gods..." (v. 33)

What a paradox! They feared the Lord... yet served their own gods. There is some certain sense of irony in this. Yet, according to proverbs definition of the fear of the Lord, that is, to hate evil, it seems they did not have this hate of evil. Instead they had a fear that God would again send lions amongst them to eat them up again, or would rain fire and brimstone... or they feared going to hell. All are wrong motives for serving God, and result in an improper fear of God. Granted, God used those lions to get the attention of the Assyrians, but they did not act properly in response for the Lord's attempt to reach them.

However, with this said... let also also remember that it is not an improper thing to tremble in the presence of the Lord at that, out of a reverent awe that hates sin, and takes seriously His punishment of sin.

In spirit and in truth - posted by Jimm (), on: 2004/6/19 12:01

Philologos

I see what you are saying. I do not think I expressed myself as well as I could have in my last post. When I spoke of fear being equal to worship, what I really meant to say (maybe wrongly), was that holy fear is equal to worship. We know that we live in the era that Jesus spoke, when the true worshipers of God will worship in Spirit and in truth. That is why I spoke of (holy) fearing in the spirit, if you follow what I am saying.

It makes me think of what Paul says when he said, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." Romans 7:18

Certainly this includes holy fear as being something that does not dwell in us. He goes on in Chapter 8 to say, "For the y that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit."

That is why I (maybe wrongly) think of it as holy fearing in Spirit.

James

Definition of Fear - posted by Yodi (), on: 2004/6/19 13:14

Well, I don't think I have much more to add. I think we all agree here on the definition of fear. I don't think it could have been put more simpler than "DelightedInU" defined Biblical fear. Pretty much "reverance".

Re: Definition of Fear - posted by Chancellor (), on: 2004/7/13 23:15

John Bunyan (yes, the same one who wrote Pilgrim's Progress) wrote a book titled The Fear of God that is probably the best book on the subject.

Re: Fear = worship - posted by All2and4Him (), on: 2004/7/16 19:45

Worship is a word derived out of giving worth. The original english word I was taught was something like worthship. Giving what was worth. God is truly worthy of fear.

A proper attitude toward God is true worship. That can manifest itself in a variety of ways. The attitude of worship is the attitude we are to have for God. Everything we give to God that is right, is worship. "Present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God. This is your spiritual act of worship"

Lastly, I see what was said about the fear of God compelling us to worship. I think that compelling drive to worship God isn't the fear, I think that drive is where the holy fear comes from. I don't know what to call it.

John

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2004/7/17 3:38

Hi John

Yes, the English word's etymology is interesting. I see it as linking not only with 'giving worth' but assessing worth. In a sense, when we say God is worthy, we are passing our legitimate judgment in saying 'this is the value that I put upon Him'. Stated like that it sounds very man-centred, but God reveals Himself so that we can respond to Him, and the response of worship is partly that of 'ascribing greatness' to God. (Deut 32:3)

In that vast crowd my voice will be heard; He is worthy; that's my verdict and my response is 'worship' in its fullest sense of loving surrender to the One whose presence fills us with awe.

Re: Fillial fear - posted by Delboy (), on: 2004/7/17 11:48

Hi Ron, you wrote in a thread about the meaning of fillial fear,I can't remember where.Would you re-enlighten me as i think this would add to the discussion.Thanks

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2004/7/17 16:01

Quote:
-----Hi Ron, you wrote in a thread about the meaning of fillial fear,I can't remember where.Would you re-enlighten me as i think this would add to the discussion.Thanks

Hi Derek
Its on the earlier page of this same thread.

Re: - posted by All2and4Him (), on: 2004/7/17 16:53

Yea, I see it as having a heart that says "God there is nothing more worthwhile than you! Everything else pales in comparison to you. I am worthy of nothing because you alone are worth it all!"

I have been thinking about the thing that drives us to fear God. What if it is how worthy He is for each of His characteristics? We have the spiritual knowledge of his power, which is worthy of awe, beauty, which is worthy of astonishment, love which is worthy of all the love we can give, holiness which is worthy of fear, authority, which is worthy of total unquestioned submission, enormity, which is worthy of humility...I could go on... I remember being able to see God like this, and it was like each individual aspect of His nature shaped how I reacted to Him as a whole.

All to and for Him,

John

Re: thanks - posted by Delboy (), on: 2004/7/17 18:16

Ron, thanks
Can anyone advise on the best method of keeping track on threads and discussions etc
There is so much material its knowing how best to record stuff
thanks for your patience :-)

Re: The Fear of God - posted by Ruairidh (), on: 2004/7/23 9:53

Can I recommend a book by Jerry Bridges called the Joy of Fearing God.

It is probably the best book I have read on the subject, and has an awesome parable illustrating what the fear of God is.