

## The Fear of the Lord

Isaiah 33:5–6 (NKJV)

<sup>5</sup>The LORD is exalted, for He dwells on high; He has filled Zion with justice and righteousness.

<sup>6</sup>Wisdom and knowledge will be the stability of your times, And the strength of salvation; The fear of the LORD is His treasure.

- *Wisdom and knowledge are associated with the fear of the Lord (Psalm 111:10; Proverbs 1:7; 9:10).*
- *The fear of the Lord is also related to “the stability of your times” and the Hebrew word for “stability” means, “a sure foundation” in other words the fear of the Lord is what will keep us from being shaken, moved or knocked off course.*
- *Isaiah 33:6 also describes the fear of the Lord as “His treasure.”*
- *The Hebrew word for treasure can mean “a treasure house, a treasury, a “storehouse” where things of great value can be stored without fear of them being lost or stolen.*
- *The Hebrew word for treasure can also refer to the precious things that are stored in the treasury.*
- *Thus the fear of the Lord is both that precious treasure God has given as well as the storehouse by which we can safe guard it.*
- *Linking the fear of the Lord with wisdom, knowledge and stability really provides us with insights why the fear of the Lord is a treasury.*
- *When a person lacks wisdom, knowledge and stability the very precious things God gives them are easily lost.*

Proverbs 1:7 (NKJV)

<sup>7</sup>The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, But fools despise wisdom and instruction.

- *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge because by the fear of the Lord we will not take for granted the things God has given us.*
- *God provides knowledge so that we will be able to recognize those things He has given us and we will know that they are indeed very precious and valuable.*
- *Many times God gives us insights into His Word or very wonderful experiences of His love and presence but instead of treasuring those things so that we can*

*daily be refreshed by them, we soon take them for granted and forget about them.*

- *The impact of those wonderful experiences or revelations that we have had from God simply fade away from our hearts and minds.*
- *Those wonderful insights into His Word or those times He has miraculously answered our prayers have been given to us so that we can spend time each day meditating and remembering them. As a result, our hearts will be filled with both joy and awe, and our faith and confidence in Him will grow even stronger.*

**Psalm 111:10 (NKJV)**

<sup>10</sup>The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do His commandments. His praise endures forever.

- *We can find Christians who know how they should live but don't actually do it and so it can be said they have knowledge but they lack wisdom and thus they can be considered foolish.*
- *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, because it actually motivates us to obey God's commandments and to keep His Word.*
- *God provides us wisdom so that we will carry out the steps that need to be taken so that those treasures that He has given us will be protected from lost or theft because the devil is both a thief and a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. (John 10:10; 1 Peter 5:8)*
- *When we have both wisdom and knowledge it provides stability and a sure foundation on which we can build our lives.*

**Isaiah 11:3 (NKJV)**

<sup>3</sup>His delight is in the fear of the LORD, And He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes, Nor decide by the hearing of His ears;

- *This Scripture speaks prophetically about Jesus and clearly states He has the fear of the Lord.*
- *If Jesus has the fear of the Lord and He is the Son of God, how much more do we need the fear of the Lord.*
- *Another important thing we can learn about the fear of the Lord from Isaiah 11:3 is, "His delight is in the fear of the Lord."*
- *The fear of the Lord brings a delight to our souls and enables us to enjoy life to the fullest.*

- *Christians who don't have the fear of the Lord are generally dissatisfied with their relationship with God. They look for other activities or possessions to fill the void and some of those counterfeits can be very destructive to their lives.*
- *Without the fear of the Lord we will live lukewarm lives at best, or lives filled with dissipation and immorality at worst.*
- *When Christians seek to please the flesh it is because they are either bored or trying to flee from painful circumstances in their life.*
- *The answer to our struggles against temptation is the fear of the Lord, because it produces a deep delight and satisfaction in our hearts. It fills the void, so we no longer need or want to walk in sin.*
- *The most basic definition of the fear of the Lord is being conscious of the reality of God.*
- *The fear of the Lord can run an entire spectrum of experiences and emotions.*

**John 13:23–25 (NKJV)**

<sup>23</sup>Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved.

<sup>24</sup>Simon Peter therefore motioned to him to ask who it was of whom He spoke.

<sup>25</sup>Then, leaning back on Jesus' breast, he said to Him, "Lord, who is it?"

- *Apostle John, at the Last Supper, is depicted lying on the chest of the Lord Jesus.*
- *Imagine being so close to our God, our Creator, and our Saviour.*

*When Apostle John was enjoying Jesus' presence at the Last Supper, could we say he was experiencing the fear of the Lord?*

- *Absolutely, because the fear of the Lord is being conscious of the reality and presence of God.*
- *We need to remember that the fear of the Lord is a delight and the reality and delight of being with Jesus is more wonderful than anything else.*

**Revelation 1:17–18 (NKJV)**

<sup>17</sup>And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, "Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last.

<sup>18</sup>I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.

- *However, since God is so infinite, our experience of Him also can take on innumerable forms.*
- *In Revelation 1:17-18, the same apostle John who lay on Jesus' chest at the last supper enjoying being close to Him, now comes face to face with Jesus Christ in His glory and he "fell at His feet as dead."*
- *The presence of God can be so over powering that John not only fell down before Him but also was incapable of even moving, as he lay almost lifeless at His feet.*
- *As John lay at Jesus feet trembling with fear at seeing Him in His glory, Jesus in an act of deep love and tenderness for His beloved friend reaches down and lays His right hand on him and said, "Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last."*
- *Jesus' words of comfort go far beyond just telling John not to be afraid, He reminds him of His great sacrifice and victory so that he can be fully confident that he truly is righteous before God, "I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death."*

**John 20:27–28 (NKJV)**

<sup>27</sup>Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing."

<sup>28</sup>And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!"

- *Thomas, just hours before had said in an irreverent tone, when hearing about reports of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, "I will only believe if I put my hands in His wounds."*
- *Jesus then appears, and instead of rebuking him harshly for his unbelief and irreverent words He says, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing."*
- *Thomas' response says it all, "My Lord and my God!"*
- *Thomas went from being a sarcastic skeptic, to being filled with the fear of the Lord as he encountered the reality of the resurrected Saviour.*
- *I am confident that this one encounter with the resurrected Christ was enough to transform Thomas' life forever and to make the fear of the Lord real to him.*

- *This story illustrates another aspect of the fear of the Lord that will help us to live holy and consecrated lives for the glory of God – God is always with us and He sees and hears everything.*
- *I think Thomas, after this encounter, would have thought twice before he would have spoken or acted rashly again and the words of Jesus' teachings would have taken on new meaning, "For there is nothing hidden which will not be revealed, nor has anything been kept secret but that it should come to light. (Mark 4:22)*

**Proverbs 16:6 (NKJV)**

**<sup>6</sup>In mercy and truth Atonement is provided for iniquity; And by the fear of the LORD one departs from evil.**

- *One of the strongest ways to overcome sin and compromise is the fear of the Lord.*
- *When we are conscious of the reality of God in every circumstance, we will find a new strength and resolve to depart or flee from evil and temptation.*
- *The fear of the Lord will give us strength to say "no" to self.*

**Genesis 39:9 (NKJV)**

**<sup>9</sup>There is no one greater in this house than I, nor has he kept back anything from me but you, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"**

- *When Potiphar's wife was trying to seduce Joseph, he was able to flee from temptation because he had the fear of the Lord, "How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"*
- *Many times as Christians we treat Jesus' suffering and death for us at Calvary very lightly as if it has little consequence, not so much by our words but by the way we live our lives.*

**1 Samuel 11:7 (NKJV)**

**<sup>7</sup>So he took a yoke of oxen and cut them in pieces, and sent them throughout all the territory of Israel by the hands of messengers, saying, "Whoever does not go out with Saul and Samuel to battle, so it shall be done to his oxen." And the fear of the LORD fell on the people, and they came out with one consent.**

- *The fear of the Lord motivated the people of Israel to overcome their own fears, selfishness and laziness and to be united in their fight against the enemies of God, "And the fear of the LORD fell on the people, and they came out with one consent.*

- *The fear of the Lord will motivate us to step out in faith, beyond our own self-centered desires and make those sacrifices that are needed so that we can live holy consecrated lives that bring glory to God and see many come to salvation.*

**Proverbs 14:26 (NKJV)**

**<sup>26</sup>In the fear of the LORD there is strong confidence, And His children will have a place of refuge.**

- *One of the wonderful things about the fear of the Lord is that it actually delivers and frees us from fear, because it provides us with a strong confidence in God.*
- *Christians who do not have the fear of the Lord often struggle with worries and the uncertainties of this life.*
- *“Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God.” Corrie Ten Boom*
- *Remembering God’s faithfulness provides us with a peace that passes all understanding. (Philippians 4:7).*
- *“The remarkable thing about fearing God is that when you fear God you fear nothing else, whereas if you do not fear God you fear everything else.” Oswald Chambers*
- *When a Christian is besieged by fear, worry, anxiety and the uncertainties of the future the most powerful things he or she can do is cultivate the fear of the Lord knowing, “He Himself has said, that “I will never leave you nor forsake you.” so that we may boldly say, “The Lord is my helper’ I will not fear what man can do to me.”” (Hebrews 13:5-6)*

**Proverbs 19:23 (NKJV)**

**<sup>23</sup>The fear of the LORD leads to life, And he who has it will abide in satisfaction; He will not be visited with evil.**

- *The fear of the Lord will always keep us walking toward God and growing in a richer and richer life with Christ.*
- *If a Christian is not experiencing an abiding satisfaction it is because they are not walking in the fear of the Lord.*
- *The reason the fear of the Lord causes us to abide in satisfaction is because we are conscious of the reality of God and what can be more satisfying than experiencing unbroken fellowship with Jesus?*

**Proverbs 23:17 (NASB95)**

**<sup>17</sup>Do not let your heart envy sinners, But live in the fear of the LORD always.**

- *What a wonderful goal, “to live in the fear of the Lord always.”*
- *This is the abiding principle of John 15 where the word “abide” is used 12 times beginning with verse 4, “abide in Me and I in you” and then continuing by exhorting us to obey him so that we will abide in His love (vs10) and in His joy (vs11) and ending with the encouragement in verse 16, that we should bring forth fruit that will abide forever.*

**Proverbs 14:27 (NKJV)**

**<sup>27</sup>The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, To turn one away from the snares of death.**

- *“The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life” - Many times Christians are seeking to find that overflowing abundant life that Jesus promises us in John 10:10 but they fail to cultivate the fear of the Lord with the result that the thief is able to steal, kill and destroy.*
- *The fear of the Lord not only is a fountain of life but it also causes us to flee from temptation and compromise, resulting in us turning away from the snares of death.*
- *God’s people are plundered when we fail to have the fear of the Lord and we make ungodly decisions or act in compromising ways that lead to ruin.*

**Proverbs 22:4 (NKJV)**

**<sup>4</sup>By humility and the fear of the LORD Are riches and honor and life.**

- *The fear of the Lord results in a life that brings forth glory to God and eternal riches and rewards.*
- *The fear of the Lord is something that only believers can experience because for unbelievers their encounter with God on judgment day will only be one of terror.*

**Psalm 130:4 (NKJV)**

**<sup>4</sup>But there is forgiveness with You, That You may be feared.**

- *The fear of the Lord is founded on the very fact that forgiveness has been extended to us.*
- *The difference between the fear of the Lord and the terror of God is that the first elicits hope and the second hopelessness.*

- *How do we, as believers, develop the fear of the Lord in our lives?*

**Proverbs 1:29 (NKJV)**

<sup>29</sup>Because they hated knowledge And did not choose the fear of the LORD,

- *“And did not choose the fear of the LORD” – The first thing we must understand is that the fear of the Lord is not an experience which we wait for to happen but a choice that we pursue.*

**Psalm 34:11 (NKJV)**

<sup>11</sup>Come, you children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the LORD.

- *The fear of the Lord is something that we need to learn and be instructed in.*
- *The fear of the Lord is something that needs to be developed within our heart through the process of prayer, meditating upon the Lord and His Word and through godly fellowship.*
- *Some people try to develop the fear of the Lord by running after experiences but this mind set can lead to confusion and instability.*
- *When we encounter the miraculous and the power of the Holy Spirit that does not mean we have arrived.*
- *Experiencing miracles, wonders and signs is not the destination but the invitation for us to either begin or continue on in our journey with the Lord to deepen our consecration and spiritual maturity and on this path we will learn and develop the fear of the Lord.*

**2 Corinthians 5:7 (NKJV)**

<sup>7</sup>For we walk by faith, not by sight.

- *The sign of spiritual maturity is not found in the operation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit but the development of the fruit of the Spirit – godly character.*
- *When it says that we walk by faith and not by sight it means that many times it may not appear as if God is doing something but He actually is.*
- *When we walk by faith and not by sight then our faith produces the fear of the Lord because we look directly to God for assurance and not circumstances.*
- *The fear of the Lord guarantees that we will keep on the right path and we will produce godly fruit.*



**Galatians 2:11–14 (NKJV)**

<sup>11</sup>Now when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed;

<sup>12</sup>for before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision.

<sup>13</sup>And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy.

<sup>14</sup>But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before them all, “If you, being a Jew, live in the manner of Gentiles and not as the Jews, why do you compel Gentiles to live as Jews?”

- *In Galatians 2 we can learn something about the fear of the Lord from Peter’s example.*
- *The fear of the Lord is something that needs to be maintained daily otherwise it can grow weak.*
- *Peter, who boldly preached the first evangelical sermon in history, recorded in Acts 2, free from the fear of the Jewish religious leaders, now a few years later found himself with quite a different attitude.*
- *Peter acted in a hypocritical way because “fearing those who were of the circumcision” he separated himself from the Gentile believers.*
- *What happened to Peter?*
- *Peter had not kept his full attention on Jesus and His Word and very subtly he began to be affected by the opinions of men and before he knew it, he was being influenced by the fear of man instead of the fear of God.*
- *If Peter’s eyes were firmly focused on Jesus, he would not have been influenced by the opinions of men.*
- *Peter’s actions could very well have resulted in the Church falling into legalism but by God’s mercy, Paul brought strong correction to Peter and refocused him back on the truth and on Jesus Christ.*
- *What was Peter’s attitude toward Paul who had so publically rebuked him when he had gone off into error, “beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom give to him has written to you.”(2 Peter 3:15)*
- *Peter was very appreciative of Paul and the ministry God had given Paul and the correction he had received from him. This is truly the sign of a godly man who desired to please Christ.*

**2 Peter 1:13–14 (NKJV)**

<sup>13</sup>Yes, I think it is right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by reminding you,

<sup>14</sup>knowing that shortly I must put off my tent, just as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me.

- *We can see that Peter continued his life and ended it faithfully with the fear of the Lord not fearing men nor martyrdom.*

**Proverbs 2:4–5 (NKJV)**

<sup>4</sup>If you seek her as silver, And search for her as for hidden treasures;

<sup>5</sup>Then you will understand the fear of the LORD, And find the knowledge of God.

- *If we pursue God with our whole hearts and seek to understand God's Word then we will understand the fear of the Lord.*
- *In order to find, develop and mature in the fear of the Lord is something that we must pursue daily, but the fruit is eternal.*

**Acts 9:31 (NKJV)**

<sup>31</sup>Then the churches throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and were edified. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, they were multiplied.

- *The early Church walked in the fear of the Lord and the message of the Gospel was unstoppable and even the entire might of the Roman Empire was incapable of stopping it.*
- *However in general, the Church in the Western world has been weakened by sin, compromise and halfhearted service to God.*
- *In the West the world has been more effective in changing the church than the church has been in changing the world.*
- *The key for the decline of the Gospel in the West has been a lack of the fear of the Lord in the Church, but the good news is that God is once again awakening believers to seek Him and to seek the fear of the Lord.*
- *The fear of the Lord is to live intentionally for the glory of God.*