

Doctrine of Fear

1A Definition and Introduction.

1B Definitions from the Britannica Dictionary:

1C "An emotion excited by threatening evil or impending pain, accompanied by a desire to avoid or escape it; apprehension; dread."

2C "Reverence for constituted authority, especially when accompanied by obedience thereto.; as, the fear of God."

2B From the Theological Dictionary of the New Testament: "Expressions containing words of the phobos group always describe a reaction to man's encounter with force. The scale of reactions ranges from spontaneous terror and anxiety to honour and respect, which already presupposes mastery of the experience through reflection. Hence evaluation of the reaction of fear is closely bound up with the understanding of one's own existence. It also offers access to the religious self-understanding of specific individuals and groups."

3B Fear, worry, anxiety, and insecurity are universal problems for all human beings, believer and unbeliever alike.

4B Fear comes in three categories: Fear of loss, fear of exclusion, fear of pain or difficulty.

1C Fear of loss is related to those things which we have, such as life, property, and so on.

2C Fear of exclusion is related to those things which we don't have, and fear that we never will.

1D For the single person, it's a fear that he'll never marry.

2D For the poor, it's a fear that he'll never have the lifestyle he desires.

3C The fear of pain or difficulty is the natural idea of the avoidance of those things which are painful or difficult to bear.

4C The more you surrender to fear, the more things you will come to fear. The more you surrender to fear the more power fear has in your life.

5C The fear of death is an example where the three are combined. In death you fear both loss and exclusion.

5B The central question is this: are we to fear God as we fear danger, death, and evil?

1C You see, Scripture describes fear as a sin, and there are many passages which prohibit fear.

1D Romans 8:15 "For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to **fear** again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!"

2D 2 Corinthians 7:15 "His affection abounds all the more toward you, as he remembers the obedience of you all, how you received him with **fear** and trembling."

3D Hebrews 2:14-15, "14 Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, 15 and might free those who through **fear** of death were subject to slavery all their lives."

- 4D 1 Peter 3:6, “just as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any **fear.**”
- 2C But there is one passage that rings clear above the others as the surpassing principle concerning fear, which is 1 John 4:18: “There is no **fear** in love; but perfect love casts out **fear**, because **fear** involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love.”
- 3C And yet, at the same time, time and again, the fear of God is regarded as a good thing. What’s with this apparent contradiction?
- 4C The solution comes in two parts.
 - 1D First is the principle of the transformation of fear before God.
 - 2D Second is this principle: that fear of God and other categories of fear are mutually exclusive.
- 2A Fear as Sin.
 - 1B Fear prohibited by God, because in it is the absence of faith.
 - 1C Genesis 15:1, “After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, “Do not **fear**, Abram, I am a shield to you; Your reward shall be very great.””
 - 1D Setting: This came after Abram’s victory against the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the rescue of his cousin Lot after he had been kidnapped.
 - 2D The peace treaty with Melchizekek as mediator has just finished, and the Lord says this to Abram to give him confidence concerning his blessing.
 - 3D Of great concern to Abram is the kind of reward he will receive because of his faithfulness to God. He defines blessing as a genetic heritage, and the Lord knows that very well.
 - 4D So the Lord takes the initiative to tell Abram that he will receive his heart’s desire, and to not be afraid of falling short of that blessing.
 - 2C Genesis 21:16-18, “16 Then she went and sat down opposite him, about a bowshot away, for she said, “Do not let me see the boy die.” And she sat opposite him, and lifted up her voice and wept. 17 God heard the lad crying; and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven and said to her, “What is the matter with you, Hagar? Do not **fear**, for God has heard the voice of the lad where he is. 18 “Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him by the hand, for I will make a great nation of him.””
 - 1D Hagar feared the death of her son, Ishmael, because of the vindictiveness of Sarah.
 - 2D God comforts her by letting her know that she need not fear the loss of her son, and his future.
 - 3C Genesis 26:24, “The LORD appeared to him the same night and said, “I am the God of your father Abraham; Do not **fear**, for I am with you. I will bless you, and multiply your descendants, For the sake of My servant Abraham.””
 - 1D This is a restatement of God’s promise to Abraham, and a confirmation that it is good for Isaac’s generation as well.
 - 2D Isaac has just been through a very trying time when he unsuccessfully attempted

several times to find a place to settle in the land promised to his father.

3D Here is a fear of loss.

4C Exodus 14:13-14, "13 But Moses said to the people, "Do not **fear**! Stand by and see the salvation of the LORD which He will accomplish for you today; for the Egyptians whom you have seen today, you will never see them again forever." 14 "The LORD will fight for you while you keep silent.""

1D This of course is the very dramatic setting of the Exodus from Egypt.

2D The Egyptian army has come in pursuit of their escaped slaves, and they are furious.

3D The children of Israel fear the loss of their lives, and their newly found freedom.

4D So Moses interjects at the moment with words of encouragement.

5C Numbers 14:6-9, "6 Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, of those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes; 7 and they spoke to all the congregation of the sons of Israel, saying, "The land which we passed through to spy out is an exceedingly good land. 8 "If the LORD is pleased with us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us -- a land which flows with milk and honey. 9 "Only do not rebel against the LORD; and do not **fear** the people of the land, for they will be our prey. Their protection has been removed from them, and the LORD is with us; do not **fear** them.""

1D The spies have returned from their scouting expedition to the promised land.

2D Joshua spoke as the chief of scouts to say that there was nothing to fear in the people who presently occupied that land.

3D Here is a classic example of the fear of the Lord as a replacement for fear.

6C Deuteronomy 3:22, "'Do not **fear** them, for the LORD your God is the one fighting for you.'"

1D Here Moses refers to the people who occupy the promised land.

2D They are not to be an object of fear, because of the presence and help of the Lord.

7C Deuteronomy 31:7-9, "7 Then Moses called to Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel, "Be strong and courageous, for you shall go with this people into the land which the LORD has sworn to their fathers to give them, and you shall give it to them as an inheritance. 8 "The LORD is the one who goes ahead of you; He will be with you. He will not fail you or forsake you. Do not **fear** or be dismayed." 9 So Moses wrote this law and gave it to the priests, the sons of Levi who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and to all the elders of Israel."

1D Here are the final words of Moses. And his most important and urgent final exhortation is do not fear.

2D This was a heritage blessing for Israel: to carry with them always these words of Moses and to know of his solemn testimony that the Lord was with them.

3D Sometimes the words of great men and women can serve well to alleviate fear.

8C Joshua 8:1 "Now the LORD said to Joshua, "Do not **fear** or be dismayed. Take all the people of war with you and arise, go up to Ai; see, I have given into your hand the

- king of Ai, his people, his city, and his land.”
- 1D There is much to fear in time of war - so much is at stake. Life, liberty, property, national prestige.
 - 2D But the Lord commands Joshua to enter into war with Ai, and to do so with all confidence and no fear.
 - 3D This absence of fear is only possible because of the activity of the Lord.
 - 4D This kind of saying is repeated in Joshua 10:8 and 10:25.
- 9C Judges 6:22-23, “22 When Gideon saw that he was the angel of the LORD, he said, "Alas, O Lord GOD! For now I have seen the angel of the LORD face to face." 23 The LORD said to him, "Peace to you, do not **fear**; you shall not die.””
- 1D Angels were beings of such awesome power that human beings often feared them greatly.
 - 2D Gideon gives a cry of despair at meeting the angel of the Lord - he thinks that seeing an angel is the immediate precursor to death.
 - 3D So the Lord intervenes and speaks to Gideon, so that he will know that he is not going to die.
- 10C 1 Samuel 12:18-24, “18 So Samuel called to the LORD, and the LORD sent thunder and rain that day; and all the people greatly feared the LORD and Samuel. 19 Then all the people said to Samuel, "Pray for your servants to the LORD your God, so that we may not die, for we have added to all our sins *this* evil by asking for ourselves a king." 20 Samuel said to the people, "Do not **fear**. You have committed all this evil, yet do not turn aside from following the LORD, but serve the LORD with all your heart. 21 "You must not turn aside, for *then you would go* after futile things which can not profit or deliver, because they are futile. 22 "For the LORD will not abandon His people on account of His great name, because the LORD has been pleased to make you a people for Himself. 23 "Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD by ceasing to pray for you; but I will instruct you in the good and right way. 24 "Only **fear** the LORD and serve Him in truth with all your heart; for consider what great things He has done for you.”
- 1D The people begged for a king, even when they knew it was against the will of God. They did so out of jealousy.
 - 2D Samuel prophesied a hard message to the people concerning this desire, and as a result they became afraid of what discipline might come upon them.
 - 3D So they repented and turned to the mercy of the Lord.
 - 4D In this passage Samuel communicates to the people that they are not to fear discipline, but rather the Lord.
 - 5D So here is a very important point!
 - 1E Fear of the Lord supplants fear of discipline.
 - 2E In fear of discipline there can be any of the three types of fear.
 - 3E But if you fear the Lord, you will not fear His discipline; it is no longer a matter of fear.
 - 4E And of course fearing the Lord means a lot more than fearing what He might

do to you.

11C There is a wrong way to fear even God. 2 Kings 17:29-41, "29 But every nation still made gods of its own and put them in the houses of the high places which the people of Samaria had made, every nation in their cities in which they lived. 30 The men of Babylon made Succoth-benoth, the men of Cuth made Nergal, the men of Hamath made Ashima, 31 and the Avvites made Nibhaz and Tartak; and the Sepharvites burned their children in the fire to Adrammelech and Anammelech the gods of Sepharvaim. 32 They also feared the LORD and appointed from among themselves priests of the high places, who acted for them in the houses of the high places. 33 They feared the LORD and served their own gods according to the custom of the nations from among whom they had been carried away into exile. 34 To this day they do according to the earlier customs: they do not **fear** the LORD, nor do they follow their statutes or their ordinances or the law, or the commandments which the LORD commanded the sons of Jacob, whom He named Israel; 35 with whom the LORD made a covenant and commanded them, saying, "You shall not **fear** other gods, nor bow down yourselves to them nor serve them nor sacrifice to them. 36 "But the LORD, who brought you up from the land of Egypt with great power and with an outstretched arm, Him you shall **fear**, and to Him you shall bow yourselves down, and to Him you shall sacrifice. 37 "The statutes and the ordinances and the law and the commandment which He wrote for you, you shall observe to do forever; and you shall not **fear** other gods. 38 "The covenant that I have made with you, you shall not forget, nor shall you **fear** other gods. 39 "But the LORD your God you shall **fear**; and He will deliver you from the hand of all your enemies." 40 However, they did not listen, but they did according to their earlier custom. 41 So while these nations feared the LORD, they also served their idols; their children likewise and their grandchildren, as their fathers did, so they do to this day.

1D At this time, the foreign nations continued in their worship of idols - there is even a register of the nations and the idols which they worshipped.

2D These nations also feared the God of the Israelites. Although God is the one true God, these foreigner unbelievers were treating God as though he were just another one of their idols. He was not unique to them. Their worship pattern of our God was therefore corrupt and not proper.

3D In verse 35 there is a key idea: that fear of other gods and fear of the Lord are not compatible.

1E If you fear a pagan god, then you cannot at the same time fear the one true God of the universe.

2E The first commandment is 'You shall have no other gods before me' - it expresses the will of God concerning worship. By His will the two are excluded.

3E But if you worship idols, you do not have the fear of the one true God in you.

4E Hand in hand with the prohibition against fearing other gods is the command to fear God only, and with that goes a promise.

- 5E The promise is that God will deliver them from their enemies; in other words, He will personally remove a common object of fear.
- 6E So fear of God removes common sinful fear.
- 12C Job 5:19-27, "19 "From six troubles He will deliver you, Even in seven evil will not touch you. 20 "In famine He will redeem you from death, And in war from the power of the sword. 21 "You will be hidden from the scourge of the tongue, And you will not be afraid of violence when it comes. 22 "You will laugh at violence and famine, And you will not be afraid of wild beasts. 23 "For you will be in league with the stones of the field, And the beasts of the field will be at peace with you. 24 "You will know that your tent is secure, For you will visit your abode and **fear** no loss. 25 "You will know also that your descendants will be many, And your offspring as the grass of the earth. 26 "You will come to the grave in full vigor, Like the stacking of grain in its season. 27 "Behold this; we have investigated it, *and* so it is. Hear it, and know for yourself."
- 1D Here is a passage which records divine security from many kinds of fears.
- 2D Fear of famine, fear of war, fear verbal maligning, fear of violence, fear of wild beasts.
- 3D Your home will be secure, and your descendants will be many; you will live a full life.
- 4D Specifically mentioned is the fear of loss.
- 5D This absence of fear comes about because of the activity God and our knowledge and trust of that activity.
- 13C Job 11:14-15, "14 If iniquity is in your hand, put it far away, And do not let wickedness dwell in your tents; 15 "Then, indeed, you could lift up your face without *moral* defect, And you would be steadfast and not **fear**."
- 1D Confession of sin is mentioned here as an antidote to fear.
- 2D If you confess your sin and return to fellowship with the Lord, then you truly have nothing to fear.
- 14C Psalm 23:4 "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I **fear** no evil, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me."
- 1D The fear of death involves fear of loss, fear of exclusion, and fear of pain.
- 2D The valley of the shadow of death is very close to death - nearness to death because of violence, illness, hunger, and various kinds of danger.
- 3D The valley of the shadow of death has the greatest potential to invoke fear of any human situation or condition. That's why David says 'even though.'
- 4D David fears no evil - and this even though he might even experience death. There is no evil in death for those who know the Lord.
- 5D David also reveals the source of his comfort and the reason he has no fear. The rod and staff of the Lord give these things to him.
- 6D The shepherd's rod and staff were tools of protection and guidance and rescue for the flock. So also the Lord protects us and rescues us and guides us.
- 15C Psalm 27:1-3, "1 <A Psalm of David.> The LORD is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I **fear**? The LORD is the defense of my life; Whom shall I dread? 2 When

- evildoers came upon me to devour my flesh, My adversaries and my enemies, they stumbled and fell. 3 Though a host encamp against me, My heart will not **fear**; Though war arise against me, In *spite of* this I shall be confident.”
- 1D Now here David mentions the light and salvation of the Lord - that He guides and saves is the reason there can be no fear of anyone.
- 2D No matter how bad it gets, no matter how your adversaries and enemies strive against you, if you have the guidance of God’s word and the assurance of His intervention you are without need.
- 1E Guidance is for when you need to act. Guidance implies responsibility. So God’s word gives you guidance, and you must act upon it in order to bring about His will in your life.
- 2E Intervention is for when guidance does not apply. God intervenes when He finds us helpless.
- 3E Often He waits for us to supplicate Him in faith before He will act.
- 3D Confidence is the opposite of fear. Fear results in shame, while confidence results in reward.
- 16C Psalm 46:1-3, “1 <Korah, set to Alamo. A Song.> God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble. 2 Therefore we will not **fear**, though the earth should change And though the mountains slip into the heart of the sea; 3 Though its waters roar *and* foam, Though the mountains quake at its swelling pride.”
- 1D Catastrophic geological upheavals are not a matter for fear when you have the Lord.
- 2D He will protect you even in the event of death from such a thing.
- 3D From time to time in the earth’s history there are cataclysms of great proportion - the kind of disasters that bring much misery, and splash across the headlines.
- 4D Many people fear that sort of thing because of its sudden and violent nature. The hurricane, the tornado, the earthquake, the flood.
- 5D Yet God is a refuge and a strength.
- 1E A refuge in that He can, if He chooses, keep you safe even when disaster is all around you.
- 2E And a strength in that even if you are to endure disaster He supplies what you need.
- 17C Proverbs 3:25-26, “25 Do not be afraid of sudden **fear** Nor of the onslaught of the wicked when it comes; 26 For the LORD will be your confidence And will keep your foot from being caught.”
- 1D The snare of the wicked can take many forms. A snare is a sudden trap sprung by those who want to do you harm.
- 2D Even though the trap occurs with breathtaking suddenness, we are not to be afraid, for the Lord is our confidence.
- 2B The fear of the Lord is a concept that moves through virtually every book of the Bible. Let’s begin in the Old Testament.
- 1C Description:

- 1D Psalm 19:9, “The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the LORD are true; they are righteous altogether.”
- 1E Compare this with Psalm 12:6, “The words of the LORD are pure words; As silver tried in a furnace on the earth, refined seven times.”
- 2E The word ‘clean’ in Psalm 19 is the same in Hebrew as the word ‘pure’ in Psalm 12.
- 3E So the fear of the Lord is clean, and the words of the Lord are pure.
- 4E When we fear God we come to personify His word which is in us.
- 2C Psalm 22:23 “You who fear the LORD, praise Him; All you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him, And stand in awe of Him, all you descendants of Israel.”
- 1D This is valuable because it gives a synonym for fear, which is ‘awe.’
- 2D Therefore we have here a very valuable description of the fear of the Lord, and that it is truly transformed by our understanding of Him. “From the Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament: (megôrâ) **fear, terror**. This root means to be intimidated before a stronger or superior being or thing. It is used of fear toward men, animals and God. The Moabites feared the Israelites when the Moabites appeared on the horizon, because of their great numbers (Num 22:3). Judges are instructed not to fear “the face of men,” i.e. not to let the social position of any adversary in litigation intimidate them nor sway them in judgment (Deut 1:17) The threats of a false prophet were not to turn the people from God (Deut 18:22). Although David was only a stripling, the gifts bestowed on him impressed and then frightened Saul (1Sam 18:15). Job rejects the implied charge of secret sin, avowing his innocency and claiming that he would see God in the flesh; therefore his slanderers should fear judgment (Job 19:29). Leviathan strikes fear in even the mighty men of the earth (Job 41:25 [H 171]). The Lord is pictured as fearing the boasters of the heathen if they chasten Israel (Deut 32:27). But Samaria is to fear the consequences of the idols in Bethel (Hos 10:5). m¹gôr, m[®]gôrâ. Fear, terror. This noun, “horror,” in KB, occurs less frequently than y¹rç’ or p¹µad. m¹gôr has the more extreme sense of terror, in contrast to y¹rç’ which is more restrained (Psa 31:13, [H 14]; cf. Psa 111:10 and Psa 19:9 [H 101; Jer 20:4; cf. Prov 14:26. Deliverance from the terror of human caprice rests in God (Psa 34:4 [H 51; cf. v. 1 [H]; cf. also the familiar phrase in Jeremiah, m¹gôr miss¹bîb, terror on every side, Jer 6:25; etc.). H.G.S.”
- 3D So it couples the sense of common fear with the sense of transformed fear.
- 4D Here then is another excellent lesson on the fear of the Lord.
- 1E You cannot have both common and transformed fear of the Lord. The two are incompatible.
- 2E Common fear of the Lord is associated with punishment and discipline, while transformed fear can only be described by personal love for God.
- 3E Common fear is an attribute of being out of fellowship with God, while transformed fear is an attribute of being in fellowship.
- 4E This is the reason for their incompatibility.

3C Transformation!

1D Joshua 4:1-9, 20-24, "1 Now when all the nation had finished crossing the Jordan, the LORD spoke to Joshua, saying, 2 "Take for yourselves twelve men from the people, one man from each tribe, 3 and command them, saying, 'Take up for yourselves twelve stones from here out of the middle of the Jordan, from the place where the priests' feet are standing firm, and carry them over with you and lay them down in the lodging place where you will lodge tonight.'" 4 So Joshua called the twelve men whom he had appointed from the sons of Israel, one man from each tribe; 5 and Joshua said to them, "Cross again to the ark of the LORD your God into the middle of the Jordan, and each of you take up a stone on his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Israel. 6 "Let this be a sign among you, so that when your children ask later, saying, 'What do these stones mean to you?' 7 then you shall say to them, 'Because the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD; when it crossed the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off.' So these stones shall become a memorial to the sons of Israel forever." 8 Thus the sons of Israel did as Joshua commanded, and took up twelve stones from the middle of the Jordan, just as the LORD spoke to Joshua, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Israel; and they carried them over with them to the lodging place and put them down there. 9 Then Joshua set up twelve stones in the middle of the Jordan at the place where the feet of the priests who carried the ark of the covenant were standing, and they are there to this day... 20 Those twelve stones which they had taken from the Jordan, Joshua set up at Gilgal. 21 He said to the sons of Israel, "When your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, 'What are these stones?' 22 then you shall inform your children, saying, 'Israel crossed this Jordan on dry ground.' 23 "For the LORD your God dried up the waters of the Jordan before you until you had crossed, just as the LORD your God had done to the Red Sea, which He dried up before us until we had crossed; 24 that all the peoples of the earth may know that the hand of the LORD is mighty, so that you may **fear** the LORD your God forever.""

1E Gilgal was the Plymouth Rock of Israel, the place where they made landfall into the promised land.

2E The place they had yearned for all their lives, they finally came to at Gilgal.

3E So they took twelve stones from the dry riverbed of the Jordan as they crossed, and they used these to set up a memorial to the grace of the Lord in giving them a land.

4E These stones are to be a memorial to all future generations of the awesome nature of the God of Israel - and thus invoke that sense of reverent awe.

2D 1 Samuel 12:24, ""Only **fear** the LORD and serve Him in truth with all your heart; for consider what great things He has done for you."

1E We've already examined this passage in detail as a part of this study, but again look at what the fear of the Lord entails.

- 2E It entails a consideration of what great things He has done for us.
- 1F The command to consider is from a pretty generic Hebrew verb, RA'AH. It forms a sort of poetic coupling with YARA, 'to fear.'
 - 2F So really Samuel tells the people to look what the Lord has done for them.
 - 3F When we consider what the Lord has done for us, it should bring about a sense of awe, knowing the combination of power and character in His works.
- 4C How to Get the Fear of the Lord:
- 1D Deuteronomy 14:23, ""You shall eat in the presence of the LORD your God, at the place where He chooses to establish His name, the tithes of your grain, your new wine, your oil, and the firstborn of your herd and your flock, so that you may learn to **fear** the LORD your God always."
 - 1E The fear of God is a learning process. It does not come about through a singular experience or by some magical overnight transformation.
 - 2E Here is mention of some elements of the ritual system, a system by which the Jews came to know God.
 - 3E So through the knowledge of God one learns to fear God. Knowledge of God and the transformed fear of God are not the same.
- 2D Deuteronomy 17:14-20, "14 "When you enter the land which the LORD your God gives you, and you possess it and live in it, and you say, 'I will set a king over me like all the nations who are around me,' 15 you shall surely set a king over you whom the LORD your God chooses, *one* from among your countrymen you shall set as king over yourselves; you may not put a foreigner over yourselves who is not your countryman. 16 "Moreover, he shall not multiply horses for himself, nor shall he cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, since the LORD has said to you, 'You shall never again return that way.' 17 "He shall not multiply wives for himself, or else his heart will turn away; nor shall he greatly increase silver and gold for himself. 18 "Now it shall come about when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself a copy of this law on a scroll in the presence of the Levitical priests. 19 "It shall be with him and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to **fear** the LORD his God, by carefully observing all the words of this law and these statutes, 20 that his heart may not be lifted up above his countrymen and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, to the right or the left, so that he and his sons may continue long in his kingdom in the midst of Israel."
- 1E So entrance into the promised land and establishment of the kingdom also will include a king.
 - 2E And the king will be one selected by the people according to certain criteria which will define his character.
 - 3E And the instruction for the king is to keep a copy of the Mosaic Law with him always, so that he may read it and learn to fear the Lord.
 - 1F Fear of the Lord means that you have to read God's word and learn.

- 2F You can only have transformed fear by means of learning.
- 4E This comes with a promise of blessings - longevity of rule and lengthy dynasty.
- 3D Deuteronomy 31:10-13, "10 Then Moses commanded them, saying, "At the end of every seven years, at the time of the year of remission of debts, at the Feast of Booths, 11 when all Israel comes to appear before the LORD your God at the place which He will choose, you shall read this law in front of all Israel in their hearing. 12 "Assemble the people, the men and the women and children and the alien who is in your town, so that they may hear and learn and **fear** the LORD your God, and be careful to observe all the words of this law. 13 "Their children, who have not known, will hear and learn to **fear** the LORD your God, as long as you live on the land which you are about to cross the Jordan to possess.""
- 1E Moses commanded a periodic reading of the Law, to be done at the time of the seven year remission of debts, at the feast of booths.
- 2E The Law is to be read as a reminder to fear God, so that again understanding the Law is to invoke the transformed fear.
- 3E This was intended for a time when God was not visible among them.
- 4E There were not a great many times when miracles ran rampant during the history of Israel; God concentrated them at a few significant time.
- 5E The rest of the time, the people had to rely on the word of God concerning His miracles, not unlike our present time.
- 6E So this tradition is for every generation after the one which experienced the great miracles of the exodus and wilderness journey and occupation of the promised land.
- 5C Result... Fear God and Not Sin:
- 1D Exodus 20:18-20, "18 All the people perceived the thunder and the lightning flashes and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw *it*, they trembled and stood at a distance. 19 Then they said to Moses, "Speak to us yourself and we will listen; but let not God speak to us, or we will die." 20 Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid; for God has come in order to test you, and in order that the **fear** of Him may remain with you, so that you may not sin.""
- 1E Well now Moses has just come down from the mountain of God with the ten commandments.
- 2E While the ten commandments are read for the first time, there are certain manifestations of the presence of God.
- 3E These manifestations really scared the people of Israel, and so they trembled with fear and distanced themselves from the mountain.
- 4E After they had moved away, they requested of Moses that he speak in behalf of God, but they fear death should they hear the voice of God.
- 5E Of course this is totally superstitious on their part.
- 6E Moses explains that God intends for them to have a fear of God that lasts throughout their wilderness journey, so that they might not sin.

- 1F Fear of God is definitely not a fear of punishment. This passage again reveals the nature of the fear of God.
- 2F Fear of God is not only the antidote to common and sinful fear, it is the antidote to every category of sin.
- 3F God calculates this event to so impress the Israelites with a sense of awe that it will last them for many years of travelling.
- 4F But the sense of awe concerning the character of God is very much different than fear of discipline.
- 7E Moses reminds his people of this very event when they are about to enter the promised land, Deuteronomy 4:10.
- 2D Deuteronomy 5:29, "Oh that they had such a heart in them, that they would **fear** Me and keep all My commandments always, that it may be well with them and with their sons forever!"
 - 1E Obedience is here associated with the fear of the Lord. Obedience comes from transformed fear.
 - 2E The transformation of the fear of God is an amazing tool for obedience. For with the awe of understanding who He truly is comes a desire to please Him.
- 3D Deuteronomy 6:1-2, "1 "Now this is the commandment, the statutes and the judgments which the LORD your God has commanded *me* to teach you, that you might do *them* in the land where you are going over to possess it, 2 so that you and your son and your grandson might **fear** the LORD your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments which I command you, all the days of your life, and that your days may be prolonged."
 - 1E There is an additional benefit to the fear of the Lord and resultant obedience.
 - 2E Your days are prolonged - that is, you live a longer and fuller life.
- 6C Applications:
 - 1D Genesis 22:10-12, "10 Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. 11 But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." 12 He said, "Do not stretch out your hand against the lad, and do nothing to him; for now I know that you **fear** God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me."
 - 1E Well this is a very famous passage where Abraham obey the command of the Lord to sacrifice, even if it is his own son.
 - 2E As a result, the Lord knew that Abraham feared him. Think about it for a minute, though.
 - 1F This was a terribly unfair situation, at least from the human viewpoint. God asked Abraham to sacrifice his own son.
 - 2F But Abraham weighed what he might lose in each case, and chose to lose his son rather than lose the Lord.
 - 3F At the same time he learned a valuable lesson about the character of the Lord. That the Lord chose to lose His own Son rather than see the world lost in sin.

- 4F Our God was righteous in every respect that he should do this thing for us.
- 5F But there is more...
- 1G Abraham is said to have feared the Lord for not withholding his own son, his only son from God.
- 2G So we can conclude that the fear of the Lord is the equivalent of holding Him higher than your most valued possession.
- 3G Surely for Abraham this was Isaac.
- 2D Exodus 18:19-22, "19 "Now listen to me: I will give you counsel, and God be with you. You be the people's representative before God, and you bring the disputes to God, 20 then teach them the statutes and the laws, and make known to them the way in which they are to walk and the work they are to do. 21 "Furthermore, you shall select out of all the people able men who **fear** God, men of truth, those who hate dishonest gain; and you shall place *these* over them *as* leaders of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties and of tens. 22 "Let them judge the people at all times; and let it be that every major dispute they will bring to you, but every minor dispute they themselves will judge. So it will be easier for you, and they will bear *the burden* with you."
- 1E These are the words of Moses' father in law, who advises him concerning the great burden of judging the disputes of the people.
- 2E He begins by telling Moses what a fool he is for undertaking such a burdensome responsibility.
- 3E Then he goes on to tell him to delegate this responsibility, and how to do it.
- 4E The main qualification for a judge of the people is to be fear of God. So fear of God qualifies you as a wise person.
- 7C Psalm 25:14 "The secret of the LORD is for those who **fear** Him, And He will make them know His covenant."
- 1D This almost deserves a category by itself - God's secret counsel is for those who fear Him.
- 2D (sôd) **counsel, council, assembly**. The primary meaning of the word is "confidential speech" hence, "counsel." The emphasis on confidentiality marks a distinction between this word and the more general `çfâ (q.v.) "advice, " "counsel." The word stresses that intelligent counsel can be a key to good success (Prov 15:22). The wise and upright man who walks in the fear of the Lord will have God's secret counsel.
- 1E Proverbs 3:32 compares to this one. "For the devious are an abomination to the LORD; But He is intimate with the upright."
- 2E Also Amos 3:7, "Surely the Lord GOD does nothing Unless He reveals His secret counsel To His servants the prophets."
- 3E It's not that we counsel God, but that if we fear Him, He brings us into an inner circle.
- 4E This is surely the meaning of Matthew 13:10-13, "10 And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in **parables**?" 11 Jesus answered

them, "To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been granted. 12 "For whoever has, to him *more* shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him. 13 "Therefore I speak to them in **parables**; because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand."

5E And also Revelation 2:17, "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give *some* of the hidden **manna**, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it."

8C Psalm 31:18-20, "18 Let the lying lips be mute, Which speak arrogantly against the righteous With pride and contempt. 19 How great is Your goodness, Which You have stored up for those who **fear** You, Which You have wrought for those who take refuge in You, Before the sons of men! 20 You hide them in the secret place of Your presence from the conspiracies of man; You keep them secretly in a shelter from the strife of tongues."

1D The context of this is false accusation. This can happen to anyone, and Christians are no exception.

1E Christians may be targeted because of their less mature brethren, associating backslidden Christians with all Christians is a common source of false accusations against Christians.

2E Christians may also be targeted simply because of jealousy - a test of undeserved suffering from those who hate what is good.

2D But the writer fears God with a godly fear, and so he knows that he has many good things in store for him, thanks to the goodness of God.

3D One of those good things is preservation from the gossip and maligning of men.

4D So if you fear God, you may be spared the conspiracies of others; God renders them as non-effective in some interventionist way.

9C Psalm 33:8-9, "8 Let all the earth **fear** the LORD; Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. 9 For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast."

1D Here is an exhortation to the whole earth to fear the Lord and to stand in awe of Him.

2D Once again there is the association of fear and awe, exactly as we studied previously.

3D But here we have a reason to do so, which is the sovereign will of God.

1E The sovereignty of God is a measure of His infinite power. All things which He decrees come to pass.

2E But always God employs His sovereign power in order to bring about good. The things which He spoke, and came about were good things, likewise the things He commanded and stood fast.

3E Therefore, observing the works of the Lord is reason for godly fear or awe. By

them we have a sense of awe about what He has done.

4E Meeting omnipotence may invoke a wide range of reaction - utter fear, to hope. If you're handicapped by a sinful nature, the tendency to fear before the awesomeness of God is greatly strengthened.

5E But then something happens; you realized that God is a good God - that He is loving and gracious and all the rest - and you are transformed to a state of awesome appreciation.

6E Well now think about it. You surely must have an appreciation for a person with absolute power coupled with absolute integrity.

7E There is an axiom about absolute power.. That it corrupts absolutely. But this only applies to sinful creatures. But God with absolute power is only employed for absolute good. That's awesome.

10C Psalm 34:1-11, "I will bless the LORD at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth. 2 My soul will make its boast in the LORD; The humble will hear it and rejoice. 3 O magnify the LORD with me, And let us exalt His name together. 4 I sought the LORD, and He answered me, And delivered me from all my fears. 5 They looked to Him and were radiant, And their faces will never be ashamed. 6 This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him And saved him out of all his troubles. 7 The angel of the LORD encamps around those who **fear** Him, And rescues them. 8 O taste and see that the LORD is good; How blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him! 9 O **fear** the LORD, you His saints; For to those who **fear** Him there is no want. 10 The young lions do lack and suffer hunger; But they who seek the LORD shall not be in want of any good thing. 11 Come, you children, listen to me; I will teach you the **fear** of the LORD."

1D This is a Psalm of praise, where the singer determines to continually praise God. It has quite a noble tone to it.

2D The singer also enlists the voices of others to praise God with him - the reason...?

1E That the Lord has delivered him from all his fears.

2E So we begin with the idea that the Lord delivers you from your fears.

Therefore there is no reason to fear at all, because you should take your fears to the Lord.

3E But why He does this is important as well. If you discover the Lord releases you from all your fears, you have to find out why this is so.

3D Look at the way this is done:

1E Seek the Lord and He answers.

2E Look to him and become radiant, and never ashamed.

3E Cry to the Lord, and the Lord saves you from all your troubles.

4D Then comes verse seven, which is the ultimate.

1E Fear of the Lord replaces all fear.

2E Fear the Lord, and the angel of the Lord encamps around you.

3E It was the ancient custom to put the vulnerable people of the group in the middle of the camp, and the trained military types around them for

protection.

- 4E So the angel of the Lord encamps around you and rescues you.
- 5E But there is more to this than meets the eye, if you know the true identity of the angel of the Lord.
- 6E The angel of the Lord is a way to refer to the preincarnate Christ.
- 7E It is the work of Christ which rescues you from all the worst things in this life and the next.
- 8E From the ISBE: "This angel is spoken of as "the angel of Yahweh," and "the angel of the presence (or face) of Yahweh."
 - 1F The following passages contain references to this angel: Gen 16:7 ff--the angel and Hagar; Gen 18--Abraham intercedes with the angel for Sodom; Gen 22:11 ff--the angel interposes to prevent the sacrifice of Isaac; Gen 24:7,40--Abraham sends Eliezer and promises the angel's protection; Gen 31:11 ff--the angel who appears to Jacob says "I am the God of Beth-el"; Gen 32:24 ff--Jacob wrestles with the angel and says, "I have seen God face to face"; Gen 48:15 f--Jacob speaks of God and the angel as identical; Ex 3 (compare Acts 7:30 ff)--the angel appears to Moses in the burning bush; Ex 13:21; 14:19 (compare Nu 20:16)--God or the angel leads Israel out of Egypt; Ex 23:20 ff--the people are commanded to obey the angel; Ex 32:34 through 33:17 (compare Isa 63:9)--Moses pleads for the presence of God with His people; Josh 5:13 through 6:2--the angel appears to Joshua; Jdg 2:1-5--the angel speaks to the people; Jdg 6:11 ff--the angel appears to Gideon.
 - 2F A study of these passages shows that while the angel and Yahweh are at times distinguished from each other, they are with equal frequency, and in the same passages, merged into each other. How is this to be explained?
 - 3F It is obvious that these apparitions cannot be the Almighty Himself, whom no man hath seen, or can see.
 - 4F In seeking the explanation, special attention should be paid to two of the passages above cited. In Ex 23:20 ff God promises to send an angel before His people to lead them to the promised land; they are commanded to obey him and not to provoke him "for he will not pardon your transgression: for my name is in him."
 - 5F Thus the angel can forgive sin, which only God can do, because God's name, i.e. His character and thus His authority, are in the angel.
 - 6F Further, in the passage Ex 32:34 through 33:17 Moses intercedes for the people after their first breach of the covenant; God responds by promising, "Behold mine angel shall go before thee"; and immediately after God says, "I will not go up in the midst of thee." In answer to further pleading, God says, "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest."

- 7F Here a clear distinction is made between an ordinary angel, and the angel who carries with him God's presence. The conclusion may be summed up in the words of Davidson in his Old Testament Theology: "In particular providences one may trace the presence of Yahweh in influence and operation; in ordinary angelic appearances one may discover Yahweh present on some side of His being, in some attribute of His character; in the angel of the Lord He is fully present as the covenant God of His people, to redeem them."
- 8F The question still remains, Who is theophanic angel? To this many answers have been given, of which the following may be mentioned: (1) This angel is simply an angel with a special commission; (2) He may be a momentary descent of God into visibility; (3) He may be the Logos, a kind of temporary preincarnation of the second person of the Trinity. Each has its difficulties, but the last is certainly the most tempting to the mind. Yet it must be remembered that at best these are only conjectures that touch on a great mystery. It is certain that from the beginning God used angels in human form, with human voices, in order to communicate with man; and the appearances of the angel of the Lord, with his special redemptive relation to God's people, show the working of that Divine mode of self-revelation which culminated in the coming of the Saviour, and are thus a fore-shadowing of, and a preparation for, the full revelation of God in Jesus Christ.
- 9E Verse seven..."The angel of the LORD encamps around those who **fear** Him, And rescues them."
- 1F So the preincarnate logos protects and rescues those who fear the Lord.
- 2F Although this is not a specific reference to salvation from total depravity, surely the principle applies to that.
- 10E Verse eight goes on to give the basis for the transformed fear of the Lord. "O taste and see that the LORD is good; How blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!"
- 11E The ninth verse gives a benefit for the fear of the Lord, "O **fear** the LORD, you His saints; For to those who **fear** Him there is no want."
- 12E Verse eleven tells how fear of the Lord comes about - by teaching, "Come, you children, listen to me; I will teach you the **fear** of the LORD."
- 11C Psalm 36:1 "Transgression speaks to the ungodly within his heart; There is no **fear** of God before his eyes."
- 1D This is helpful in that it points out that fear of God is a sound line of defense against temptation.
- 2D If there is no fear, then there is great susceptibility to sin, and also to its destructive effects in life.
- 3D It is also important to understand that godly fear is not a fear of discipline, but a sense of awe about the totality of divine character.

- 4D It is more proper to conceive of divine character as a defense against sin, than fear of discipline.
- 12C Psalm 40:1-3, "1 I waited patiently for the LORD; And He inclined to me and heard my cry. 2 He brought me up out of the pit of destruction, out of the miry clay, And He set my feet upon a rock making my footsteps firm. 3 He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God; Many will see and **fear** And will trust in the LORD."
- 1D Our personal testimony leads others to fear the Lord with a transformed fear.
- 2D Verses one and two contain the substance of that testimony - that the Lord heard the prayers of David, and intervened to rescue him, setting him right in life.
- 3D None of this contains reason to fear the wrath of God. Instead, it is an exhortation to see His goodness, and fear that.
- 13C Psalm 60:4-5, "4 You have given a banner to those who **fear** You, That it may be displayed because of the truth. 5 That Your beloved may be delivered, Save with Your right hand, and answer us!"
- 1D From the ISBE, "The English word "banner" is from banderia, Low Latin, meaning a banner. It has come to mean a flag, or standard, carried at the head of a military band or body, to indicate the line of march, or the rallying point, and it is now applied, in its more extended significance, to royal, national, or ecclesiastical "banners" also. We find it applied sometimes to a streamer on the end of a lance, such as is used by the Arab sheik today.
- 2D More from the ISBE, "The Hebrews, it would seem, like the Assyrians, the Egyptians, and other ancient nations, had military ensigns. As bearing upon this question, a very significant passage is that found in Nu 2:2: "The children of Israel shall encamp every man by his own standard, with the ensigns of their fathers' houses."
- 3D So when the Psalmist says that God has given a banner to those who fear Him, there is some significance in the military frame of reference. The banner lifts morale, and is a reason for esprit de corps.
- 1E On the unit standards of the United States military, we have a custom of battle streamers.
- 2E These streamers state the battle and the year, and they indicate to all the combat history of the unit.
- 3E When you see 'Guadalcanal, 1942' on the standard of a Marine unit, like the first Marine Division, it makes you swell with pride, and it inspires you to be the very best in an effort to uphold the traditions of those who have gone before you in the service of that unit.
- 4E When we have a transformed fear of God, He gives us a banner, a symbol of esprit de corps, and a reason for inspiration.
- 5E Since the nature of the banner is unnamed within the passage, there must be an obvious historical reference, and so there is in Numbers 2:2, which is quoted above.
- 6E Those banners in the wilderness were symbols of boasting in God, and

reasons for esprit de corps in the military campaigns which followed.

7E The immediate context in Psalm 60 is also military - a military campaign is described in the verses following this statement.

4D But there is also a general sense here, because the writer of this Psalm states the verse as a general principle.

5D If you fear God, God will give you a banner, a reason to have godly pride in who you are as a God-fearing person.

6D The proper banner for the Christian today is not a literal one, but a spiritual one. It is our baptism into Jesus Christ.

14C Psalm 67:7, "God blesses us, That all the ends of the earth may **fear** Him."

1D Blessings are good things. When God gives His people good things, the rest of the world notices.

2D Through observing the goodness of God, others will have a sense of awe about Him.

15C Psalm 90:1-13, "Psalm 90:1 <A Prayer of Moses, the man of God.> Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations. 2 Before the mountains were born Or You gave birth to the earth and the world, Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God. 3 You turn man back into dust And say, "Return, O children of men." 4 For a thousand years in Your sight Are like yesterday when it passes by, Or *as* a watch in the night. 5 You have swept them away like a flood, they fall asleep; In the morning they are like grass which sprouts anew. 6 In the morning it flourishes and sprouts anew; Toward evening it fades and withers away. 7 For we have been consumed by Your anger And by Your wrath we have been dismayed. 8 You have placed our iniquities before You, Our secret *sins* in the light of Your presence. 9 For all our days have declined in Your fury; We have finished our years like a sigh. 10 As for the days of our life, they contain seventy years, Or if due to strength, eighty years, Yet their pride is *but* labor and sorrow; For soon it is gone and we fly away. 11 Who understands the power of Your anger And Your fury, according to the **fear** that is due You? 12 So teach us to number our days, That we may present to You a heart of wisdom. 13 Do return, O LORD; how long *will it be?* And be sorry for Your servants."

1D It is very important to register the context of this passage. It is from the context of the nation of Israel under divine discipline.

2D As a matter of principle you cannot have transformed fear of God if you are out of fellowship, and this passage confirms it.

3D Moses starts here with an ode to the eternal nature of God, verses one through six.

4D Then he turns to assess the current situation with Israel... they have been consumed by the anger of God, and dismayed by His wrath.

5D All their iniquities are before God, and even the secret sins are under His light.

6D As a result, a great contrast with the infinite age of God; their days decline.

7D The shortness of life emphasizes the divine discipline all the more. Life is too short to live under discipline all the time.

- 8D Then verse eleven says that the power of God's anger - His intervention in discipline - is unfathomable.
- 9D You cannot measure God's ability to act in discipline of your rebellion from Him.
- 10D And a final couple of requests.
- 1E That God teach them to number their days. In other words, to value the days of their lives, since there is a limit. Furthermore, to see life as an opportunity to create wisdom in your soul, and so to make priorities according to that.
- 2E And for God to return to them - that is, to return to the former way of blessing.
- 16C Psalm 102:8-18, "8 The LORD is compassionate and gracious, Slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness. 9 He will not always strive *with us*, Nor will He keep *His anger* forever. 10 He has not dealt with us according to our sins, Nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. 11 For as high as the heavens are above the earth, So great is His lovingkindness toward those who **fear** Him. 12 As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us. 13 Just as a father has compassion on *his* children, So the LORD has compassion on those who **fear** Him. 14 For He Himself knows our frame; He is mindful that we are *but* dust. 15 As for man, his days are like grass; As a flower of the field, so he flourishes. 16 When the wind has passed over it, it is no more, And its place acknowledges it no longer. 17 But the lovingkindness of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who **fear** Him, And His righteousness to children's children, 18 To those who keep His covenant And remember His precepts to do them."
- 1D Again there is a context of divine discipline. Here there is a reminder of the compassion of God while under discipline.
- 2D There will be relief from the suffering when it has filled its purpose according to God's plan.
- 3D When it comes to verse eleven it talks about the virtue love of God toward those who fear Him, and the follow up in verse twelve makes it clear that fellowship with God has been restored.
- 1E So godly fear of God has an expression in repentance and confession, so that fellowship is restored.
- 2E We can define confession as the moment that the transformed fear of God is resumed in the soul.
- 4D Verse seventeen has more: The Lord has compassion on those who fear Him, and His virtue love is forever on those who fear Him.
- 1E This is a salvation reference to the fear of the Lord.
- 2E If you fear the Lord, you have His salvation forever.
- 3E Therefore the initial expression of belief is the first time that you have a transformed fear of God.
- 17C Psalm 111: "Psalm 111:1 Praise the LORD! I will give thanks to the LORD with all *my* heart, In the company of the upright and in the assembly. 2 Great are the works of the LORD; *They are* studied by all who delight in them. 3 Splendid and majestic is His

work, And His righteousness endures forever. 4 He has made His wonders to be remembered; The LORD is gracious and compassionate. 5 He has given food to those who **fear** Him; He will remember His covenant forever. 6 He has made known to His people the power of His works, In giving them the heritage of the nations. 7 The works of His hands are truth and justice; All His precepts are sure. 8 They are upheld forever and ever; They are performed in truth and uprightness. 9 He has sent redemption to His people; He has ordained His covenant forever; Holy and awesome is His name. 10 The **fear** of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do *His commandments*; His praise endures forever.”

- 1D In verses one through four there is a steady stream of praise toward the goodness of God in His character.
 - 1E Great are the works of the Lord... verse two.
 - 2E Splendid and majestic is His work, and His righteousness endures forever, verse three.
 - 3E His wonders are made to be remembered (long lasting), and He is gracious and compassionate, verse four.
- 2D He has given food to those who fear Him, verse five.
 - 1E So now logistical supply is a part of God’s plan for those who fear Him.
 - 2E And this may be more than physical food... it looks indeed to be spiritual.
- 3D Then more praise to the character of God in verses seven through nine.
 - 1E The works of His hands are truth and justice, all His precepts are sure, verse seven.
 - 2E They are upheld forever, and performed in truth and uprightness, verse eight.
 - 3E Holy and awesome is His name, verse nine.
- 4D But then the great news comes in verse ten. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of all wisdom.
 - 1E Standing alone, this statement would be quite important.
 - 2E Set in the context of praise for God’s character, it leaps from the page as salient and profound truth.
 - 3E Transformed fear of God is a sense of awe about the character of God - and the beginning of all wisdom.
 - 4E Not just the beginning of a little, or some, or even a lot of wisdom. It is the beginning of all wisdom.
 - 1F It is the beginning of all wisdom because it sees God for who He is.
 - 2F It is the beginning of wisdom, because it is the fulfillment of the greatest commandment.
 - 3F It is the beginning of wisdom, because God rewards those who fear Him with more knowledge.
 - 4F It is the beginning of wisdom, and therefore the gateway to all blessing, satisfaction, and meaning in life.
 - 5F If wisdom is so great, then you should want to have a fear for the Lord.

- 18C Psalm 115:11, "He will bless those who **fear** the LORD, The small together with the great."
- 1D Here is a simple and straightforward promise of blessing to those who fear God.
- 2D And more than that, it won't matter if your life seems insignificant to you. It only matters that God sees you, and blesses you wherever you are.
- 3D This does not promise to make the small great in this life, but to bless you where you are.
- 4D You can rely on this, however: that no matter the smallness of this life, you will be great in the next.
- 5D Psalm 147:11 is quite similar: "The LORD favors those who **fear** Him, Those who wait for His lovingkindness."
- 19C Psalm 119:63, "I am a companion of all those who **fear** You, And of those who keep Your precepts."
- 1D This is a sidelight to our doctrine. Make friend with those who have a transformed fear of God.
- 2D Your friends are a reflection of who you are, see your friends, and you are seeing your face in the mirror as well.
- 20C Psalm 145:18-19, "18 The LORD is near to all who call upon Him, To all who call upon Him in truth. 19 He will fulfill the desire of those who **fear** Him; He will also hear their cry and will save them."
- 1D In trouble? Call upon Him. But do so with a godly fear. You will then have the confidence of His reply.
- 2D But you must call upon Him in truth, and with a transformed fear. Only from that humble state will you receive a reply.
- 3D But what a reply! He fulfills your desire, even if you didn't express everything as fully and eloquently as you could have, God knows you to reply in just the right way.
- 21C Proverbs 1:22-33, "22 "How long, O naive ones, will you love being simple-minded? And scoffers delight themselves in scoffing And fools hate knowledge? 23 "Turn to my reproof, Behold, I will pour out my spirit on you; I will make my words known to you. 24 "Because I called and you refused, I stretched out my hand and no one paid attention; 25 And you neglected all my counsel And did not want my reproof; 26 I will also laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your dread comes, 27 When your dread comes like a storm And your calamity comes like a whirlwind, When distress and anguish come upon you. 28 "Then they will call on me, but I will not answer; They will seek me diligently but they will not find me, 29 Because they hated knowledge And did not choose the **fear** of the LORD. 30 "They would not accept my counsel, They spurned all my reproof. 31 "So they shall eat of the fruit of their own way And be satiated with their own devices. 32 "For the waywardness of the naive will kill them, And the complacency of fools will destroy them. 33 "But he who listens to me shall live securely And will be at ease from the dread of evil.""
- 1D Now this is a challenging passage. These are the words of wisdom personified.

- 2D First notice that this is directed to those who are apart from the plan of God, and fellowship with God.
- 1E A couple of rhetorical questions aid in making those people identify their state. They are quite abrasive questions by nature.
- 1F Personified wisdom calls these people fools, and simple-minded... not exactly compliments.
- 2F But these are designed to catch attention, and cause self-evaluation.
- 3D Then comes an appeal for repentance.
- 1E The offer is a good one... the spirit of wisdom will be poured out on those who repent.
- 2E And the words of wisdom will be made known to them.
- 4D Verses 23 and 24 begin reveal Wisdom's attitude toward those who refuse grace.
- 1E It is proper to note that this attitude will come on account of the rejection of grace, and not because of sin.
- 2E God accounts for sin, and pays for it through the sacrifice of His only born Son.
- 3E But He allows human beings to make choices, even the rejection of His gracious provision.
- 4E But if we do reject God's gracious offer...
- 5D The disaster will be great. Let's skip over God's attitude for a moment, so we can analyze what happens to those who reject grace.
- 1E Dread comes like a storm. Calamity comes like a whirlwind. Distress and anguish come upon you.
- 2E People who are apart from God's plan are not living a quality life. They do not have lives that are fulfilled or meaningful or successful according to the divine definition.
- 3E But when they reject grace there is inevitably going to be a second round of disaster in their lives.
- 4E This is self-induced misery... they 'sow the wind, and reap the whirlwind.' - Hosea 8:7.
- 1F That is, the disaster comes because of their bad decision to live in isolation from grace.
- 2F And from the continued bad decision that come from looking at life from the viewpoint of the world.
- 3F And Proverbs 10:25 is quite appropriate to the subject, "When the **whirlwind** passes, the wicked is no more, But the righteous *one has* an everlasting foundation."
- 4F So this disaster wipes out the wicked, and they are truly left with nothing, because they have no accumulation for eternity.
- 5F This induces dread - a common fear. Here it is the fear of loss and the fear of exclusion. The ultimate in fear is to face eternity with nothing at all, and this is the lot of the one who is without God.
- 6D And God's attitude will be this:

- 1E He will laugh at the calamity.
- 2E He will mock the dread when it comes.
- 3E Well this seems undignified and unsportsmanlike, to say the very least. More than that, it seems very ungodlike.
- 4E But this is language of accomodation, attributing human responses to God in order to explain a phenomenon that applies to God.
- 5E Human beings laugh and mock the misfortunes of others when they have been wronged, as a way to express their pleasure in vindication.
- 6E The consequences of bad decisions bring vindication to God's name.
- 7E So now we're talking about vindication, and not mocking someone's misfortune. In the case of those who are apart from God's plan there is no such thing as misfortune.
- 8E They have been the recipients of discipline, an expression of love from God, so that they return to fellowship with Him. In discipline God wants the very best for His creatures, and though it is painful, it has a design to bring about good.
- 9E But reject the grace of God, and you simply become an example. That is, you become a living vindication of why it is best to follow God's plan.
- 10E God is a just God, and when bad decisions vindicate His name, He is pleased at the vindication.
- 11E Even though at the same time there must be that godly sorrow over a lost soul.
- 12E But this passage only focuses on the pleasure that God takes in the vindication, and not on the sorrow that He has for the lost soul.
- 13E From the TWOT, (la`ag) **mocking, derision.**
- 1F The wicked mock the poor and thereby insult their divine Maker (Prov 17:6).
- 2F Their wicked eyes mock their fathers (Prov 30:17).
- 3F They delight in laughing at such servants of God as Job (Job 21:3), Jeremiah (Jer 20:7), Asaph (Psa 80:6 [H 7]), Nehemiah (Neh 2:19), the Jews (Neh 3), and Hezekiah's mailmen (2Chr 30:10).
- 4F Men who mock God's servants and message will ultimately be mocked in turn: delivered into the captivity of people who speak with what seems to be a stammering or mocking tongue (Isa 33:10).
- 5F The source of this kind of judgment is God. The classic text is Psa 2:4. The Lord will mock those rebels who say of God the Father and his Messiah, "Let us break off their bands and cast off their cords." God will laugh at the heathen; he will have all of them in derision (Psa 59:8 [H 9]).
- 6F Likewise, Wisdom joins God in laughing at the calamities of the coarse and hardened fool; she mocks when their fear comes (Prov 1:26) just as "the virgin, the daughter of Zion" mocked the proud, boastful Sennacherib (2Kings 19:21; Isa 37:22), when God delivered her.
- 14E Again, God is not mocking out of an absence of self-esteem, nor from any

sinful need for vindication.

- 1F The language is there to explain that God is vindicated by the disaster of the godless.
 - 2F The disaster of the godless is a vindication of the character of God.
 - 3F Furthermore, they are beyond help, dying the sin unto death.
 - 4F Although they call upon God at that time, their pleas don't have to do with love for God... they are pleas borne of fear and self-preservation, but not pure in their motive.
 - 5F So even if they plead with God for relief, He is going to take them out through the sin unto death.
 - 6F And through this God receives glory, because He has been just, and provided ample opportunity for repentance.
 - 7F The expression of mocking and laughter goes toward the invisible realm as well, so that the life of the ungodly becomes an illustration to all of the goodness of God.
- 15E So the context of mocking and laughter is important.
- 1F There is no mocking and laughter when the possibility of repentance remains. To do so then would be not only inappropriate, but prohibitive to repentance.
 - 2F But once the opportunity to repent is passed, the individuals in question become an illustration to the rest of the world concerning the goodness of God.
 - 3F Therefore, God points this out.
 - 4F But God does not laugh and mock for His own benefit, since He has perfect self-esteem.
 - 5F And His laughter and mocking are not heard on planet earth. We do not hear these things.
 - 6F He mocks and laughs for the benefit of the invisible gallery of angels.
 - 7F Because angels, fallen and elect, are watching the course of human history, those humans who have passed the point of no return in sin are particularly instructive.
- 7D Verse 29 has the reference to the fear of the Lord...
- 1E In this verse, the writer makes equivalent hatred of knowledge and fear of the Lord. If you hate knowledge and do not choose fear of the Lord...
 - 2E There is no fear of the Lord without knowledge. Knowledge precedes fear of the Lord.
- 22C Proverbs 3:7, "Do not be wise in your own eyes; **Fear** the LORD and turn away from evil."
- 1D Being wise in your own eyes means believing that your wisdom is independent of God.
 - 2D There is no wisdom, not the least bit of wisdom, that is independent of God.
 - 3D Being wise in your own eyes is evil. Evil has you entangled in its web if you

esteem yourself as wise apart from God.

- 4D The command here to fear the Lord is also an exhortation to repent of self-wisdom and its attendant evil.
- 23C Proverbs 8:13, “The **fear** of the LORD is to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way And the perverted mouth, I hate.”
 - 1D You cannot both love evil and fear God at the same time.
 - 2D The fear of God is much the same as love for him; you cannot both love Him and evil, because the two are mutually exclusive.
- 24C Proverbs 10:27, “The **fear** of the LORD prolongs life, But the years of the wicked will be shortened.”
 - 1D Here is a blessing that comes from the fear of the Lord.
 - 2D If you have a sense of awe about His goodness, then it will prolong your life.
 - 3D It will prolong your life for at least these reasons:
 - 1E There is very little stress incurred on the soul of the one who fears God. If you fear God, then you fear nothing else.
 - 2E There are very few stupid, life-threatening decisions that come from those who fear of the Lord.
 - 3E If you fear the Lord, then you will make good decisions about your health, valuing your life.
 - 4E If you fear the Lord, He watches over you.
- 25C Proverbs 14:26-27, “26 In the **fear** of the LORD there is strong confidence, And his children will have refuge. 27 The **fear** of the LORD is a fountain of life, That one may avoid the snares of death.”
 - 1D The fear of the Lord gives you confidence, a self-esteem that is useful in virtually all situations of life.
 - 1E Psalm 119:23, “Even though princes sit *and* talk against me, Your servant meditates on Your statutes.”
 - 2E Psalm 119:46, “I will also speak of Your testimonies before kings And shall not be ashamed.”
 - 2D The fear of the Lord is a refuge, a fortress of God against which no disaster in life can prevail.
 - 3D It is also a fountain of life - prolonging and enriching your life.
 - 1E We’ve already discussed this somewhat, concerning how you avoid the snares of death.
 - 2E But a fountain of life is much more than longevity. Longevity is overrated according to the gauge of your quality of life.
 - 3E You have to gauge your quality of life by something other than longevity, for longevity can be longevity in living hell.
 - 4E What makes life good? These and many others are considered quality lifestyles.
 - 1F The hedonistic life?
 - 2F The life of ease?

- 3F The intellectual life?
- 4F The professional life?
- 5F The family life?
- 6F The charitable life?
- 7F The active physical life?
- 8F The outdoor life?
- 5E All these things pass away, and so are limited in the human frame of reference. They are destroyed by death.
- 6E But you can all these things, and eternal life thanks to the work of Jesus Christ.
- 7E And, if you're unfortunate so that you have few or none of these things, you still have eternal life in Jesus Christ.
- 8E Christ had none of what we often consider to be quality of life things. Yet, His was a life of exceeding quality.
- 26C Proverbs 15:16, "Better is a little with the **fear** of the LORD Than great treasure and turmoil with it."
- 1D This is one of the great proverbs. Many seek after great treasure in life, but often with great treasure goes turmoil.
 - 1E Turmoil in having to travel and be away from your family.
 - 2E Turmoil in working such long hours that you don't have time to enjoy what you earn.
 - 3E Turmoil through inordinate ambition and competition. The rat race is just so tiresome all the time.
 - 4E And many other ways.
- 2D The word of wisdom here is that though you have little in the way of what the world might describe as quality of life, you have the one thing that gives quality to everything.
 - 1E You have the fear of the Lord.
 - 2E In the fear of the Lord you have wisdom.
 - 3E In the fear of the Lord you have a destiny.
 - 4E In the fear of the Lord you have assurance that there is no ultimate loss, exclusion, or pain.
 - 5E In the fear of the Lord you have freedom.
- 27C Proverbs 15:33, "The **fear** of the LORD is the instruction for wisdom, And before honor *comes* humility."
- 1D This couples well with the fear of the Lord as the beginning of all wisdom.
- 2D Therefore, it seems that the beginning of wisdom is instruction, and the reason that you seek it is that you fear the Lord.
- 3D There is honor in wisdom, but before you gain honor, you must log quite a bit of time under instruction.
- 28C Proverbs 16:6, "By lovingkindness and truth iniquity is atoned for, And by the **fear** of the LORD one keeps away from evil."
- 1D Okay, keeping away from evil is a good thing. Evil is the destructive influence of

- life, devouring all who will give their lives to it.
- 2D If you fear the Lord, you will stay away from evil. Fear of the Lord is very motivational in a positive way.
- 3D Since fear of the Lord is much like love of the Lord, it is a complex of thought that leads to action - or in this case, inaction.
- 29C Proverbs 19:23, "The **fear** of the LORD *leads* to life, So that one may sleep satisfied, untouched by evil."
- 1D The fear of the Lord leads to life... this much we have already covered.
- 2D But the result of life is that you sleep satisfied, untouched by evil.
- 3D Without the fear of the Lord, evil will eventually get to you. By one route or another, evil will make its way into your life, so that you are compromised.
- 4D The compromise of the soul makes it difficult to sleep at night.
- 5D But with the fear of the Lord you'll have good days and bad days, but never the kind of days where your conscience will keep you awake.
- 6D This is one of those intangibles that give a wonderful quality to your life.
- 30C Proverbs 22:4, "The reward of humility *and* the **fear** of the LORD Are riches, honor and life."
- 1D Wow. This just comes right out and says it.
- 2D Who wouldn't want this? Riches, honor, and life! And here's the kicker...
- 3D The riches, honor, and life last forever. It's the blessing that can never be taken away.
- 4D This is the great eternal advantage for the believer in Jesus Christ. That in order to gain life we lose it.
- 31C Proverbs 23:17, "Do not let your heart envy sinners, But *live* in the **fear** of the LORD always."
- 1D Sinners and their sins often have a glamorous image.
- 2D It is an important justification for sinners to glamorize their lifestyle. They gain from the approbation, and from the glamor they rationalize that it's okay to participate in whatever they're doing.
- 3D The way of the world makes it easy to envy sinners. Their lives seem glamorous, but in the end it is a glamorous and empty lie.
- 4D This encapsulates the truth of Proverbs 5-7 concerning the lifestyle of the adulterous woman.
- 5D Proverbs 5:3-4, "3 For the lips of an adulteress drip honey And smoother than oil is her speech; 4 But in the end she is bitter as **wormwood**, Sharp as a two-edged sword."
- 32C Proverbs 24:21, "My son, **fear** the LORD and the king;"
- 1D This may well be the source of our passage in 1 Peter 2.
- 2D That these are coupled together make the exhortation to fear the king much the same.
- 3D And with the frame of reference that you have for the fear of the Lord, you can also link the fear of the king to the same kind of reverent awe for good.

- 4D Especially in the context of 1 Peter, where Peter identifies the good that rulers do: “13 Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, 14 or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right.”
- 5D So hold your rulers in awe, the same way that you hold God in awe; with an appreciation for what they can do.
- 6D For they are appointed by God in order to do good, and having received an appointment from God, no matter what their connection with God is certain.
- 7D If you fear the king, then the quality of your citizenship is also certain.
- 33C Ecclesiastes 3:12-14, “ 12 I know that there is nothing better for them than to rejoice and to do good in one's lifetime; 13 moreover, that every man who eats and drinks sees good in all his labor -- it is the gift of God. 14 I know that everything God does will remain forever; there is nothing to add to it and there is nothing to take from it, for God has so worked that men should **fear** Him.”
- 1D Mankind works and does good in his lifetime... but his work is limited by time. All the works of man will be consumed.
- 2D On the other hand, God works and it remains forever.
- 34C Ecclesiastes 8:12-13, “ 12 Although a sinner does evil a hundred *times* and may lengthen his *life*, still I know that it will be well for those who **fear** God, who **fear** Him openly. 13 But it will not be well for the evil man and he will not lengthen his days like a shadow, because he does not **fear** God.”
- 1D Solomon gives us a further distinction on the fear of God. He writes that fear of God should be public - that we should fear Him openly and without shame.
- 2D If we do this, it will be well for us.
- 3D Also Solomon has some indirect advice: get your eyes off of people. It is too often that we consider the prosperity of the wicked and through that distraction lose the focus of our spiritual lives.
- 4D The wicked are not the issue. God is the issue. Stay focused on Him, and the rest will take care of itself.
- 35C Isaiah 11:1-5, “Isaiah 11:1 Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, And a branch from his roots will bear fruit. 2 The Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him, The spirit of wisdom and understanding, The spirit of counsel and strength, The spirit of knowledge and the **fear** of the LORD. 3 And He will delight in the **fear** of the LORD, And He will not judge by what His eyes see, Nor make a decision by what His ears hear; 4 But with righteousness He will judge the poor, And decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth; And He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, And with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked. 5 Also righteousness will be the belt about His loins, And faithfulness the belt about His waist.”
- 1D Here is the famous messianic prophecy. This passage contains many great details about the Messiah of Israel, especially focusing on His character.
- 2D The Messiah will be perfect with respect to the fear of the Lord.
- 3D Now truly the Messiah has nothing to fear from the Lord with respect to

discipline. He is perfect in every way, and yet He fears God.

- 4D This is perhaps the greatest illustration of all regarding the fear of the Lord.
- 5D And since the Messiah's fear of God is surrounded by descriptions of His excellent character, you can see that excellent character and fear of the Lord go hand in hand.
- 36C Isaiah 33:5-6, " 5 The LORD is exalted, for He dwells on high; He has filled Zion with justice and righteousness. 6 And He will be the stability of your times, A wealth of salvation, wisdom and knowledge; The **fear** of the LORD is his treasure."
- 1D Here is another messianic prophecy. The great description of the Messiah describes His priority in life, which is fear of the Lord.
- 2D Christ Himself lived in poverty, Matthew 8:20, "The **foxes** have holes and the birds of the air *have* nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head."
- 3D But though He lived in poverty He was a rich man indeed because of His transformed fear of the Lord.
- 37C Isaiah 59:15-19, "15 Yes, truth is lacking; And he who turns aside from evil makes himself a prey. Now the LORD saw, And it was displeasing in His sight that there was no justice. 16 And He saw that there was no man, And was astonished that there was no one to intercede; Then His own arm brought salvation to Him, And His righteousness upheld Him. 17 He put on righteousness like a breastplate, And a helmet of salvation on His head; And He put on garments of vengeance for clothing And wrapped Himself with zeal as a mantle. 18 According to *their* deeds, so He will repay, Wrath to His adversaries, recompense to His enemies; To the coastlands He will make recompense. 19 So they will **fear** the name of the LORD from the west And His glory from the rising of the sun, For He will come like a rushing stream Which the wind of the LORD drives."
- 1D Those who are out of fellowship have much to fear from the Lord's wrath. So it is with those who live in the coastlands.
- 2D This is about the final justice which will come from the Lord... a final justice which will vindicate all the righteous.
- 3D The mediator of final justice is the Messiah, who is the Lord's own arm.
- 4D Thus from the Messiah there is much to fear.
- 38C Jeremiah 5:22-24, "22 'Do you not **fear** Me?' declares the LORD. 'Do you not tremble in My presence? For I have placed the sand as a boundary for the sea, An eternal decree, so it cannot cross over it. Though the waves toss, yet they cannot prevail; Though they roar, yet they cannot cross over it. 23 'But this people has a stubborn and rebellious heart; They have turned aside and departed. 24 'They do not say in their heart, "Let us now **fear** the LORD our God, Who gives rain in its season, Both the autumn rain and the spring rain, Who keeps for us The appointed weeks of the harvest.'"
- 1D God tells His listeners that they should fear Him... that His creative abilities illustrate His great power, and so the power should be feared.
- 2D Verse 24 indicates that the Lord uses this creative power even in time, in order to

bring rain in its season, for a good harvest.

3D So it is not just power alone, but power wielded for justice and blessing.

39C Jeremiah 10:2-16, "2 Thus says the LORD, "Do not learn the way of the nations, And do not be terrified by the signs of the heavens Although the nations are terrified by them; 3 For the customs of the peoples are delusion; Because it is wood cut from the forest, The work of the hands of a craftsman with a cutting tool. 4 "They decorate *it* with silver and with gold; They fasten it with nails and with hammers So that it will not totter. 5 "Like a scarecrow in a cucumber field are they, And they cannot speak; They must be carried, Because they cannot walk! Do not **fear** them, For they can do no harm, Nor can they do any good." 6 There is none like You, O LORD; You are great, and great is Your name in might. 7 Who would not **fear** You, O King of the nations? Indeed it is Your due! For among all the wise men of the nations And in all their kingdoms, There is none like You. 8 But they are altogether stupid and foolish *In their* discipline of delusion -- their idol is wood! 9 Beaten silver is brought from Tarshish, And gold from Uphaz, The work of a craftsman and of the hands of a goldsmith; Violet and purple are their clothing; They are all the work of skilled men. 10 But the LORD is the true God; He is the living God and the everlasting King. At His wrath the earth quakes, And the nations cannot endure His indignation. 11 Thus you shall say to them, "The gods that did not make the heavens and the earth will perish from the earth and from under the heavens." 12 *It is* He who made the earth by His power, Who established the world by His wisdom; And by His understanding He has stretched out the heavens. 13 When He utters His voice, *there is* a tumult of waters in the heavens, And He causes the clouds to ascend from the end of the earth; He makes lightning for the rain, And brings out the wind from His storehouses. 14 Every man is stupid, devoid of knowledge; Every goldsmith is put to shame by his idols; For his molten images are deceitful, And there is no breath in them. 15 They are worthless, a work of mockery; In the time of their punishment they will perish. 16 The portion of Jacob is not like these; For the Maker of all is He, And Israel is the tribe of His inheritance; The LORD of hosts is His name."

1D Jeremiah warns the people not to follow in the common fears of Gentiles.

2D The Gentiles fear the signs of the heavens, that is, astronomical events which are commonly taken as portents of evil.

1E Eclipses and comets were the two major heavenly omens. Supernovae were much more rare, but also portended evil.

2E When the Gentiles saw things like these in the sky, they quaked with fear, thinking they were on the brink of evil.

3E People also tend to make much of calendar dates, as though the man-created numbers could have significance in God's plan.

4E Remember that all calendars are created by man, except for the Hebrew calendar, which was ordained by God for the nation of Israel alone.

3D Idols are made by human hands, and thus have no more than what a human can imbue in it. Humans can imbue nothing into their idols.

1E Idols can do neither good nor bad for you. They are not a matter of fear for anyone.

2E But by way of contrast God is all-powerful and does good by His power.

3E Therefore, we are to fear God with a transformed fear.

40C Jeremiah 32:36-42, “36 "Now therefore thus says the LORD God of Israel concerning this city of which you say, 'It is given into the hand of the king of Babylon by sword, by famine and by pestilence.' 37 "Behold, I will gather them out of all the lands to which I have driven them in My anger, in My wrath and in great indignation; and I will bring them back to this place and make them dwell in safety. 38 "They shall be My people, and I will be their God; 39 and I will give them one heart and one way, that they may **fear** Me always, for their own good and for *the good of* their children after them. 40 "I will make an everlasting covenant with them that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; and I will put the **fear** of Me in their hearts so that they will not turn away from Me. 41 "I will rejoice over them to do them good and will faithfully plant them in this land with all My heart and with all My soul. 42 "For thus says the LORD, 'Just as I brought all this great disaster on this people, so I am going to bring on them all the good that I am promising them.”

1D The Israelites were beaten in war, and about to be scattered as slaves into the lands of their enemies.

2D But God promises them a restoration, both to the land, and a restoration of heart to Him.

3D He will give them one heart and one way, a path leading only to Him.

1E This is the nature of the messianic kingdom, that it has one way, one philosophy.

2E And so He intends for them to fear Him always, for their own good and for the good of their children.

3E It is good for you to fear God, and it is ultimately the best decision you can make for your children. The fear of God is the greatest heritage you can ever leave for your children.

4D The fear of God means that you will not turn away from Him.

41C Jeremiah 33:4-9, “4 "For thus says the LORD God of Israel concerning the houses of this city, and concerning the houses of the kings of Judah which are broken down *to make a defense* against the siege ramps and against the sword, 5 'While *they* are coming to fight with the Chaldeans and to fill them with the corpses of men whom I have slain in My anger and in My wrath, and I have hidden My face from this city because of all their wickedness: 6 'Behold, I will bring to it health and healing, and I will heal them; and I will reveal to them an abundance of peace and truth. 7 'I will restore the fortunes of Judah and the fortunes of Israel and will rebuild them as they were at first. 8 'I will cleanse them from all their iniquity by which they have sinned against Me, and I will pardon all their iniquities by which they have sinned against Me and by which they have transgressed against Me. 9 'It will be to Me a name of joy, praise and glory before all the nations of the earth which will hear of all the good

- that I do for them, and they will **fear** and tremble because of all the good and all the peace that I make for it.”
- 1D Again there is military defeat, and a desperate time in the life of Israel.
 - 2D And again there is the promise of restoration from God.
 - 3D So all that God does for them will be a sign to all the nations of the earth of the goodness of God.
 - 4D And this goodness and peace will bring about much fear. But it is a transformed fear.
- 3B New Testament references to the fear of the Lord.
- 1C Matthew 10:28, “Do not **fear** those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather **fear** Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.”
 - 1D Here is a common fear of God to those who are apart from Him.
 - 2D God has ability to bring eternal justice to your life for what you do in the flesh. Whether you believe in His Son determines your eternal fate.
 - 3D If you are apart from God, your focus of fear is on His omnipotence and justice, but His goodness means nothing.
 - 2C Matthew 28:5-8, “5 The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid; for I know that you are looking for Jesus who has been crucified. 6 "He is not here, for He has risen, just as He said. Come, see the place where He was lying. 7 "Go quickly and tell His disciples that He has risen from the dead; and behold, He is going ahead of you into Galilee, there you will see Him; behold, I have told you." 8 And they left the tomb quickly with **fear** and great joy and ran to report it to His disciples.”
 - 1D The good and proper response to the empty tomb is a godly fear.
 - 2D You cannot have a common fear along with a joy; but if you have joy, then the fear must be a transformed fear.
 - 3D The resurrection is the great good work of God. It inspires transformed, joyous fear like no other work.
 - 4D The sense of awe pervades us concerning the ultimate victory of God, which is the victory of death.
 - 3C Luke 23:39-42, “39 One of the criminals who were hanged *there* was hurling abuse at Him, saying, "Are You not the Christ? Save Yourself and us!" 40 But the other answered, and rebuking him said, "Do you not even **fear** God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? 41 "And we indeed *are suffering* justly, for we are receiving what we deserve for our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong." 42 And he was saying, "Jesus, remember me when You come in Your kingdom!" 43 And He said to him, "Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise."”
 - 1D Here is a common fear of God in the usual spot.
 - 2D There are no atheists in foxholes, or so the saying goes. So it is that one of the men on crosses next to Christ implores the other to fear God in the face of imminent death.
 - 3D Death without Christ should bring common fear. Death with Christ should bring transformed fear.

- 4D So it was that two men died next to Christ, but one died with Him, and one died without.
- 4C Acts 9:31, "So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria enjoyed peace, being built up; and going on in the **fear** of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it continued to increase."
- 1D Here is the recipe for spiritual growth. No gimmicks here, just the real thing.
- 2D The real thing is a god-fearing congregation under the guidance of the Spirit.
- 5C Acts 16:16 and 26, Paul used the term to designate Gentile believers, "Paul stood up, and motioning with his hand said, "Men of Israel, and you who **fear** God, listen:"
- 6C Acts 19:13-18, "13 But also some of the Jewish exorcists, who went from place to place, attempted to name over those who had the evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, "I adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preaches." 14 Seven sons of one Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, were doing this. 15 And the evil spirit answered and said to them, "I recognize Jesus, and I know about Paul, but who are you?" 16 And the man, in whom was the evil spirit, leaped on them and subdued all of them and overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. 17 This became known to all, both Jews and Greeks, who lived in Ephesus; and **fear** fell upon them all and the name of the Lord Jesus was being magnified. 18 Many also of those who had believed kept coming, confessing and disclosing their practices."
- 1D Incidents of supernatural activity invoke the fear of the Lord, being signs of His power.
- 2D This incident of honesty from a demon and caused them to fear. It was a fear leading to repentance.
- 7C Romans 3:9-18, "9 What then? Are we better than they? Not at all; for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin; 10 as it is written, "THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE; 11 THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS, THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD; 12 ALL HAVE TURNED ASIDE, TOGETHER THEY HAVE BECOME USELESS; THERE IS NONE WHO DOES GOOD, THERE IS NOT EVEN ONE." 13 "THEIR THROAT IS AN OPEN GRAVE, WITH THEIR TONGUES THEY KEEP DECEIVING," "THE POISON OF ASPS IS UNDER THEIR LIPS"; 14 "WHOSE MOUTH IS FULL OF CURSING AND BITTERNESS"; 15 "THEIR FEET ARE SWIFT TO SHED BLOOD, 16 DESTRUCTION AND MISERY ARE IN THEIR PATHS, 17 AND THE PATH OF PEACE THEY HAVE NOT KNOWN." 18 "THERE IS NO **FEAR** OF GOD BEFORE THEIR EYES.""
- 1D Here is a string of Old Testament quotes all centered on bringing conviction to unbelievers.
- 2D This is a great passage for establishing total depravity.
- 3D One of the distinguishing characteristics of total depravity is the absence of the transformed fear of God.
- 8C 1 Corinthians 5:10-11, "10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. 11 Therefore, knowing the **fear** of the Lord, we

- persuade men, but we are made manifest to God; and I hope that we are made manifest also in your consciences.”
- 1D The judgment seat of Christ stands as a reason to fear of God, but only to those who are apart from God.
 - 2D The fear of the Lord’s judgment is a powerful reason to repent, and a good tool for evangelism.
- 9C 2 Corinthians 7:1, “Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the **fear** of God.”
- 1D The perfection of holiness is done in the realm of the fear of God.
 - 2D Transformed fear stands as an ideal reason to pursue holiness.
 - 3D If you know the goodness of God, then your holiness will be transformed.
- 10C 2 Corinthians 7:13-15, “13 For this reason we have been comforted. And besides our comfort, we rejoiced even much more for the joy of Titus, because his spirit has been refreshed by you all. 14 For if in anything I have boasted to him about you, I was not put to shame; but as we spoke all things to you in truth, so also our boasting before Titus proved to be *the* truth. 15 His affection abounds all the more toward you, as he remembers the obedience of you all, how you received him with **fear** and trembling.”
- 1D Fear and trembling are signs of humility. This is humble fear toward a person who is carrying God’s message.
 - 2D Titus carried a tough message to the Corinthians; he carried Paul’s message to repent.
 - 3D The Corinthians treated Titus with humility, and received him with fear and trembling.
- 11C Ephesians 5:18-21, “18 And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, 19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; 20 always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; 21 and be subject to one another in the **fear** of Christ.”
- 1D Paul calls upon us to be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.
 - 2D This exhortation stands as the conclusion of a very fine passage.
 - 3D The passage stands as a complete message toward spiritual growth.
 - 4D Part of spiritual growth is for us to be humble to one another in the fear of Christ.
 - 1E This means to have respect for realms of authority in the church.
 - 2E And that this humility should come from the fear of Christ - the transformed fear of His character and work.
 - 3E So humility in earthly realms should come from humility in the heavenly realm.
 - 4E This also reminds us of our need for humility to established authorities.
- 12C Philippians 2:12, “So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with **fear** and trembling;”

- 1D Fear and trembling means total humility, like what we saw in 2 Corinthians 7. See also Ephesians 6:5-6, “ 5 Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with **fear and trembling**, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ; 6 not by way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.”
- 2D So you are to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, with a humility toward authority.
- 3D Although this passage is about spiritual growth, the focal point of this spiritual growth is obedience to divinely appointed authority.
- 13C Hebrews 4:1, “Therefore, let us **fear** if, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have come short of it.”
- 1D This is the common fear of the one who is apart from God.
- 2D When you come short of the promise of entering His sabbath rest, you have fear.
- 14C 1 Peter 1:17, “If you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves in **fear of your quickly sojourning [passing] time;**”
- 1D Our time on earth passes quickly. Therefore, it is necessary to have a healthy sense of that.
- 2D Our time passes quickly until the final judgment. Don't waste time, grow in the Lord until that time that you go before Him.
- 15C 1 John 4:17-19, “17 By this, love is perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because as He is, so also are we in this world. 18 There is no **fear** in love; but perfect love casts out **fear**, because **fear** involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love. 19 We love, because He first loved us.”
- 1D This is common fear.
- 2D Common fear involves punishment, while the fear of the Lord is love.
- 16C Revelation 11:18, “And the nations were enraged, and Your wrath came, and the time *came* for the dead to be judged, and *the time* to reward Your bond-servants the prophets and the saints and those who **fear** Your name, the small and the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth.”
- 1D Eternal reward goes to those who stand in awe of God's name - the name which represents His very character.
- 2D Fear of the Lord determines our eternal reward, and not our stature according to any human measure.
- 3D The most insignifant appearing life may garner reward because of their humble respect of the Lord's character.
- 17C Revelation 14:6-7, “6 And I saw another angel flying in midheaven, having an eternal gospel to preach to those who live on the earth, and to every nation and tribe and tongue and people; 7 and he said with a loud voice, "**Fear** God, and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come; worship Him who made the heaven and the earth and sea and springs of waters."”

1D Here the fear of God is equated with giving Him glory. The fear of God is motivation toward praise.

2D Worship can only come from the fear of the Lord.

18C Revelation 19:1-5 repeats the lessons of the other Revelation passages on the fear of the Lord, "Revelation 19:1 After these things I heard something like a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God; 2 BECAUSE HIS JUDGMENTS ARE TRUE AND RIGHTEOUS; for He has judged the great harlot who was corrupting the earth with her immorality, and HE HAS AVENGED THE BLOOD OF HIS BOND-SERVANTS ON HER." 3 And a second time they said, "Hallelujah! HER SMOKE RISES UP FOREVER AND EVER." 4 And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sits on the throne saying, "Amen. Hallelujah!" 5 And a voice came from the throne, saying, "Give praise to our God, all you His bond-servants, you who **fear** Him, the small and the great.""

3A Summary.

1B Passages that teach the nature of the fear of God.

1C Transformed fear of God. 1 Samuel 12:18-24 (distinguishes between godly fear and sinful fear); 2 Kings 17:29-41(distinguishes between fear of idols and fear of God); Psalm 19:9 (described as pure); Psalm 22:23; Psalm 33:8-9 (compared to awe); Proverbs 8:13 (synonymous with the hatred of evil); Isaiah 11:1-5 (a part of the character of the Messiah); Jeremiah 10:2-16 (as compared to dead idols); 1 John 4:17-19 (synonymous with love for God); Revelation 14:6-7 (fearing and worshipping are synonyms).

2C Common fear of God. Psalm 90:1-13 (anticipating divine discipline); Isaiah 59:15-19 (divine justice in discipline); Matthew 10:28 (because God can destroy the soul in hell); Luke 23:39-42 (fear of God when under punishment unto death); 1 Corinthians 5:10-11 (in anticipation of the judgment seat of Christ); Hebrews 4:1 (fear of coming in to the sabbath rest of God).

2B Passages that teach how to obtain the fear of God. Deuteronomy 14:23 (by doing the rituals of Israel); Deuteronomy 17:14-20 (by reading the Law of Moses); Deuteronomy 31:10-13 (by reading the Law of Moses); Joshua 4:1-9, 20-24 (by observing the twelve stones of Gilgal); 1 Samuel 12:24 (by observing what great things God has done for you); Psalm 34:1-11(by teaching and experiencing); Psalm 40:1-3 (through testimony); Psalm 67:7 (because God blessed His people); Proverbs 15:33 (by instruction and humility); Ecclesiastes 3:12-14 (by observing God's works); Jeremiah 5:22-24 (by observing creation); Jeremiah 32:36-42 (by observing the restoration of Israel); Jeremiah 33:4-9 (by observing the good that God does); Matthew 28:5-8 (by observing the resurrection); Acts 19:13-18 (by the witness of supernatural events).

3B Passages that teach the results of the fear of God. Genesis 22:10-12 (Abraham's obedience); Exodus 18:19-22 (ability to judge); Exodus 20:18-20 (might not sin); Deuteronomy 5:29 (it will be well with you forever); Deuteronomy 6:1-2 (days are prolonged); Psalm 25:14 (given further revelation of God); Psalm 31:18-20 (receives the

goodness and protection of God); Psalm 34:1-11(receives protection, rescue from enemies, and has no want); Psalm 60:4-5 (given a banner and rescued); Psalm 102:8-18 (recipients of divine compassion toward sin); Psalm 111 (beginning of wisdom, provision of food); Psalm 115:11 (blessing to both small and great); Psalm 119:63 (great friends); Psalm 145:18-19 (fulfills desires and rescues); Proverbs 3:7(enables a turning away from evil); Proverbs 10:27 (prolongs life); Proverbs 14:26-27 (strong confidence and a fountain of life); Proverbs 15:16 (makes poverty great); Proverbs 16:6 (keeps one away from evil); Proverbs 19:23 (a good night's sleep); Proverbs 22:4 (riches, honor, and life); Proverbs 23:17 (removes envy of sinners); Proverbs 24:21 (foundation for good citizenship); Ecclesiastes 8:12-13 (it will be well for this one, gets his eyes off of sinners); Isaiah 33:5-6 (stability of his times, and a treasure); Acts 9:31 (church growth); 2 Corinthians 7:1 (reason to perfect holiness); Ephesians 5:18-21 (reason to obey legitimate authority); Revelation 11:18 (basis for eternal reward).