

Fear of God

by Harold Vaughan

The sermon emphasizes the importance of fearing God and recognizing His holiness in a culture that often diminishes His majesty.

Duration: 53:30

Scripture: Proverbs 2:3

Topics: "Fear Of God"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker addresses the issue of people's short attention spans and their preference for violent and entertaining content. He questions the kind of people who would find pleasure in watching others being harmed. The speaker argues that the root cause of violence and destruction is a lack of the fear of God. He emphasizes the importance of studying and meditating on the Bible, as well as gathering together with fellow believers to strengthen one another. The speaker challenges the audience to rise above religious mediocrity and become diligent seekers of God, striving to develop a deep reverence for Him and rejecting sinful thoughts and actions.

Transcript

It was a cool night as these shepherds were gathered together and watching over their flocks. And breaking through the quietness and the stillness of the evening air, the angel of the Lord came upon them. The glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid.

These shepherds were terror-stricken when the angel said, Fear not, for I bring you good tidings of great joy. These trembling shepherds recovered themselves and hastened in obedience to the angel's command. These shepherds had not met God, but merely the angel of the Lord.

In the Bible we have the unusual account of many human beings that met with the angel of the Lord. We read in the book of Judges of a man by the name of Manoah and his wife, the parents of Samson, how that they had a visit from an angelic being. And the Bible says that when they beheld the brilliant countenance of this angel, that they fell on their faces in stark terror.

And Manoah's testimony was this, after it was all over. He said, We shall surely die, for we have seen God. We read in Matthew chapter twenty-eight of some guards at the tomb of Jesus Christ.

And the Bible says, Behold, there was a great earthquake, for the angel of the Lord came and rolled back the stone. His countenance was like lightning. His raiment was as white as snow.

And for fear of him, and for fear of him, did the keepers shake and became as dead men. We read in the Gospel of Luke of Zechariah, father of John Baptist, how that he had a visit from an angelic messenger. And the Bible says that when he, when he, when he saw this angel of the Lord, he was troubled and fear fell upon him.

And the angel came with that familiar introduction. Fear not. Have you ever noticed that whenever an angel appeared to human beings by and large, they always started out with the same two words, fear, not giving us the indication they had every reason to be deathly afraid.

And I want to suggest tonight, men and women, that if angels who are merely creatures of God, if they are fearful, how much more fearful it must be to encounter God himself. We read in the book of Genesis of one such person that met with God face to face and live to tell about it. We read of Jacob.

You know, when I was, when I was in grade school, we used to sing that, that old, that old, I don't want to do the course or verse or whatever it is, but we are climbing Jacob's ladder, great emphasis on the ladder. But in that vision, in the book of Genesis, not only was there a ladder that Jacob saw as he was fleeing for his life from his brother Esau, but the significant thing was that the Lord was at the top of that very ladder. And Jacob said after this vision, he said, surely the Lord is in this place.

And I knew it not. And he was afraid. And he said, how dreadful, how dreadful is this place? You know, it must be a dreadful experience to encounter this God of the Bible.

We read in the book of Exodus of Moses. He spent 40 days and 40 nights on Mount Sinai, tremendous thundering, tremendous lightnings and tremendous smoke all around. And the Bible tells us that he prayed to see God and God put him in the cleft of the rock and the back parts of God, the glory of God passed by.

And the Bible says that when Moses came down from that mountain, his face literally radiated with the glory of God. He had to put a veil on his face, but Hebrews tells us so terrible was the site. So terrible was the site that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and great exceedingly fear and great.

You know, it must be a dreadful experience to really encounter this God of the Bible. We read in Isaiah chapter six, that in the year, the King Uzziah died, the prophet said, I also saw the Lord high and lifted up. And brethren, if there's anywhere we need to see God at the end of this century is right there high and lifted up.

And the Bible said above the throne of God was seraphim, two wings covering their face, two wings, covering their feet. And with two wings, they were flying and they were crying. Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts.

The whole earth is full of his glory. You realize tonight that the word seraphim literally means flaming one. The word seraphim literally means burners, burning ones.

These seraphim are so holy during the immediate presence of God. They're there to do God's bidding and they are so holy. They're literally burning up in their own holiness.

They're like a holy incendiary, but I want to tell you my friend, holy, though these seraphim might be, they can't even look on God because the Bible says with two wings, they have to cover their face. Holy though they might be, they can't even stand before God for with two wings, they have to cover their feet. And it's with two wings.

They fly. I find it very interesting tonight that only two wings are used for service. Only two wings used for service while the other four wings are used to shield themselves from the brilliance of a holy God.

You know, it must be a dreadful experience to encounter this God of the Bible. We read in revelation chapter one, how John, the beloved apostle, the Bible says that he was in the spiritual, in the spirit on the Lord's day. That's about the best place you can be.

Amen. In the spirit on the Lord's day. And he had tremendous vision of the resurrected Christ.

Listen to the content of this vision. John said in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, there was one likened to the son of man. He was clothed with a garment, a golden girdle.

His head, his hair was like wool. His eyes were like flames of fire. His feet were like burnished brass.

His voice, like the sound of many waters, his countenance like the sun that shineth in spring. And John said, when I saw him and when I saw him, I fell down as one that is dead. I'm here to tell you that John was no enemy of Jesus Christ.

In fact, if the Lord had ever had a friend in his humanity, it was the beloved disciple, John. He was the one whom the Lord loved. He was the one that put his head on his master's breast at that last table.

Yet when the beloved disciple, John, whom Jesus loved, saw Jesus in his resurrection glory, he fell down as one that is dead. Brothers and sisters tonight, if God is dreadful when he appears in mercy, how much more dreadful he must be when he reveals himself to show us our sin. I was sitting in Shelbyville, Indiana, in a motel room one afternoon, meditating on this very theme, this very message.

My attention was arrested when a semi-tractor trailer pulled into the Kmart shopping plaza across the street. I noticed that this attractive trailer was solid, white, squeaky clean, no writing on the truck at all. And one word on the trailer part, big, bold blue letters, spelling the word majesty, majesty.

But when I sit there in my motel room and I kind of begin to chuckle under my breath and I said, now, isn't this a paradox majesty comes to Kmart. And I sat there and I just kind of chuckled. I said, man, there must be an illustration in here somewhere.

Majesty, majesty goes to Kmart. And I was sitting there kind of chuckling out of my breath. And I stopped chuckling because I began to understand that this is precisely what has happened in the church of Jesus Christ in North America, that the glory and the majesty of our great God has all been reduced to a cheap blue light special in the minds of most people that come to the best churches in these days.

I contend we have an inferior concept of God. When you study out the Bible view of God that we just heard about, and you compare that to the contemporary view of God, you find little comparison. You find namely contrast.

I go from church to church folks, and it's not uncommon for me to hear people talking about the man upstairs. And I want to tell you that they're not talking about the guy across the street in the apartment

complex. When they make reference to the man upstairs, these church members are talking about Jehovah God.

My little boy went into a Baptist Sunday school and came out with a sticker on his lapel. You know, our kids love stickers that I mean, they don't make a difference what they say. They'll wear them.

I mean, they love stickers and he came out with this little sticker. I said, come here, son. Let me see what it says.

And it read somebody up there likes me. And I thought to myself, when we had gotten to the point, when we think of God merely as a bridge over troubled waters as a man upstairs or a somebody up there, we have gotten very, very far from the Bible concept and the Bible view of God. I was shocked in Wisconsin when I was listening to television and a beer commercial came on.

It's about the only ones that can afford to, uh, to, uh, uh, advertise on certain channels. And I was listening to this and this beer advertised itself as being the beer from God's country, using the name of God to sell alcoholic beverage here in the land of the free and the home of the brave in the early seventies. Some of you will remember when the Dubie brothers came out with a song.

Some of you will remember this. Jesus is just all right with me. I mean, you remember that Jesus is just all right with me.

Some of my Christian friends thought that Dubie brothers had become believers, but we've all lived to see that that was hardly what happened. And folks, I've learned to understand that it doesn't make any difference whether Jesus is all right with me. And quite frankly, it doesn't make any difference whether Jesus is just all right with you.

The real encompassing issue tonight is am I, are you all right with Jesus? That's really the issue tonight. Is it not Tom P Hall, the country music steamer came out with a song. He went like this, me and Jesus.

And then notice the order of this lineup. If you would me leading the way, naturally Jesus bringing up the rear, me and Jesus got our own thing going boy. We don't need nobody to tell us what it's all about.

Larry Gatlin, one time gospel singer came out with an album called the midnight choir. One of the takes went like this. Will there be Mogan David in heaven? Will there be Mogan David in heaven? And if not, who in hell wants to go there? I believe tonight that we have gotten to the point where we view God as some sort of a celestial good old boy.

He's some sort of a cosmic job. He only exists for our benefit and our happiness. But I'm here to tell you tonight that the God of the Bible is my brethren tonight.

We need to get back to the Bible and get off of this psychology and get off of this shulerism and get back to what the word of God says that our God is a Holy God. I fear tonight. I fear tonight.

We have communicated a bad message to our generation and we've done it with our bumper sticker theology. Smile. God loves you.

Well, folks, if you're going to have that on one side of the bumper, you better have it on the other side of the bumper. That God is angry with the wicked every day. Then in Ravenhill said, if we're not careful, we're going to send a whole generation to hell with a grin on their face.

Listen to that. You say, hell, don't you think, don't you think tonight that God loves the sinner while he hates their sin? Well, there's an element of truth in that, but you better understand one thing, Mike, my friend, when it comes to the great white throne judgment, it is not going to be sin cast into a Lake of fire forever. It will be unrepentant sinners that will be cast into a Lake of fire for all eternity.

And my brethren tonight, I believe we need a baptism of more than ever. And I invite you to take your Bible open, open to Romans chapter three tonight, if you would Romans chapter three, and I want you to notice what one of my friends calls God's autopsy of a dead society, Romans chapter three and verse twelve. God's commentary on the human race.

Here it is Romans chapter three, verse twelve quoted from the old Testament scriptures. Notice what God says, Romans three and verse twelve. They are all gone out of the way.

They have together become unprofitable. There is none that do it. Good.

No, not one. And notice the description. This is us.

Their throat is an open grave with their tongues. They have used the seat. The point of ask is under their lips.

Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. You don't believe it. Watch thirty minutes of primetime television, whose mouths are full of cursing and bitterness.

Their feet are swift to shed blood. Destruction and misery are in their way. The way of peace had they not known.

There is no fear of God before their eyes. Look at that letter. There is no fear of God before their eyes.

I believe tonight that verse eighteen is the reason for verses twelve through seventeen, because they had no healthy fear of God. They sinned with abandonment. And my friend, these are days when God consciousness is dying out in America.

And I'm here to tell you tonight, people think nothing of taking God's name in vain. And you don't have to curse a blue streak to use God's name in an empty vein, futile way. Let me give you tonight some Bible examples of those that did not fear the Lord.

Bible examples of those that did not have the fear of God. We read over in the Old Testament in the book of Leviticus, how that God executed judgment. Literally, he devoured by fire, because they offered strange fire on the altar of the Lord.

I remind you tonight that are Aaron's sons. These are priestly men. These are praying men.

Yet the scripture says that they offered this strange fire and God calls that fire on the altar to leap off the altar and to literally burn them alive and burn them to death. I've studied that out and best I can understand. It's when the Bible says they offered strange fire.

That means that they use some charcoal, other than what God had commanded. They presumed it would be all right. And upon that presumption, they were burned to death.

May I say it to you tonight that presuming on God is an evidence of a lack of the fear of the Lord. We read in the Old Testament, the book of first Samuel, how that Eli's sons are slain by the Philistines because they ministered without the fear of the Lord. Here they are priestly men.

And the Bible tells us that these two characters, half die and Phineas are slain. Why? Because in first Samuel chapter two, the Bible says that they lay with women at the tent of the congregation. You know what that means? These two priests commit immorality with the women who have brought sacrifices to offer to God.

They're committing immorality at the house of God. May I say tonight that immorality is an evidence of a lack of the fear of God. And let me say to you tonight that immorality is an evidence of the judgment and the wrath of God that when people reject God, God gives them over to their own affection.

And the ultimate end of that is perversion and destruction and evidence of a lack of the fear of God. What about in first Chronicles? We read of the Coa fight. His whole duty in life was to guard the ark of the covenant.

He knew that no human hand was to ever touch that sacred art. Yet one day the, the archers on a cart and the ox stumbles and the archers about to tip over and fall into the mud and also reaches out his hand instead of the art, because he didn't want it to be desecrated by that earth. But God knew that it wasn't the ground that would desecrate that ark.

It was the touch of a human hand that would desecrate that sacred vessel. And when he reached out to study the art, what happened? God struck him dead on the spot. May I say it to you tonight, that disobedience disobedience is an evidence of a lack of the fear of God.

What about in the new Testament and book of Acts and an eyes in Sapphira, things are happening in Jerusalem. A great revival is underway. Everybody's selling their property, bringing the money and laying it at the apostle's feet and Ananias and Sapphira want to get in on the act.

So they go out and sell a little parcel of land. Ananias comes in by himself at first. He lays the money down before Peter.

Now folks, he could have, he could have kept the money. He could have kept it all, but he lied about it. And he said, this is all the money that we got for the land.

And he pocketed half of the proceeds. He lied about it. Peter looked at Ananias and said, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy ghost and God struck him dead? Now Ananias came water or Sapphira came waddling in late that night.

This is why you ought to always be on time for church service. Baptist. Amen.

You never know what happens prior to your showing up. And she did not know what had happened to her husband tells the same lie. And what happened to her? God struck her dead.

May I say it to you tonight? Dishonesty dishonesty is an evidence of a lack of the fear of God. And we read in first Corinthians, how that many partook of the Lord's table unworthily. And because of that, many of them slept.

They got a premature death and many of them were very sick. I believe tonight that taking God lightly is an evidence of a lack of the fear of God. But folks, we read about it.

Not only in the Bible, all we need to do is to open our newspaper to find a rampant evidence of a lack of the fear of God that permeates our culture. I don't know if we understand tonight that we're living in a post-Christian world where we have rejected the light of scripture and the light of God as a nation tonight. And we're reaping these consequences and we'll continue to reap.

One of the evidences of a lack of the fear of God is our overwhelming sensuality. That is just swallowed up the entire, the entire generation that in which I live, they tell me there are over 2000 pornographic magazines are public or sold rather here in America, over 250 of them feature children. This was some years ago when they said that over 300,000 children are used every year in the making of pornographic materials, 300,000.

They tell us that we have more adult bookstores than we do McDonald's hamburger outlets here in America. It's getting rather severe folks. I was in Canada at a revival conference.

One of the speakers was a Christian who worked in government. He was a speechwriter for Trudeau. He got up and said at that time in Canada, that before their government, there was a lobby at that very moment.

And they were fighting for the right. They were lobbying for the right to get the legal age for sexual consent between adults and children. They were trying to get that Lord, the legal age for sexual consent between adults and children.

They were trying to get the child's age Lord to age four in Canada. Do you understand that some of our liberal lawmakers in Washington, DC have before us this year, a bill before the United States government that I understand is my understanding to get the legal age for sexual consent between adults and children, Lord down to age 12 here in America, whoever felt the day would come when they perverts would be fighting for the right to rape your children. You know what? One of their slogans is sex before eight or it's too late.

God help us. They tell me that one out of three girls will be sexually abused. Hardly a crusade goes by, but when you have to deal with someone who was in one out of five boys, they say sexually abused in America before reaching age 18.

And now we've got a campaign for safe sex. So we're going to give them all the materials to arm themselves because they're surely going to get involved in this anyway. So let's, let's help them do it right.

Listen, young people, I'll tell you all you ever need to know about safe sex. All you ever need to know two words, holy matrimony is all you ever need to know about safe sex. We give them a hundred thousand reasons why they all not to fornicate.

That's, that's no, that's no different. That's no different than telling that all the reasons why y'all not to do such and such because you'd go to jail. I'll tell you why God said, be pure.

That's the only thing you need to know. My friend, an evidence of a lack of the fear of God. What about, what about the drug crisis and evidence of a lack of the fear of God? Francis Schaeffer said that being, we had rejected the light of scripture that in this country, we will be given to Eastern mysticism and drug

taking.

You tell me if he was not a prophet drug taking, you know, the word sorcery in the old Testament has to do with drug taking witchcraft. And you understand that when people take dope, they open up themselves to what the Bible calls evil spirits or demons. That's not Pentecostalism brother.

That's the Bible. What about this idiot that blew 22 people away down in Texas, Killeen, Texas? Oh, he was a drug addict. Have you ever noticed that the mass murderers, everyone I've ever seen is either a Satan worshiper or a dope addict.

Have you ever noticed that my brethren tonight, I want to tell you the war on drugs. There is no war on drugs. Drugs.

Aren't the problem. Columbia is not the problem. Cocaine is not the problem.

The problem is the immoral behavior of the American people. That's the problem. And it's a sin against God.

We're morally insane. Well, not only the drug crisis. What about tonight? Our preoccupation with violence and evidence of a lack of the fear of God preoccupation with violence.

They tell me that by the time the average kid gets to be 16 years old in this country, he has witnessed 18,000 murders via television, 18,000 people. He's been shot, blown up and stabbed and murdered. One television producer said he had to show a murder or rape or the equivalent every seven or eight minutes because the people have such a short attention span that if you didn't show something exciting, they would get bored and turn the channel to look for something a little more entertaining.

What kind of people I asked you, what kind of people would entertain themselves by watching other people get shot, stabbed, assaulted and blown away? Doesn't the Bible right here say that their feet are swift to shed blood and destruction and misery are in their ways. You take away of a handgun in the country plan, and you're not going to stop the murder that's going on. I want to tell you something tonight.

I want to tell you tonight. It's people that kill people and evidence of a lack of the fear of God. Oh, what about it tonight? A lack of respect for the human for human life and evidence of a lack of the fear of God.

Folks, I'm here to say, if you've got no fear of God, you'll have no respect for anybody else. Not even your own children. You know, you know, the most dangerous place to live in America.

It's not New York. It's not Harlem. It's not Los Angeles.

You know where the most dangerous place to live in America, your own mother's womb, the most unsafe place to live in America. 25 million innocents have been slaughtered in this country. Think of it 300,000 strong in Washington, DC, fighting for the right to kill their own offspring.

I'm here to tell you, you're never going to solve the abortion crisis until you solve the immorality crisis that has created the abortion crisis. Lack of respect for human life. Think of it tonight.

Think of it tonight. How bad it's gotten. I'll tell you not only the abortion epidemic, but leading to infanticide, which is just the killing of the unborn or killing of the born.

If they don't turn out right. One Nobel prize scientist said that every child born in the world ought to undergo a barrage of tests. Nobel prize scientists.

If you can pass the test, give them a birth certificate. If they cannot pass the test, terminate it. Polite way of saying, kill them, kill them infanticide.

Listen, folks, if you can abort them before they're born, you can kill them after they're born. If they don't turn out right up to, up to specification. And I want to tell you, if you can do that with the young people and the babies, why not get rid of the old people, euthanasia? We're not talking about a team tour in a foreign country, euthanasia.

You know what we're talking about here? We're talking about happy death. We're talking about mercy killing. We thought about the hemlock crowd.

I was listening to radio the other day. And this woman who was an expert in these matters said that in Holland, that 25% of all deaths in Holland are physician assisted. The, you know, you know, at times bestseller list comes out with one.

Guess what it is. Final exit, a manual on how to kill yourself. Suicide.

The folks here we are, where we've got 43 million people receiving a social security check. That's 20% of the population. The rest of us are supposed to come up with the money to fund these people.

And what are you going to, what do you think is going to happen when the pyramid gets even more inverted and we have no funds and we have all of these demands, what do you think we're going to do with these old people? Well, like one government spokesman said, you ought to have mercy and compassion. Notice the word compassion on your mother and father. When they get old, they don't feel good.

They don't get around like they used to. You ought to have compassion on them and you ought to allow them to be put to sleep. Oh, my friend.

I think, I think we don't understand how far we have descended as a people in this country. When these things are being talked about by the so-called intellectuals among us. And God's people sat around with our heads in the sand.

And we think if we can continue to have our services and continue to do what we want to do and have our home and have our home on the lake and do this and do that, all will be well. Look at what we're handing to the next generation. Hemlock society had a meeting, the right to die people over in Europe.

A girl rolled out on the platform in a wheelchair in front of the microphone. She got out in front of the microphone. She made the announcement.

I've decided to take the plunge. Know what she meant by that? She meant that she had decided to kill herself. You know how the crowd responded? A standing ovation.

Now, these are our liberal friends who call themselves compassionate, caring, death with dignity. I'm here to tell you, they're a bunch of barbarians. And my brethren tonight, this is all due to a lack of the fear of God.

If you have no fear of God, you will have no respect for other people. And ultimately you will have no respect for yourself. Humanism has a death wish tonight, a death wish tonight.

And we wonder why young people are committing suicide. We wonder about it. Well, I'll tell you why, because they've been told there is no God.

Listen, if you've got no God, you've got no law. If you've got no law, you've got no meaning. And if you've got no meaning, you've got no hope.

Here we have a generation that has no hope. I'm telling you, it's an evidence of a lack of the fear of God in our society. But what about tonight? What about it tonight? Is there a possibility, a lack of the fear of God in the church? Is it possible tonight, my friend, that Jesus is being wounded in the house of his friends? Take your Bible tonight and look in the book of Malachi right before Matthew.

The last book of the old covenant, God's last word to his covenant people, Israel. This is a hard thing. You know, folks, there are some people, there are some people that deny the Bible, deny the word of God, deny the virgin birth.

They deny all of these things. They throw the Bible right out the window. There's another crowd over here.

On the other hand, we say we believe the Bible from cover to cover. We believe it's the inspired, infallible, inerrant word of God. Well, let me make an announcement tonight, the atheists and the Bible deniers and these people over here, listen to me tonight.

I don't think that the atheists have hurt the cause of Jesus Christ. I really don't believe it. Madeline, Mary O'Hara has never hurt the Lord.

You look at her long enough. You'll have to get saved. I listened.

She is not the problem. She is not the problem. We can talk about her all we want.

She is not the problem. I believe tonight that more damage has been done, not by those that disclaim the Bible and deny the Bible, but by those that say they believe the Bible and then turn around and live in such a way. So it's denied the reality of what they say.

They believe this is where the damage is being done. Now, listen to what God had to say to his people. Malachi one in verse six, look at this.

God says a son, a son honors his father. A son honors his father and a servant, his master. If then I'd be a father, God says, where is my honor? And if I'd be a master, where is my fear? A son honors his father, a servant, his master.

If I'd be a father, Hey, where's my honor? And if I'd be a master, where is my fear? And Jeremiah thirty-five, God told his prophet and Jeremiah thirty-five. God told his prophet to go out and invite the record books into the house of the Lord. Jeremiah went out, invited these records by people in invited into a certain room in the house of God.

God told him to give him wine to drink. He's recognized. They come in, they sit down.

Jeremiah says to the leader of that troop, he said, I want to offer you a glass of wine to drink. He declined and said, no, thank you. He went to the next man and offered him wine to drink.

He said, no, thank you. He went to the next man. He said, no, thank you.

He went all the way around that room and nobody took it. I'm thinking maybe these people are fasting today and maybe they're mourning about something grieving here. Finally, one of them spoke up and said, Jeremiah, by the way, we don't drink wine period.

He said, Oh really? How long has that been going on? They said for generations, our forefather Jonah, dad commanded us never to drink wine, never to live in houses made with hands and never to succeed. They said out of respect for our forefather Jonah, dad, we don't drink wine period. His theology is being crippled, crumpled here.

I can imagine he sent those record bikes out and start an audience with God. I can't, you see, it's just profit. God, you told me to invite the record bikes in and God, you told me to give them wine to drink and God, you knew all the while that they wouldn't drink it.

Now, God, why did you do it? I can imagine God coming back with a bold, pungent, two-fisted statement that just crippled the mouth of his prophet when he said, for one simple reason, Jeremiah, these people are implicitly obedient to an earthly father, but your people are so stiff-necked and I happen to be their God. If I'd be a father, hey, where's my honor? And if I'd be a master, where, where is my fear? You don't want my little boys call me what they call me. Daddy got a good ring to it.

Don't you think daddy, I kind of like term of endearment, a term of affection, daddy, and I'm all the time getting requests addressed to daddy, a daddy. Can we call dominoes tonight? I guarantee you right at the church. Daddy, can we go fishing this week? Hard to turn down that request anytime.

Amen. And daddy, can we, can you come out and play ball with us? Hey daddy, can we, can we watch that Christian video? Hey daddy, this daddy, that, you know, you know, folks of my children all this week address me, daddy, can we go here? And daddy, can we go there? And daddy, can we do this? And, and yet they never obey anything. I say never pick up their toys.

When I ask them to never make up their bed of a morning, never do anything. I ask them, you know, it wouldn't take me very long to say, now, wait a minute, fellas, hold, hold everything here. You've been calling me your daddy.

You've been calling me your father. Now, how about a little respect and a little obedience for the title that you're giving me and folks, we expect our children to honor us and obey us. Do we not? And if we expect that out of our children, don't you imagine that God expects the same out of his, if I'd be a father, where is my honor? If I'd be a master, where is my fear? Let me give you tonight, four characteristics of the fear of God, right out of the Bible.

Duncan Campbell was in the new Hebrides. I mentioned him this morning. God swept through those islands.

Campbell said in one of those meetings, a sinner came and got up under the pulpit, oblivious to anybody else's. Campbell said, the man cried out at the top of his voice. And he said, Oh God, hell is too good for me.

Oh God, hell is too good for me. You know what you call it? That's Holy ghost conviction. And it's becoming rarer and rarer in Baptist churches in America.

Oswald chamber said, the conviction is the rarest thing that ever strikes a man. My brethren, I believe the fear of the Lord has certain characteristics. Let me give you four of them tonight.

Number one, Proverbs eight, 13. The fear of the Lord is to hate evil pride, arrogancy, and the evil way. The fear of the Lord is to hate sin.

Charles Finney said, when you have the fear of God, you not only dread the consequences of sin. He said, you get to the point where you begin to dread sin itself. You just hate to sin.

You know, there's some things I don't like to do. And I don't do it. If I don't do it, if I can get out of it, I don't like cut grass.

I don't like to wash the car. I don't like to wax the trailer. Believe me.

I don't like to do that. I don't like to wash dishes. I don't like to do certain things.

And folks, I want to tell you, I don't do it. If I can get out of it, there's some things I don't like, and there's some things I really despise. There's a few things I hate.

Changing diapers is one thing I hate. All the men here say it. Amen.

And a pastor. I'm not working in nursery on Tuesday. I'm sorry about this.

I, I'm going to be busy. I can tell right now I'm busy. I'm not going to be available for that.

Now you say, brother, how you just fight? Yeah, I just find that. And I don't do it. If I can get out of it, that's my wife.

I mean, folks, I don't do the things I hate. I don't do the things I don't like. And I'm here to tell you tonight that when a man hates sin, he's not likely to get engaged in it.

And that's what the fear of God is all about. The fear of God is to hate. My brethren, that is the fear of the Lord.

Number two, the fear of the Lord prevents sin. Listen to me. This is the only adequate moral restraint.

We can't understand why we don't have any ethics anymore. You cannot have ethics and morality apart from Bible religion. Are you listening to me tonight? You can't have it.

You're not going to have it. And the farther we get away from God, the more scandals they're going to be in the professing church. Oh, my brethren, tonight, the fear of the Lord is the only adequate moral restraint.

It prevents sin. Proverbs 16, six, by the fear of the Lord, men depart from evil by the fear of the Lord. Men depart from evil.

This is the answer to moral problems. Brethren, here it is by the fear of the Lord. Men depart from evil.

My wife's not in here. She's not. My wife is one of the most godly people I've ever met.

I mean, she's just a good person. I mean, she's just that way. And I'm telling you, she's also one of the most naive people I've ever met in my life.

She doesn't know what's going on. Praise God that there's a few people that don't even know what's happening in terms of evil. We've been married for three months.

I got up enough courage to question my wife. I said to her, and I said, I got a question for you. Let's have it.

When you were a teenager, why didn't you do what all the other teenagers were doing? I wanted to know, why didn't you party? Why didn't you go out and get drunk? Why didn't you fool around? Why didn't you do what everybody else was doing? My wife looked at me as sober as she could be. And she said, Harold, when I, when I was a teenager, the reason I didn't do what all the other kids were doing, because I knew if I did it, it would just kill my father. It hurt him so bad.

It was just killing. I didn't want to hurt my dad. Pretty good motivation for not wanting to get involved in those things.

And my brothers and my sisters tonight, I'm here to tell you that the reason you ought not to want to sin is not because of the trouble it's going to get you in, but because of how it's going to grieve and offend and hurt our great holy God. By the fear of the Lord, men depart from evil. Number three, by the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, seeing life from God's point of view.

First church I ever got involved in, we had an unhappy incident where the pastor decided to leave his wife for his best friend's wife. It became public knowledge. The people of the church went to the land broken and in tears.

They said, man, in God's name, in God's name, don't do it. Don't leave your wife. Don't divorce your wife.

Don't don't commit the sin. And they were, they were, they were broken. You know what the response was? Well, we know what we're doing is wrong.

We know what we do is wrong. We know it's wrong, but after we've done it, we're going to claim first John one, nine, we're going to confess our sin. God's not going to forgive us and everything's going to be all right.

I don't care if you're a Calvinist. I don't care if you're an Armenian or a scopio light or something in between all of those shades, my friend, that's sorry, theology in anybody's book. And I'm here to tell you tonight, we've gotten to the point where seeing makes no difference.

Just do what you want to claim a verse everything will be. Well, my friend, there are consequences that go along with sin tonight. And I want to tell you that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

I'll tell you number four, the fear of the Lord will affect the fruit of our lips and the conduct of our life. Are you listening to me tonight? The fear of the Lord will affect the fruit of our lips and the conduct of our life. George Gallup said, we've never been more religious and our religion has never made less impact on the way we live our lives in America.

It's false religion folks. We've our churches packed out with people that's never been converted by the power of God. Listen, the fear of the Lord will affect the fruit of our lips and the conduct of our life.

The Bible says, let them that name the name of Christ depart from iniquity. John Bunyan preached 15 sermons on that text. Let them that name the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

I think we need to have such a reverential, all of God on our hearts, such a fear of God that if we ever dare to take his name upon our lips and preaching, praying, conversing or singing, we have no privilege use of the name of the Lord, but I will not hold him guiltless and take his name in vain. All my brethren tonight, Martin Luther said we needed to love and fear God. That's what he said.

We need to love and fear God. I want to give you tonight. The main reason you ought to fear God.

I think you'll be surprised. I want to illustrate it by way of parable. Parable comes from India.

Robbie Zacharias gives this parable from his homeland. Two young people are engaged to be married. The time for the ceremony to take place draws near.

It becomes very apparent that this young woman is a wicked minded person. She comes to her fiance and says, in what way are you going to prove to me that you love me more than anyone else? The young man said, well, I'll prove it in any way. I'll do anything you ask.

The young woman said, well, if you really love me more than anybody else, I want you to prove it one way. I want you to take your mother's life. The boy said, don't be ridiculous.

My love for you is categorically different than my love for my mother. And when I marry you, you're going to be that number one person in my life. Don't be ridiculous.

That young woman said, no, if you really love me more than anybody else and want to marry me, I want you to prove it by taking your mother's life and taking her heart out of her body and bringing it to me as a token of my victory. Well, the parable states that boy went home and was troubled and tossed and turned, but he decided to do it. He took his mother's life.

He gets the heart out of her body in his hand. He goes running across the miles with this token of victory for his fiance. As he's running through a picket in the woods, he stumbles and trips and the heart bounces out of his hand.

Frantically, he gets down on all four and he can't find it at first. And then finally under a bush, there was a kind of a crumpled mess. He began to try to gather and piece together his mother's heart in his hands as a token of her victory.

And as he's gathering that heart together in his hand, suddenly a voice comes out of the heart saying, son, are you hurt? There's something indescribable about a parent's love, even for an erring child, if they're not. And I'm here to tell you tonight that there's something indescribable about the parental love of God for us, his people that ought to strike a note of trembling and fear in our hearts here this evening. Jeremiah chapter 29.

I think it is. God says, I'm going to cleanse my people from all their sin, whereby they have sinned against me, saith the Lord, and all the nations of the earth shall tremble and fear when they hear of all the good that I'm going to do for them. My brethren tonight, I'm here to tell you that God has been mighty good to us.

Do you understand tonight? God doesn't know you a thing. Are you aware of this? You aware tonight? It's the very goodness of God. If you have any heart left for holiness, that you're not a complete reprobate.

My wife is not an emotional person. We were coming home one night out of church service on a rare occasion, tears began to stream down her face. And she looked at me and she said, Harold, why has God been so good to us? Why has God been so good to us? Man, here we are.

God's been so good. I said, honey, there's no reason for it. He's just a good God.

He didn't give us anything we deserve. And he's a good God. We just sit there and worship God.

Oh, my brethren tonight. Some people are puzzled. Why? How God could allow this maniac in Texas to blow away 22 innocent people.

How could God allow a drunk driver to have a head-on collision and kill an innocent child? How could God allow these terrorists to terrorize and torture these innocent victims folks tonight? The thing that's got me puzzled is not how could God allow some people to die. The thing that's got me puzzled tonight is how could God allow any of us to continue to live? Has God been good to you tonight? Do you understand tonight? The very fact, the very fact you have any heart for God whatsoever is an evident token of the goodness and the grace of God. And my brethren tonight, I'm here to tell you that when we understand how good God has been to us, it ought to instill in us a note of trembling and fear before the Lord.

Philippians chapter two, the Bible says, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. Let me ask you tonight, kind sir, when's the last time you ever trembled in the presence of God, working out your salvation? Dear ma'am, when's the last time you ever trembled before a holy God? Brethren, we are rejoicing, but we are lacking the trembling in the church of God. It says in the book of Corinthians that we ought to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

It says in Hebrews that we've received such great promises that we might serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. And it says in the book of Acts that the churches had rest and were multiplied, walking in the fear of the Lord and the comfort of the Holy ghost. Listen, folks, you can't have the comfort of the Holy ghost until you, first of all, have the fear of God.

And I'm here to tell you tonight that when God's on the scene, you've got these two things. Always you get the fear of the Lord and you've got the comfort of the Holy spirit. The fear of the Lord is a spirit of conviction and the comfort of the Holy spirit is a spirit of celebration.

And I'm telling you when God's in your life, you don't have one or the other. You've got both. You've got a spirit of conviction and you've got a spirit of celebration.

There's rejoicing yet with trembling. My brethren, when we realize the great awesomeness of our great God and our accountability to him and the very fact that we will give an account of every idle word that we've ever spoken tonight, it's enough to cause us to rejoice with trembling tonight, with trembling. You said, brother Harold, how in the world can we obtain the fear of God in our culture? How in the world can we be those that grow and really obtain a real serious fear of the Lord? Well, I want you to look in Proverbs chapter two tonight, because that gives us the answer best place in the Bible.

I can find on how to obtain the fear of the Lord. Proverbs chapter two and verse one underscore the verbs tonight. Notice carefully these verbs.

How do you obtain the fear of the Lord? Solomon tells us the answer. Proverbs two, verse one, my son, if thou wilt receive my words and hide my commandments with thee, so that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom and apply thine heart to understanding. Yea, if thou cryest after knowledge and lifteth up thy voice for understanding, if thou seekest her silver and searches for her as for his treasures, then thou shall understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God.

Notice receive, hide, incline, apply, cry, lift, seek, search. Then you will understand the fear of the Lord. You know what God's saying to us tonight, folks? He's saying he's not interested in the casual inquiries.

He's looking for diligent seekers. He's not looking for casual inquiries. He's looking for people that's going to get serious, diligent seekers.

And God says that when you'll receive and apply and incline and hide and cry and lift and seek and search, then you'll come to know this thing called the fear of the Lord and you'll find a true knowledge of God. You should make it practical. Let me give you four things tonight on how to obtain the fear of the Lord.

Number one, the way to obtain the fear of the Lord. Number one is by confessing. First of all, that you don't have it.

You know, sometimes admitting you're wrong is the first step to making it right. When I begin to study the fear of the Lord, I studied this theme for three years. I found it was a dominant theme of the Old and New Testaments as well, but I can name on one hand every sermon I'd ever heard on the fear of the Lord.

Just never heard much about it. I began to study this out and I read that text where God says that the fear of the Lord is to hate evil. And I said to God many a day, I said, God, I want to tell you, I don't have the fear of the Lord because the fear of the Lord is to hate evil.

And to be quite honest about it, Lord, there's some sins I don't hate. There's some sins I really enjoy, which told me I didn't have the fear of God. And my brethren, I want to tell you, I'm still trying to perfect holiness in the fear of God.

Listen to me tonight. If you can entertain thoughts of lust and rebellion and enjoy it, you don't have the fear of God. Listen, if you can be anything other than a hundred percent truthful in your speaking, you don't have the fear of the Lord.

Nehemiah didn't cheat the people because he feared God. It says, Oh my brethren. First of all, we need to admit that we don't have it.

Oh, we only have it to a degree. Number two, I think we need to daily ask for the fear of the Lord. And I'm not talking about praying one prayer.

One time I'm talking about praying the same prayer thousands of times, many days, maybe for a year, maybe for a half year. Have you found out that you're a slow learner spiritually? Have you found that out? I found, I think sometimes I must be spiritually retarded. It takes me so long to really ingrain and incorporate one concept in my life.

I have to work on it for a couple of years daily. Ask for the fear of the Lord. Ask and it shall be given point three by faith.

Receive it. Listen, friend, when you ask God for something, I think the next thing you ought to do is to thank God for it before it ever shows up. Thanking God is the first step of faith.

You know, sometimes you have to pray like this. Lord, I, I admit, I need a better fear of you. And God, I ask you to give it to me.

And Lord, even though I really don't sense it in my spirit right now, I believe it because I've asked for it in sincerity. And I believe that you're working the fear of God down into my heart right now, by faith, receive it. Folks, when you ask God for something, go ahead and claim it by faith.

If it's in the will of God, you know, you have the petitions you desire of him. Point four, memorize Psalm 34, memorize Proverbs chapter two, memorize these verses on the fear of the Lord. The Bible is full of them.

Collect these verses, meditate on them. Meditate. We had two women in our church housewives from all appearance, godly people.

And they decided to band together every week. They determined they did not have a fear of God. I'm not talking about somebody running around.

I'm talking about godly housewives. And they determined they did not have the fear of the Lord. They decided they determined they were going to begin to pray every day, search, search the scriptures, memorize, meditate, and meet together once a week with each other to try to build up one another and share what they had learned and pray one for the other.

Even what that text said, if you receive incline, apply, cry, hide, lift, seek, search, then you will come to know the fear of God and find a true knowledge of the Lord. All my brothers and sisters tonight, there it is. There it is.

And my challenge to you tonight is a people. My challenge to you tonight is a people. It's a rise above the tide of religious mediocrity that surrounds us in these days and become desperate, diligent seekers of God and to come to know this thing called the fear of the Lord.

Wouldn't you like to get to the point when you even hated the garment that was spotted by the flesh? When you wouldn't run off the cliff in some sort of a mental sin, but before it ever came into your mind, there would be a reflex action against it. The very holiness of God coming to repel it. And that you would get to the point where you would not even entertain these thoughts mentally much less than physically.

Are some of you wearing men with me here tonight? My friend working at your own salvation with fear and trembling, perfecting holiness in the fear of God, turning away from every, every sin of the flesh and of the spirit. Oh, my brethren tonight, that God was stir our hearts up for a hungering and a hankering after true holiness for blessed are they are blessed to appear in heart for they shall see the Lord. Listen, folks, God's working in my heart in these days.

And I want to give you a little report tonight, struggling week. The flesh is never going to be improved, but I want to tell you something tonight. It's getting to the point where I can see that sin coming.

And many times I am able in these days to say no to it before it ever comes in full force. I might not sound like much to you, but I want to tell you to a person that had his mind filled with trash and feel for Jennifer

for years. It sure is a good victory to know that the fear of God can shun these wicked thoughts and put them to flight.

Oh, my brothers, my sisters tonight. How many of you here tonight really think that our God, this God of the Bible deserves better than what he's been getting in these lukewarm days? How many of us here really tonight think that our God deserves better than what he's been getting from us in these days? Do you feel the Lord? Do you need to have a confrontation with the holiness of God tonight? Will you become a diligent seeker? Will you tonight? Will you have to say in your heart, Lord, I only have the fear of God to a degree or God. I don't have it at all, but God, I want it.

God, give it to me. God, thank you for it. God, I'm going to, you know, fly my heart toward it.

God, make me one that fears you. Oh, my challenge to you tonight, my brethren, my sister, my teenage friend is to become a diligent seeker after God. The only way you're going to stay clean is with the fear of God.

The only way that you'll not become a shipwreck your own self with God. If no one else is with this thing called the fear of the Lord. Oh, my brethren tonight, our God is worthy.

He's worthy of much better. And brethren, it's up to us to apply in crime, receive, hide, cry, lift, seek, search. God said it to make any difference what the culture is.

Then you find a true knowledge of God and you'll know the fear of the Lord.

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