

himself in his own eyes, until his iniquity be found to be hateful. The words of his mouth are iniquity and deceit: he hath left off to be wise, and to do good. He deviseth mischief upon his bed; he setteth himself in a way that is not good; he abhorreth not evil.” In **Luke 16**, the rich man died and went to hell. He did not fear God. He clothed himself in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. Jesus said, in **Matthew 10:28**, “*And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.*”

Conclusion

In **Malachi 4:1-2**, please consider the clear distinction and destination of the believer and non-believer, “*For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.*” In **verse 1**, God’s wrath is to be poured out on the ungodly. In **verse 2**, the only people that escape this wrath are those that fear God’s name. Where do you stand with God? Is your name written in the Lamb’s Book of Life? Do you fear God?

*“My flesh trembleth for fear of thee;
and I am afraid of thy judgments.”*

Psalms 119:120

*“Who knoweth the power of thine anger?
even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath.”*

Psalms 90:11



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*“ Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ,
and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.”
Acts 16:31*

The Riches

OF GRACE

Robert W. Reed
April 2008

"hath appeared to all men." Titus 2:11

Fear of God

“Teach me thy way, O LORD; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name.”

Psalms 86:11

+ Godly Fear +

The fear of God is commanded and commended in Holy Scripture. In general, the fear of God is often used to denote piety. Godly men used to be called God-fearing men. The Psalmist asked the Lord to unite his heart to fear His name, that is, he wanted a single and sincere heart in accordance with God’s will. By nature, our hearts are divided and full of tumult. The confession here is that the heart is variable and separate from God. The prayer is that the heart would be knitted to God. Our prayer should be that we have a godly fear and reverence in our heart to the Lord.

“The Fear of God is the Soul of Godliness.”

John Murry

This article will consider three areas on the subject of the fear of God: it is the central theme of Scripture, it is the mark of God's people, and it is generally ignored by the ungodly.

The Fear of God is the Major Theme in Scripture

There are literally hundreds of verses and examples of the fear of God from Genesis to Revelation. The Israelites were called God's people in the Old Testament (**Exodus 19:4-6**) and in **verse 16**, they trembled as they came before the presence of God at Mt. Sinai, "*And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled.*" God gave them His commandments in **Exodus 20:1-20**. According to **Exodus 19:18**, God's manifestation and law was to instill the fear of God in His people to rid them of carnal things, "*And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly.*" Godly fear produces obedience and nips sin in the bud. God's people were to learn to fear Him (**Deuteronomy 4:9-10; 6:1-2, 13**).

The virtue of the New Testament is that God would place His fear in our hearts in order that we turn not away from God (**Jeremiah 31:31-34; 32:38-40**). In **Ezekiel 36:26-27**, God said under the new covenant, He would cause us to walk in His statutes and judgments. The Lord Jesus Christ could distinguish between those who feared God and those that did not, **Ezekiel 21:32**, "*Thou shalt be for fuel to the fire; thy blood shall be in the midst of the land; thou shalt be no more remembered: for I the LORD have spoken it.*" According to **Ecclesiastes 12:13-14**, the whole duty of man is to fear God and keep His commandments, "*Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.*" The word fear basically means reverence and dread. These two words give a good balance in the proper understanding of the character of God. Reverential fear is a sense of awe, honor, respect or veneration. It is an awareness of God's position, presence, and greatness, **Leviticus 19:3**, "*Ye shall fear every man his mother, and his father, and keep my sabbaths: I am the LORD your God.*" This fear draws us to God and to stand in awe of His majesty (**Genesis 28:12-17; Exodus 3:1-6; Joshua 4:14; Isaiah 6:1-5; Revelation 1:7**).

Dreadful fear has the idea of terror or anguish, **Deuteronomy 2:25**, "*This day will I begin to put the dread of thee and the fear of thee upon the nations that are under the whole heaven, who shall hear report of thee, and shall tremble, and be in anguish because of thee.*" The first recorded instance of fear in Scripture is in **Genesis 3:10**. Even in a perfect environment (Garden of Eden) man was warned of God by the consequences of sin (**Genesis 2:18**). This fear is a healthy fear and is seen many times in Scriptures (**Deuteronomy 17:13; Psalm 105:38; Acts 5:11; Hebrews 4:1, 10:31**). God can be a blessed comfort or a dread to us. For example, a police officer's presence can be of a great comfort if you are obeying the law or are in need of assistance. On the other hand, the officer can be a great dread if you are breaking the law. The same is true with God.

The Fear of God is the Mark of God's People

The fear of God is implanted in the heart of the believer upon regeneration. That is, the fear is put there by the Holy Spirit (**Jeremiah 32:36-40**). Piety and fear go hand in hand. Godly people are God fearing people. To fear God is to hate evil (**Proverbs 8:13**). The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge (**Proverbs 1:7; 3:7; 9:10; 16:6**). The Bible says that Abraham and Isaac feared God (**Genesis 22:12; 31:42, 53**). In **Psalms 103:11,13, and 17**, those that fear God are called God's people. It was fear that caused Noah to build the boat (**Hebrews 11:7**). We are told in **Philippians 2:12**, to work out our salvation with fear and trembling. Our sojourning here on this earth is to be in the fear of God (**I Peter 1:17**). It is the fear of God that characterizes the true worshipper of God and those who are redeemed (**Revelation 14:6-7; 15:4; 19:5**).

The Fear of God is Ignored By Unbelievers

In **Romans 3:18** we read, "*There is no fear of God before their eyes.*" The nations that sinned against God ignored His judgments (**Romans 1:28-32**). Many throughout Scripture refused to fear the Lord God and suffered the consequences. In **Psalms 36:1-4**, we have a description of the ungodly, *To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David the servant of the LORD. "The transgression of the wicked saith within my*