

Walking in the Fear of the Lord

TEXT: Acts 9:31; Phil. 2:12

INTRODUCTION:

- A. LUKE TOLD OF THE CHURCHES WALKING IN THE FEAR OF THE LORD.
- B. PAUL TOLD THE PHILIPPIANS ABOUT FEAR AND TREMBLING.
- C. NOT A POPULAR CONCEPT TODAY. "My God is not like that!"
 - 1. A reaction to the "hell, fire, and brimstone" preaching of another generation.
 - 2. But could it be that we have gone to other extreme?
 - 3. Could this be why many Christians are apathetic or negligent in their service?
 - 4.. **Matt. 10:28.**
- D. IN THIS LESSON WE WANT TO ACCOMPLISH THREE THINGS.
 - 1. Define the "fear of the Lord."
 - 2. Point out why the "fear of the Lord" is important to the Christian.
 - 3. Suggest how we can develop a **healthy** "fear of the Lord."

I. DEFINING THE "FEAR OF THE LORD."

- A. THE WORD "FEAR."
 - 1. Hebrew, **yir'ah**, fear, terror; awesome or terrifying thing (object causing fear); fear (of God), respect, reverence, piety.
 - 2. Greek **phobos**, fear, dread, terror; that which strikes terror.
- B. "FEAR OF THE LORD" OFTEN DEFINED AS "REVERENCE" OR "AWE."
- C. "FEAR OF THE LORD" SHOULD INCLUDE A PLACE FOR "TREMBLING"!
 - 1. As Paul indicated in **Phil. 2:12**, by combining "fear and trembling."
 - 2. "Trembling," **tromos**, "a trembling or quaking with fear."
 - 3. Just as one would likely tremble in the presence of one who could take our life, so Jesus taught us to fear the Lord(**Matt. 10:28**).
- D. A PROPER "FEAR OF THE LORD" WOULD THEN INCLUDE.
 - 1. Reverence and awe(**Heb. 12:28**).
 - 2. A trembling and quaking if one knows they have offended God and have not obtained forgiveness!(**Heb. 10:26-27, 30-31; 12:28-29**).

II. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE FEAR OF THE LORD.

- A. FROM THE BOOK OF PROVERBS, WE LEARN THE FEAR OF THE LORD:
 - 1. Is the beginning of knowledge(**Prov. 1:7**).
 - 2. Will cause one to hate evil(**Prov. 8:13**).
 - 3. Will prolong life(**Prov. 10:27**).
 - 4. Provides strong confidence and is a fountain of life(**Prov. 14:26-27**).
 - 5. Prompts one to depart from evil(**Prov. 16:6**).
 - 6. Leads to a satisfying life, and spares one from much evil(**Prov. 19:23**).
 - 7. The "fear of the Lord" is the way to riches, honor, and life!(**Prov. 22:4**).
- B. WITHOUT THE FEAR OF THE LORD WE CAN'T PLEASE HIM(**Isa. 66:1-2**).
- C. THE ONE WHO TREMBLES AT HIS WORD HAS GOD'S PROMISE OF MERCY!(**Psa. 103:17-18**).

III. DEVELOPING THE FEAR OF THE LORD.

- A. THE "FEAR OF THE LORD" COMES THROUGH THE WORD OF GOD!

1. Fear comes through believing(**Rom. 10:17**).
 2. **Deut. 31:10-13** Israel was to gather every seven years to read the Law.
 - a. Consider the fearful words of Paul(**Rom. 2:4-11**).
 - b. Or how about the words of Peter(**2 Pet. 3:7-14**).
- B. THE WORD, PROPERLY USED, WILL MAINTAIN A PROPER BALANCE
1. To avoid extremes, we must read **ALL** of God's Word.
 - a. Some read only of God's love and mercy, and have no fear of the Lord.
 - b. Others emphasize "fire, hell and brimstone" passages, and know nothing of God's everlasting loving kindness
 - c. The one develops an attitude of permissiveness that belittles God's holiness and justice
 - d. The other develops an attitude of terror that forgets God's grace and compassion.
 2. Even in the passages noted above, the context of each speaks much of God's grace and forgiveness for those who will repent!
 3. So we must be careful how we use the Word of God, but use it we must!

CONCLUSION:

- A. **Psalms 89:7.**
- B. WHY DO WE NEED TO FEAR THE LORD?(**Hebrews 4:1-2, 11**).
- C. WITH THE PROPER FEAR OF THE LORD, WE WILL WORK WILL BE BETTER CHRISTIANS(**2 Cor. 7:1**).
- D. ARE YOU PERFECTING HOLINESS IN THE FEAR OF GOD?