

THE FEAR OF GOD - About the fear itself

Found in 29 verses from our list

Unlike many people today, Scripture describes the "fear of God" in a very positive way. Not only is it a necessity, but it is also good! It is to influence *all* aspects of one's life.

Since the concept of "fear" can be translated several ways (including words such as "afraid" and "reverence"), it is put in italics, where present in the verses listed below.

1. Make sure it is the God of the Bible who you fear!

- a. In these three verses, the concept "God-fearing" is similar to our term "religious." The "fear" is not necessarily directed toward the God of the Bible.
- b. Used of unsaved people who tended to be religious, but who *did not* accept the good news of salvation.
Acts 13:50 - The Jews aroused the prominent *God-fearing* women and the leading men of the city, to start a persecution against Paul and Barnabas.
- c. Used of people who *did* listen to the message of good news, and who (at least in some cases) *did* turn to the God of the Bible.
Acts 17:4 - Some of the Jews became convinced about the truth and joined Paul and Silas, as did many *God-fearing* Greeks.
Acts 17:17 - Paul reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the *God-fearing* Greeks, as well as with anyone else he happened to meet.

2. Fear of God is a requirement, and must take precedence over all other types of fear.

- a. We owe it to God.
1 Chron. 16:25 - He is to be *feared* above all gods (v. 26+ explains why).
Jeremiah 10:7 - Who should not *fear* you, O King of the nations? This is what we owe you! ... There is no one like you!
- b. Two examples to illustrate its importance.
Proverbs 15:16 - Better a little with the *fear* of the Lord, than many possessions with turmoil.
Proverbs 31:30 - The woman who *fears* the Lord should be praised - rather than those who have only temporary qualities, such as charm (can be deceptive), and beauty (lasts but a moment).

- c. It must take priority over fear of people.
 - Matthew 10:28 - Do not *fear* those who kill the body, but are unable to kill the soul. *Fear* him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.
 - Luke 12:4-5 - Do not be *afraid* of those who kill the body, but after that can do no more. Instead, this is the one you should *fear*: *Fear* him who has power to throw you into hell, after the body is killed. Yes, I tell you, *fear* him.
- d. It is an all-encompassing attitude toward God, not merely fear of what he can do.
 - Exodus 20:20 - Do not be *afraid* (of the terrifying display of God's power - v. 18-19). God is testing you, so that the *fear* of God will be with you.

3. It is an obligation; it can be learned and chosen.

- a. People can command others to fear God.
 - Daniel 6:26 - I make a decree that in every part of my kingdom people must *fear* and tremble before the God of Daniel.
- b. It is a choice.
 - Proverbs 1:29 - (The focus in this verse is on those who were unwilling to do so.) They did not choose to *fear* the Lord.
- c. It can be taught and learned.
 - Deut. 14:23 - ... so that you may learn to *fear* the Lord your God always.
 - Deut. 17:19 - ... so that he may learn to *fear* the Lord his God.
 - Deut. 31:12-13 - Assemble the people ... so they can listen and learn to *fear* the Lord your God. Their children must hear it and learn to *fear* the Lord your God.
 - Deut. 31:13 - Their children must hear this law and learn to *fear* the Lord your God.
 - Psalms 34:11 - My children, I will teach you the *fear* of the Lord.
- d. It can be understood.
 - Proverbs 2:5 - You will understand the *fear* of the Lord (if you choose to pursue wisdom - see the context).

4. It must have a constant and welcome presence in one's life.

- a. To be done continually.
Proverbs 23:17 - Always continue to *fear* the Lord.
- b. A delight (an example).
Isaiah 11:3 - He (the Lord's servant = Jesus) will delight in the *fear* of the Lord.
- c. A constant influence in how you live.
1 Peter 1:17 - You must live your lives as temporary residents here (on this present earth) in *reverent fear*.

5. It is pure; and when it is present, it will influence one's conduct.

- a. Pure, not with ulterior motives.
Job 1:9 - (Spoken by Satan:) "Does Job *fear* God for nothing?" [The events that followed would prove Satan's accusation false.]
Psalm 19:9 - The *fear* of the Lord is pure; it endures forever.
- b. Associated with wisdom and knowledge.
Psalm 111:10 - The *fear* of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.
Proverbs 1:7 - The *fear* of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.
Proverbs 9:10 - The *fear* of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.
Micah 6:9 - To *fear* your name is wisdom.
- c. Associated with hatred of evil.
Proverbs 8:13 - To *fear* the Lord is to hate evil.

Verses used: Exodus 20:20; Deut. 14:23; 17:19; 31:12-13; 1 Chron. 16:25; Job 1:9; Psalm 19:9; 34:11; 111:10; Proverbs 1:7, 29; 2:5; 8:13; 9:10; 15:16; 23:17; 31:30; Isaiah 11:3; Jeremiah 10:7; Daniel 6:26; Micah 6:9; Matthew 10:28; Luke 12:4-5; Acts 13:50; 17:4, 17; 1 Peter 1:17.