

Jer 5:22 (NIV) "Should you not fear me?" declares the Lord. "Should you not tremble in my presence?"

- In Hebrew, *yirah* (Jon 1:16, Ps 90:11), *yare* (above, Mal 3:16) and *pachad* (Job 3:25a, Ps 119:120) mean reverent fear, terror, or dread, normally translated simply fear. There are other words in Hebrew for mere respect, reverence, or honor, such as *kabad* (Ex 20:12). In Greek fear/terror is *phobo* (Mat 28:4, 1 Pet 2:17c), where reverence or honor is *timao* (1 Pet 2:17a/d).
- With this distinction in both Hebrew and Greek, some still assert that "fear merely means reverence." As if God through His Spirit could not select the right word hundreds of times! Some would prefer to believe this than to understand that God really ought to be feared.
- Why is it we will not accept the fear of God? Why do we try to "explain away" the fear of God in Scripture? What is it in our unconscious minds that creeps up when the Spirit leads us into the revelation of the fear of God?

Something deep within us says, "It's all an illusion." "Surely, behind the curtain over there, there must be a cute little man pulling levers to make all the smoke and flames." "If we really knew, we'd see that God is just a gentle con-man, who means well, but is really harmless." – Wizard of Oz

We must realize how effective Satan is at lying, and repent, or our knowledge of God will remain flawed

If we fear anything other than God, we are deceived. God is the only thing in the universe worthy of fear. Satan, of course, would disagree and has made an industry out generating *bogus fear*. His weapons are horror movies, anxieties, worries, nightmares, phobias, panic attacks, demons, etc. *Satan wants the fear due God*. To be sure, Satan is truly a terrifying master to those under his care, but those "in Christ" have been purchased from his mastery and need not fear him any longer. Whenever it is in our power, we should cut off any access Satan has to our minds or hearts to plant *bogus fear*.

Isa 8:12-13 (NIV) ...Do not fear what they fear, and do not dread it. The Lord Almighty is the one you are to regard as holy, he is the one you are to fear, he is the one you are to *dread*.

Ps 76:4,7 (NIV) You [O God] are resplendent with light... You alone are to be feared.

Maybe we are afraid because He is Sovereign - Job 23:13-16 (NIV) "But he stands alone, and who can oppose him? He does whatever he pleases. He carries out his decree against me, and many such plans he still has in store. That is why I am terrified before him; when I think of all this, I fear him. God has made my heart faint; the Almighty has terrified me."

The fear of the Lord may be the beginning of wisdom, but the end is love. Love is our hope, our goal, our sure destiny as believers. If we are obedient, we will get close to it while still in this world. In the meantime, we fear now, because none of us is yet without

sin or perfect in love. 1 Pet 1:17 (RSV) And if you invoke as Father him who judges each one impartially according to his deeds, conduct yourselves with fear *throughout the time of your exile*.

His intense determination to make us holy (so that we can be with Him forever) is cause for the right kind of godly fear: that He will NOT quit sanctifying us when, in our opinion, we are good enough. Phil 2:12-13 (NIV) ...continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.

Mike Yaconelli: "I would like to suggest that the Church become a place of terror again; a place where God continually has to tell us, "Fear not"; a place where our relationship with God is not a simple belief or a doctrine or theology, it is God's burning presence in our lives. I am suggesting that the tame God of relevance be replaced by the God whose very presence shatters our egos into dust, burns our sin into ashes, and strips us naked to reveal the real person within. The Church needs to become a gloriously dangerous place where nothing is safe in God's presence except us. Nothing--including our plans, our agendas, our priorities, our politics, our money, our security, our comfort, our possessions, our needs.

Isaiah writes: *"The LORD Almighty is the one you are to regard as holy, he is the one you are to fear, he is the one you are to dread," (Isaiah 8:13 NIV)* This Fear of the Lord is not a negative thing, simply an ever present reminder that while we are forgiven through the blood of Jesus, we are still accountable before God for our actions. In other words, the blood of Jesus is not a license to do as we please. Would you live your life differently if you had to give the Father a complete accounting for your work at the end of each day?

we all loved our earthly fathers, but we feared the times of discipline (which was for our own good).

We show we fear of God by the way we live our lives and by our statements, *"Let those who fear the LORD say: 'His love endures forever'." (Psalms 118:4NIV)* Secondly, we must have His mind set. *"To fear the LORD is to hate evil; I hate pride and arrogance, evil behavior and perverse speech." (Proverbs 8:13 NIV)*

*Wisdom:*

*The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow his precepts have good understanding. To him belongs eternal praise. Psalms 111:10*

*The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline. Proverbs 1:7*

*Keep from Sin:*

*Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid. God has come to test you, so that the fear of God will be with you to keep you from sinning." Exodus 20:20*

*Good Life:*

*Oh, that their hearts would be inclined to fear me and keep all my commands always, so that it might go well with them and their children forever! Deuteronomy 5:29*

*For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; Psalms 103:11*

*How great is your goodness, which you have stored up for those who fear you, which you bestow in the sight of men on those who take refuge in you. Psalms 31:19*

A person not fearing God, is a person not believing, not trusting and not knowing God. He does not accept that God exists.

Fearlessness will lead to sin. The cloud of sin, and in the end destruction will befall the lives of those who do not fear God. "There is no fear of God before their eyes" (Rom. 3:18)

The person who does not fear God is ungodly. He will not keep well the ordinances of God and the duties connected therewith. God told Moses, "Gather Me the people together, and I will make them hear My words, that they may learn to fear Me all the days that they shall live upon the earth" (Deut. 4: 9)

We need not fear man. This happened to be the mistake of Saul. He said that he feared the people and obeyed their voice (1 Sam. 15: 24). The fear of man brings a snare. We should fear only God (Prov. 29:25).

The true believer need not fear at the process of chastisement on things in future. One need not fear the final judgment. Judgment will be a fiery indignation which will devour adversaries (Heb. 10: 27).

Churches multiplied, walking in the fear of the Lord (Acts. 9:31).

His holiness creates fear in us. Who can there be without fearing you or glorifying Him He is the only holy God (Rev. 14: 7; Is. 6: 1-5).

The coming judgment creates in us fear for Him. "Saying with a loud voice, fear God and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come," announced the angel (Rev. 14: 7).

The fear of God is decreasing in the world. The fear of God is not found in churches and associations. The fear of God is absent in worship.

"God, teach me to fear you" (Luke. 1: 50: Ps 103: 17).