

Filial Fear

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; but goods despise wisdom and instruction” (Proverbs 1:7).

Today we all deal with fear on different levels. We fear the division that is running rampant in our country. We fear economic depression or inflation. We fear terrorists, or crazy people with guns. We fear the loss of our health or the loss of a loved one.

Fear can paralyze you into inaction or sometimes spur you to running away from something. The only solution for this is God who will redeem you from your fears and fill you with faith, confidence and strength. However, God will only help you when you first fear the only thing that you really should be afraid of, and that is Him. It is only through God that all other fears are removed. I love Luther’s explanation:

“Luther distinguished between that and what he called filial fear, drawing from the Latin concept from which we get the idea of family. It refers to the fear that a child has for his father. In this regard, Luther is thinking of a child who has tremendous respect and love for his father or mother and who dearly wants to please them. He has a fear or an anxiety of offending the one he loves, not because he’s afraid of torture or even of punishment, but rather because he’s afraid of displeasing the one who is, in that child’s world, the source of security and love.” (By: R.C. Sproul) <https://www.ligonier.org/blog/what-does-it-mean-fear-god/>

This kind of relationship with God is implied only through fearing who He is and it requires more than just understanding that He exists.

Fear of God: 18 times
Fear of the Lord: 30 times
Fear the Lord: 32 times
Fear thy God: 5 times
Fear Him: 23 times
Total times concerning “fearing God”:108 times

Fearing God involves obedience. Fearing God involves trust. Fearing God involves your heart. You fear God because God is your creator. He is the creator of the universe, who loves you and wants the best for you. You can at least fear the greatness of who is He is. It’s all about the awesomeness of God, who has power we cannot even imagine.

Think about that for one minute. That is a lot of passages on “Fearing God.” To see something mentioned this many times requires your full attention. After all, 108 times the Bible tell you to Fear God. Apparently, it’s something we need to be doing!

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