



new life fellowship

Sermon Title: Proverbs: The Fear of the Lord is the Beginning of Wisdom

Speaker: Richard Villodas, Lead Pastor

Scripture: Proverbs 1:7, 9:10

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge,
but fools despise wisdom and instruction. (*Proverbs 1:7 - NIV*)

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom,
and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. (*Proverbs 9:10 - NIV*)

Sermon Outline:

What does it mean to fear the Lord? We find ourselves in a fallen world that is powered by fear. Too often Christianity falls into this trap. People are too often scared into religion. Fear is a great motivator to make people change their behavior. Fear often plays a big role in religion and has been used by many as a strategy to getting people to be followers of Jesus. It is impossible for fear to transform hearts.

Is the essence of Christianity fear-based?

Two opposite views that are contrasted against the Fear of the Lord: Afraid of God and Too Familiar with God.

- Afraid of God
- Too familiar with God

God is a Comforting Father and a Consuming Fire. We are to hold both these truths together, not holding on to one more than the other, so that we don't end up with a distorted image of God. The Fear of the Lord helps us resist being afraid of God and becoming too familiar with God. We must remember that God is God, and I am not.

Fear of the Lord = To be in awe and in wonder of God.

The Fear of the Lord is an utter preoccupation with God, that leads me to order my life around his ways.

- The fear of the Lord reminds us that God is God, and I am not.
- The fear of the Lord leads us to giving careful thought to our ways.
- The fear of the Lord assumes that God needs to be involved in all aspects of life.
There is no sacred/secular split.

How are we to live in a healthy fear of the Lord?

- Behold the Creation of God
- Behold the Crucified God

May the fear of the Lord cause us to live our lives with a constant sense of the awe and wonder of God.

Sermon Summary:

This Sunday, Richard Villodas, Lead Pastor, concludes our sermon series on the book of Proverbs. Pastor Rich will end our series with a look at "the fear of the Lord", which can be one of the most misunderstood phrases in the Bible. Pastor Rich will explore what this statement means, as well as what it doesn't mean and how to build it into our lives.

Sermon Questions:

1. How does this scripture connect for you the topic that was discussed today? What words resonate with you? Why?
2. In your family of origin, did you grow up hearing that God was always waiting for you to mess up so that he could punish you for whatever sin you committed? Or did you grow up with a sense of being too familiar with God, thinking that he was like one of your buddies? How did your experience growing up shape the way you

view God today? Find time this week to journal your responses to these questions, asking for the Lord's guidance and forgiveness where you may need it.

3. Have you been living afraid of God, seeing God as moody and volatile? Do you believe that any wrong move or bad decision you made would lead to God's wrath and punishment? Are you able to hear and understand for those of us who are in Christ Jesus, there is no judgement? We have received justification and there is no reason to be afraid of God. Share your thoughts with your small group or a trusted brother/sister in Christ.
4. Have you been living in a way where you are flippant towards God? So much so that God is an afterthought and doesn't factor into your decisions about your life? How and where can you begin this week to ask the Lord where He is leading you, instead of making decisions first and then asking for the Lord's help?
5. Where do you feel the Holy Spirit is leading you to begin living a healthy fear of the Lord? Do you need to begin to behold God's amazing creation – maybe getting outside and taking a walk or going to the park to witness some of the beauty of God's creation? Or do you need to behold the crucified God? Maybe during your prayer time this week, you need to do so on your knees or you might go a little deeper this week in Scripture reading about our crucified God.