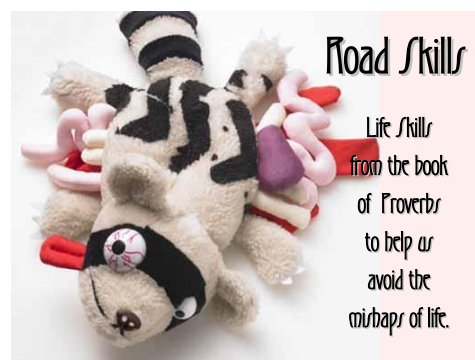


2- Road Skills – The Fear of the Lord

05/23/2010 - Jim Johnson

According to Solomon the foundation of all wisdom rests in the fear of the Lord (Prov. 1:7 & 9:10) This concept is so critically important to the goal of wisdom that Solomon mentioned it 18 different times in this book.



A. The Fear of the Lord: _____ is it?

Fear serves as an alarm system alerting us to impending danger.

Fear of this kind is designed by God for our protection. The Lord is very, very good but He is dangerous. He can't help but be dangerous to us - simply because He is, by nature, all together holy, and we, by nature, are not. Moses was not permitted to look upon him though they met on Mount Sinai. God said to him *"You cannot see My face, for no man can see Me and live!"* (Ex 33:20) God is Holy – we are not – and therefore we must fear him. He is nuclear material and we are mortal flesh. For our purpose I would like to define it this way. **To fear the Lord is to respect Him for who He is and to respond to Him in submission.**

B. What is it about God that we should fear?

The fear of the Lord is rooted in his holiness and results because we lack His holiness. This then governs the way He relates to us and the way we relate to Him. So what is it about God that we should fear?

1. We ought to fear His _____ (Matt 10:28)

Jesus told us to fear God, because there will one day be a judgment when God will consign many to an eternity in a horrible place known as hell. Fortunately God has provided a Redeemer for us, the Lord Jesus. And because he was altogether holy, he was willing to take his holiness and drape it over the wickedness of man. To anyone who would by faith receive Him as Savior. (Gal 3:27). The Christian then is clothed in Christ's holiness, and therefore we have no reason to fear damnation.

The fear of the Lord is understood, however, as being experienced much more by the believer than the unbeliever. So why should the people of God fear Him?

2. We should fear His _____ (Heb. 12)

God loves His people, and one token of that love is that He will discipline the child that errs in an effort to correct the wrong thinking and behavior. His intolerance for wickedness drives Him to purify the behavior of His children and make them holy in practice.

3. We should fear His _____ (2 Cor. 5:11)

Paul discusses the Bema seat of Christ, where each believer will have his or her life inspected. It is a judgment reserved just for Christians. Paul feared falling short in that judgment, he therefore worked hard at his work of evangelism.

4. We ought to fear His _____ (1 John 2:28)

John tells us that Jesus is coming back, and we therefore need to abide in Him, stay the course and live for Jesus, so that when He returns we won't want to shrink away in shame. Essentially he tells us that we ought to be afraid of disappointing the Savior.

Is it possible to both love and fear God? Yes, just as a child loves their father, and yet fears the consequences of disobedience. The more that a person grows in holiness – the less they are motivated by the fear God. Paul also said in 2 Cor. that it was the love of Christ that compelled him. Paul was energized to serve God because Christ had so loved him. The more we grow in holiness, the less we are motivated by fear and the more we are motivated

by other things. Maybe that's just where wisdom begins. Our most basic motivation to live for God should be grounded in the fear of the Lord. But as we grow in our holiness, we operate out of other motivations, and yet the Fear of the Lord, always remains the foundation beneath it all.

C. The Fear of the Lord: What _____ does it bring?

1. The Fear of the Lord brings _____ life (Prov. 10:27)

When we fear the Lord, we obey His word and His word teaches safe and healthy living.

2. The Fear of the Lord gives us _____ in life (Prov. 14:26)

The person who fears the Lord knows that they are in good standing with God. They know they have a powerful partner in life who is committed to their safety and well being. This person is not alone. They have confidence.

3. The Fear of the Lord yields _____ in life (Prov. 19:23)

The person who fears the Lord is satisfied. They sleep well. They are also content (15:16)

4. The Fear of the Lord causes us to _____. (Prov. 22:4)

Riches, honor and life go to those who fear the Lord. These are not spiritual rewards. When he speaks of riches – he is speaking of wealth, and honor is the esteem we would all like to have in the eyes of others. Life speaks to an excellent quality life.

5. The Fear of the Lord provokes _____ (Prov. 16:6)

The one who fears the Lord is the one who keeps away from evil. Why? Because of concern for his discipline, being denied His reward, and disappointing the God we love.

D. The Fear of the Lord: How do I _____ it?

The evangelical church is full of people who have been nursed on the mercy and grace of God and who know very little of the Fear of the Lord. As a result many of us do not tremble when we reach for sin. Some of us were taught the fear of God without the love of God. Most of us were taught the love of God without the fear of God. We try to argue it away, but the fear of the Lord is a concept firmly entrenched in the NT as well as the OT. (2 Cor 5:11; Eph. 5:21; Phil. 2:12; 1 Peter 2:17; 1 Peter 1:17.) We can't begin to truly appreciate the depth His love until we understand the fierceness of His holiness.

E. The Fear of the Lord – How do I _____ in it?

Proverbs 9:10 tell us that, "*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.*" Solomon makes the fear the Lord AND understanding the Lord synonymous ideas. In other words, the more that a person knows and understands about God, the more they fear Him. Where do we get this understanding of God? First and foremost the Scripture: Read it cover to cover – only this time go back and read the parts you have been skipping. Beyond the Scripture: Read a book about God's holiness. Two great choices are **The Holiness of God** by R.C. Sproul or **The Knowledge of the Holy** by A.W. Tozer. Both good solid evangelical authors – and yet both capture the awesomeness of God's holiness.

FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

Use this section in your personal or family devotions to better apply the truth.

1. What do you believe about God that warms your heart toward Him?
2. What do you believe about God that causes you to fear Him?
3. In view of the Fear of the Lord, what decision do you need to rethink?