

FEAR OF THE LORD

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Unless otherwise stated Scripture quotes are from the NLT

Introduction:

Is there a more misunderstood doctrine in the Church today? I think not! Jesus Himself was anointed with the spirit of the fear of the LORD! [Isa.11:2](#) - [And the Spirit of the LORD will rest on him—the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.](#) The Amplified Bible expresses it this way: ["the Spirit of knowledge and of the reverential and obedient fear of the Lord."](#) The NET Bible brings out what the effects of this heavenly anointing are: ["a spirit that produces absolute loyalty to the LORD."](#) WOW! What can be wrong with that! Why wouldn't such an anointing be the cry of your heart?

The very expression ["fear of the LORD"](#) seems to have some negative connotations. An investigation of Scripture reveals that ["fear of the Lord"](#) is an extremely positive blessing of God. If we purpose to accurately represent the Lord Jesus Christ in our generation in Canada we need to take a fresh look at this. We need every blessing of God we can have in order to fulfill Jesus' will today!

The church in Canada has had a strong teaching emphasis on the love and grace of God for the past 30 or 40 years. This is right and good and has definitely been of God. It's important for us to remember that when ever there's an emphasis on any one truth of God's Word it is not to the neglect of other truths. **We need to hear the whole counsel of God,** (Acts 20:27).

At present, to even mention ["the fear of the Lord"](#) almost seems to be in direct opposition to the love of God, however, **IT'S NOT** . What we discover from

1 Cor. 13 (*the love chapter*) is: true love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. The love of God always rejoices in the truth of God's word. The love of God rejoices in ["the fear of the Lord"](#), because it's truth. By it, by the fear of God, a man avoids evil (Pr. 16:6). This is what the love of God delights in.

How the fear of God effects our lives.

- * It's pure -Ps. 19:9
- * It's the beginning of wisdom - Pr. 15:33 Ps. 111:10
- * It's the beginning of knowledge - Pr. 1:7
- * It brings blessing from God - Ps 115:13, Ps. 128:1
- * It brings divine protection - Pr. 34:7
- * It results in no lack -Ps. 34:9, Ps. 25:13
- * It adds to length of life -Pr. 10:27
- * It brings divine favor -Jer. 26:19, Luke 1:30, Acts 10:35
- * It brings God's instruction -Ps.25:12
- * It brings God's confidence -Ps, 25:14

* It turns us from sin -Pr. 3:7, Pr. 16:6, Ex. 20:20

* It's a fountain of life -Pr. 14:27, Pr. 19:23, Pr. 22:4

Rev. Dick Iverson gives this meaning to "fear of the Lord: An awesome reverence and respect toward God, knowing that He is totally righteous, full of mercy and truth; compensating and rewarding the obedient in faith and to the contrary, judging and chastening the disobedient in faith.

IMPORTANT SCRIPTURES:

Pr 1:7 Fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge. Only fools despise wisdom and discipline.

Pr 10:27 Fear of the LORD lengthens one's life, but the years of the wicked are cut short.

Pr 14:27 Fear of the LORD is a life-giving fountain; it offers escape from the snares of death.

Pr 15:33 Fear of the LORD teaches a person to be wise; humility precedes honor.

Pr 16:6 Unfailing love and faithfulness cover sin; evil is avoided by fear of the LORD.

Pr 19:23 Fear of the LORD gives life, security, and protection from harm.

Pr 22:4 True humility and fear of the LORD lead to riches, honor, and long life.

Isa 11:2 And the Spirit of the LORD will rest on him-the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.

Isa 33:6 In that day he will be your sure foundation, providing a rich store of salvation, wisdom, and knowledge. The fear of the LORD is the key to this treasure.

Ac 9:31 The church then had peace throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria, and it grew in strength and numbers. The believers were walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit.

2Co 5:11 It is because we know this solemn fear of the Lord that we work so hard to persuade others. God knows we are sincere, and I hope you know this, too.

Col 3:22 You slaves must obey your earthly masters in everything you do. Try to please them all the time, not just when they are

watching you. Obey them willingly because of your reverent fear of the Lord.

JESUS & THE FEAR OF GOD:

Isa. 11:1-5 (NIV) spoke prophetically of the Lord Jesus Christ. Verse two describes the Spirit of the LORD which was to rest upon Him. "The Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him --the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD --". Then in verse three it says that Jesus "will delight in the fear of the LORD." There's got to be something very powerful and positive about "the fear of the LORD" in order for Christ to delight in it. It must be a good and beneficial thing to have as a part of the spiritual fiber that makes up our life in Christ.

If we are not yet able to say that we delight in the fear of the Lord as Jesus did it's an indicator of the need for more spiritual growth. We're all in a spiritual growth process. We , "are being transformed into His likeness with ever - increasing glory, (2 Cor. 3:18). Delighting in the fear of the Lord is just another step in the right direction, closer to the heart of God. In the generation in which we find ourselves we are, in general extremely lacking in a healthy fear of God. This is true of both inside and outside the Evangelical Church. In fact, over time it seems that we have drifted so far away from it that even to verbally express fearing the Lord can be misunderstood to be extreme legalism. I just hope we will choose to seek God for this voluntarily and that God doesn't need to manifest "Ananias and Saphira" situations among us! (Acts 5)

LIVING IN REVERENT FEAR OF GOD:

How we live our lives as God's people in the "here and now" is vital and does effect our "tomorrow"! Are we serious about our relationship with Christ? How much does His sacrificial death on the cross mean to us? Do we really believe that our God is taking personal interest in our relationship with Him? Are we prepared to fully honor the Lord with our lives? Do we really think it matters to God how we live? Is there any reason to fear the God of love and grace?

1 P.1:14-20 - Obey God because you are his children. Don't slip back into your old ways of doing evil; you didn't know any better then. ¹⁵ But now you must be holy in everything you do, just as God-who chose you to be his children-is holy. ¹⁶ For he himself has said, "You must be holy because I am holy." ¹⁷ And remember that **the heavenly Father to whom you pray has no favorites when he judges.** He will judge or reward you according to what you do. **So you must live in reverent fear of him during your time as foreigners here on earth.** ¹⁸ For you know that God paid a ransom to save you from the empty life you inherited from your ancestors. And the ransom he paid was not mere gold or silver. ¹⁹ He paid for you with the precious lifeblood of Christ, the sinless, spotless Lamb of God. ²⁰ God chose him for this purpose long before the world began, but now in these final days, he was sent to the earth for all to see. And he did this for you.

The point of interest here is the context surrounding verse 17! Holiness is the subject matter. There appears to me to be good reason to fear God. The inspired Apostle makes it very clear that when it comes to God's judgement He plays no favorites. Judgement is based on ACTIONS not beliefs per say! More specifically it how effective our faith is in computing our beliefs into actions of obedience that really counts in God's eyes.

GOD HAS NO FAVORITES! This concept needs to be embraced. It will help to ensure a health FEAR of God! This too needs to be examined in light of some "eternal security" emphasises. If there is nothing to fear about God and His judgment then how can we obey the

Word? We are told to "live in reverent fear" of God during our earthly pilgrimage!

If we are eternally secure regardless of our actions then what fear is there? We so adopt the attitude, "so what at least I'll make it to heaven. I don't really care about rewards anyway as long as I'm a believer I'll get to heaven." What a terrible mistake can be made here.

NT. The Biblical reason for fearing God here is the fact that God does not have favorites when it comes to judgment. Our actions are what will dictate our reward. God will judge His people! We are not exempt from judgement just because we are Believers. We are not appointed to the wrath of God, however we are pointed to the judgment seat of Christ. We will all appear before God to give an account of our actions.

Rom. 14:10 - ...Remember, each of us will stand personally before the judgment seat of God.

Rom. 14:12 - Yes, each of us will have to give a personal account to God.

2Co 5:10 - For we must all stand before Christ to be judged. We will each receive whatever we deserve for the good or evil we have done in our bodies.

NT. If there's nothing to be afraid of then why fear? Why fear God if there's no reason too?

Verse 17 of 1P. 1 is very instructive and regardless which of the more popular Bible translations you prefer the word "fear" means exactly that. The original Gk. word infers even terror! Jesus Himself made reference to this kind of fear in [Lk.12:4,5](#) -"Dear friends, don't be afraid of those who want to kill you. They can only kill the body; they cannot do any more to you. ⁵ **But I'll tell you whom to fear. Fear God**, who has the power to kill people and then throw them into hell. The original Greek word used for "fear" implies being terrified!

1) to put to flight by terrifying (to scare away)

1a) to put to flight, to flee

1b) to fear, be afraid

1b1) to be struck with fear, to be seized with alarm

1b1a) of those startled by strange sights or occurrences

1b1b) of those struck with amazement

1b2) to fear, be afraid of one

1b3) to fear (i.e. hesitate) to do something (for fear of harm)

An honest approach of investigating what Jesus meant by "Fear God" leaves one clearly realizing that He meant, we need to be more afraid of God than we are of people. The fear we have of people and what they can do to our physical body is a fear that generates a degree of terror. This kind of fear causes us to make decisions because we are afraid of the physical consequences of our actions. If, for example we happen to be arrested for our faith in Christ our fear of what might happen to us could cause us to renounce Jesus. If our fear of God is greater than our fear of man then we will bring that into the equation when making our decisions. In this context fear has a very powerful influence in our lives.

In the natural world fear can be a very good thing. Being afraid of getting physically hurt can be influential in avoiding premature death! The fear of legal consequences, such as fines or imprisonment, can help to keep some people more honest in certain financial matters. A healthy fear of heights can help in avoiding foolish behaviour. The list goes on and on. Fear can be a very important tool for safer living!

Fear is not all bad! In fact God Himself tells us that it's wise to fear God. Pr. 9:10 tells us that to fear God is the very beginning of wisdom. If there is a true fear of God then this fear will be very influential in our choices! Pr.16:6 tells us that it is the fear of God that will cause people to avoid sinning. One might ask, "How does fearing God help us to stay clear of sin?" There would be no fear of God if there was no consequence for sin. If we know that God disapproves of our actions and that He judges sin then this SHOULD generate fear. If we don't believe that God hates sin and will judge our actions of disobedience then we will not be afraid to sin! This is exactly what we are told in Ps.36:1 - **Sin whispers to the wicked, deep within their hearts. They have no fear of God to restrain them.** Rom.3:18 says exactly the same thing. A health fear of God will act as a restraint against sinning. This can only be true IF we understand that God will hold us accountable for our actions.

PERSONAL ACCOUNTABILITY:

At the very heart of accountability is the nature of God! Is it His nature to hold people accountable for their actions? The first full revelation of the character and nature of the LORD was given to Moses in Ex 34:5-7.

Ex.34:5 ¶ Then the LORD came down in a pillar of cloud and called out his own name, "the LORD," as Moses stood there in his presence. 6 He passed in front of Moses and said, "I am the LORD, I am the LORD, the merciful and gracious God. I am slow to anger and rich in unfailing love and faithfulness. 7 I show this unfailing love to many thousands by forgiving every kind of sin and rebellion. Even so **I do not leave sin unpunished**, but I punish the children for the sins of their parents to the third and fourth generations."

Notice how it's a part of God's nature to "not leave sin unpunished"! This is what we need to understand and see very clearly. This concept is not restricted to the Old Testament or Old Covenant. God's nature does not change! He is loving, gracious, merciful, patient and forgiving. He is also the God of justice and judgment. Sin will not go unpunished!

Col.3:24 Remember that the Lord will give you an inheritance as your reward, and the Master you are serving is Christ. 25 **But if you do what is wrong, you will be paid back for the wrong you have done. For God has no favorites who can get away with evil.**

1Pe 1:17 - And remember that the heavenly Father to whom you pray has no favorites when He judges. He will judge or reward you according to what you do. So you must live in reverent fear of him during your time as foreigners here on earth.

We must understand that these Scriptures are referring to Believers as well as unbelievers. It is a serious misconception to think that because Believers are "in Christ" that we avoid judgment. In fact we are told that judgment begins with God's people. 1Pe 4:17 - **For the time has come for judgment, and it must begin first among God's own children.** And if even we Christians must be judged, what terrible fate awaits those who have never believed God's Good News?

The Spirit of God warns us about the importance of our actions in light of who God is. Gal. 6:7 - **Don't be misled. Remember that you can't ignore God and get away with it. You will always reap what you sow!** We simply cannot ignore God or His Word and think we are free from personal accountability. When Jesus returns He is coming with rewards and all of God's people will be judged according to their actions. Rev. 22:12 - **"See, I am coming soon, and my reward is with me, to repay all according to their deeds.** Each one of us will be held personally responsible to God for how we have lived during time here on earth. Rom. 14:10 - **...Remember, each of us**

will stand personally before the judgment seat of God. This cannot be avoided and we simply can't hide from the all-seeing eyes of the Lord. We have too answer to Him!

THE SEVERITY OF GOD:

The Old Testament records not only the grace, love and mercy of God but also His severity. A coin has both heads and tails. A vehicle battery has both a positive and negative post. We haven't seen the full coin if all we've been shown is the heads side and the power of electricity lays dormant if there's only the positive field. We are living in time in Canada when the Church needs to be refreshed with a look at the full council of God. We need to see God for ALL He is not just selected facets of preference. It's very difficult if not impossible to really appreciate heaven if one never looks into hell! To more fully appreciate the love, mercy, grace and forgiveness of God we need to look at the justice, judgment and severity of God. God has capacity to hate just as He has the capacity to love. God can show mercy and He can also harden the human heart. God hardened Pharaoh's heart so that He could demonstrate his awesome powers to the world! God's severity against sin is clearly seen through the various judgments God brought against the nation of Israel when they rebelled against Him. The most dramatic Old Testament act of God's severity is of course the flood! Out of the entire human population only eight people were saved! Everyone else drown in the floodwaters of God's judgment. God is capable of being very severe! Having said that we must remember that His severity is always in line with His justice! If God chooses to be severe it is not without divine justification!

Does the New Covenant abolish the severity of God? Can God be severe today? It's very interesting that today the vast majority of God's people on earth come from the "gentile" or "non-Israelite" background. This certainly 'wasn't the case under Old Covenant. At this point in Church history it is easy for Gentile Believers to take salvation granted! When God chose to open the doors of eternal wide open to the Gentiles it was made possible through severity to the Jews. Stop and think about it for a moment had God not hardened their hearts and blinded their spiritual eyes they would have welcomed Christ as their Messiah. There would have been no crucifixion! Had not the Jews insisted on Jesus death Rome would have released Jesus! There would have been no shedding of the Lamb's blood to take away the sin of the world. There would have been no hope for the Gentile world. The Apostle Paul uses this very illustration to teach the Gentile Believers in Rome. [Rom. 11:22 - Notice how God is both kind and severe. He is severe to those who disobeyed, but kind to you as you continue to trust in his kindness. But if you stop trusting, you also will be cut off.](#) There is a very sense where us Gentiles should be grateful for God's severity. Had He not chosen to blind and deafen the nation of Israel few if any Gentile would be saved today.

It 'wasn't long in the life of the New Testament before it was made vividly aware of God's severity. The Gospel is the "Love Story" of God! It's God nature to love, to be gracious, kind, merciful, just, and forgiving but we need to reminded that God hates sin and He can deal very severely with people who profess to know Christ and yet their actions are contrary to God. Let's not forget Ananias and Sapphira in Acts chapter five.

[Acts 5: 1 ¶ There was also a man named Ananias who, with his wife, Sapphira, sold some property. 2 He brought part of the money to the apostles, but he claimed it was the full amount. His wife had agreed to this deception. 3 Then Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart? You lied to the Holy Spirit, and you kept some of the money for yourself. 4 The property was yours to sell or not sell, as you wished. And after selling it, the money was yours to give away. How could you do a thing like this? You weren't lying to us but to God." 5 As soon as Ananias heard these words, he fell to the floor and died. Everyone who heard about it was terrified. 6 Then some young men wrapped him in a sheet and took him out and buried him. 7 About three hours later his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. 8 Peter asked her, "Was this the price you and your husband received for your land?" "Yes," she replied, "that was](#)

the price." 9 And Peter said, "How could the two of you even think of doing a thing like this—conspiring together to test the Spirit of the Lord? Just outside that door are the young men who buried your husband, and they will carry you out, too." 10 Instantly, she fell to the floor and died. When the young men came in and saw that she was dead, they carried her out and buried her beside her husband. 11 Great fear gripped the entire church and all others who heard what had happened.

This powerful demonstration of the severity of God happened right in the midst of the church service. This is so foreign to us (I'm personally thankful it is) nevertheless it really happened. I can't imagine being Peter that day or being in that church service can you! This was not an action of the devil! God struck these people down for premeditatedly lying to Him. God does nothing without purpose. What's it to Him to take a human life? What this severe act of God did was set a precedent! The result of this severity brought the fear of God into that group of Believers! Verse 11 tells the story, "**Great fear gripped the entire church and all others who heard what had happened**". I think it's quite safe to say that people would have second thoughts about abusing the grace of God for quite some time. Without question there has been a lot of ungodly behaviour in the Church that the Lord has chosen to overlook for the time being. He hasn't forgotten about these spiritual atrocities. Unconfessed sin will not be overlooked forever. If God 'doesn't confront us with it in the "here and now" you can rest assured it will be confronted at the judgment seat of Christ. **1Co 4:5 -... When the Lord comes, he will bring our deepest secrets to light and will reveal our private motives. And then God will give to everyone whatever praise is due.** Nothing escapes God! Just because we do not see immediate action from God against known sins does mean that He is indifferent to it or that we're getting away with something! **Heb 4:13 - Nothing in all creation can hide from him. Everything is naked and exposed before his eyes.** This is the God to whom **we must explain all that we have done.**

Another New Covenant example of God's ability to show the severity side of His nature is found in His letter to the Church at Thyatira in Revelation chapter two.

Rev.2:18-23 -"Write this letter to the angel of the church in Thyatira. This is the message from the Son of God, whose eyes are bright like flames of fire, whose feet are like polished bronze: 19 "I know all the things you do your love, your faith, your service, and your patient endurance. And I can see your constant improvement in all these things. 20 But I have this complaint against you. You are permitting that woman—that Jezebel who calls herself a prophet—to lead my servants astray. She is encouraging them to worship idols, eat food offered to idols, and commit sexual sin. 21 I gave her time to repent, but she would not turn away from her immorality. 22 Therefore, **I will throw her upon a sickbed, and she will suffer greatly with all who commit adultery with her,** unless they turn away from all their evil deeds. 23 **I will strike her children dead.** And all the churches will know that I am the one who searches out the thoughts and intentions of every person. And I will give to each of you whatever you deserve.

This certainly doesn't sound like the lowly gentle Jesus, the Lamb that was led away to be slaughtered without even raising His voice! The Lamb of God is also the Lion of the tribe of Judah. This gentle Jesus is also known in Scripture as the "warrior" or as some translations put it "the man of war". It's very clear from the wording of this letter to the local church at Thyatira that it was going to be Jesus who would bring sickness to the Jezebel and it was going to be Him that would strike her children dead. This was not going to be the work of the devil! We are definitely seeing something of God that needs to be seen and understood. White is distinguished when compared with black! The love, grace, and mercies of the Lord are much more appreciated when we understand the same God who has chosen to love us has the capacity to hate. The God who chooses to show mercy and grant forgiveness can also be severe and harden the human heart. The gracious patient Lord of Glory can be roused to anger!

EXAMPLES TO WARN US:

God has chosen to reveal Himself to us. He has held nothing back! We are given very clear manifestations of His nature in Scripture that serve as examples for us to learn from.

1Cor.10:1-11 - I don't want you to forget, dear brothers and sisters, what happened to our ancestors in the wilderness long ago. God guided all of them by sending a cloud that moved along ahead of them, and he brought them all safely through the waters of the sea on dry ground. ² As followers of Moses, they were all baptized in the cloud and the sea. ³ And all of them ate the same miraculous food, ⁴ and all of them drank the same miraculous water. For they all drank from the miraculous rock that traveled with them, and that rock was Christ. ⁵ Yet after all this, God was not pleased with most of them, and **he destroyed them in the wilderness.** ⁶ ¶ These events happened as a warning to us, so that we would not crave evil things as they did ⁷ or worship idols as some of them did. For the Scriptures say, "The people celebrated with feasting and drinking, and they indulged themselves in pagan revelry." ⁸ And we must not engage in sexual immorality as some of them did, causing 23,000 of them to die in one day. ⁹ Nor should we put Christ to the test, as some of them did and then died from snakebites. ¹⁰ And don't grumble as some of them did, for that is why **God sent his angel of death to destroy them.** ¹¹ **All these events happened to them as examples for us. They were written down to warn us,** who live at the time when this age is drawing to a close.

Verse 11 says God had these events recorded as examples to warn us, that is to warn New Covenant Believers. I find that I ask myself this, "if there are no consequences for my actions then what constructive value is there to a warning." If, as some assume, our position "in Christ" insulates us from the justice of God, then a warning of pending danger is nothing short of deception. God is light and in Him there is no darkness, deception is darkness and therefore we can rest assured that if God issues a warning then there is good reason for it. There will be consequences if the warning is not heeded!

2P.2:4-6 - For **God did not spare even the angels when they sinned;** he threw them into hell, in gloomy caves and darkness until the judgment day. ⁵ And **God did not spare the ancient world**-except for Noah and his family of seven. Noah warned the world of God's righteous judgment. Then God destroyed the whole world of ungodly people with a vast flood. ⁶ Later, he turned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into heaps of ashes and swept them off the face of the earth. **He made them an example of what will happen to ungodly people.**

Why fear God? Because He has capacity and capability of being very severe! The prophet Jeremiah understood this. Lam. 3:22 - *The unfailing love of the LORD never ends! By his mercies we have been kept from complete destruction.* The reason we are not completely destroyed is because of God unfailing love and mercy. Destruction is what happens when God chooses to withhold His mercy. Hell is the ultimate expression of God's justice. It is severe but it is just and it is forever. The redeemed of the Lord will live in the awesome presence of the loving God for all eternity! The ungodly and sinners will spend eternity living out the second death, separated from God for all eternity. This is the absolute justice of God!

LOVE DISPELS FEAR:

Does fearing God mean that we are to live terrified lives? Is life "in Christ" a tightrope walk where the slightest wrong move means disaster? Is there room to move in God. Is a baby afraid to try walking because it result in a fall? Proper parenting gives reassurance that if there is a fall there will also be a loving protective hand of help awaiting! The whole Gospel theme is one of love. God loved us enough to make away for us through the sacrificial death of Christ to experience the joys and blessings of "sins forgiven". Reciprocating love causes us to embrace this Good News, repent

of sin and receive Jesus Christ as our personal Lord and Saviour. Salvation is a true and honest love story from start to finish. The devil uses Legalism, Traditionalism and Religion to complicate New Covenant Christianity! It cannot be over emphasized, True Christianity is about relationship with Jesus! All spiritual maturity is directly related to growth in relationship.

Growing in intimacy with God is absolutely personal. God uses various methods and different ministries to impact our lives with spiritual knowledge. God pours His love into our hearts but we must personally respond to the Lord. We must, personally, allow ourselves to be drawn closer and closer to the heart of God. We must allow God's Word to work. We must desire relationship. How well do we know the Lord. I'm not talking about information here. I'm not talking about how many years of Bible education we have. I'm talking about how close are we living to the heart of God. How "in love" with the Lord are we? There is a growing in love! There is a maturing love that has the power to balance off any terror of God's severity. This is more based on intimacy than information. This is a heart issue! This is something between an individual and the Creator. The intimacy of this kind of relationship with God is similar to having a "sacred, holy bedroom". It is in this private holy place that pure spiritual love is exchanged. In this kind of intimacy there is no room for terror. Oh, there's always deep healthy respect for God severity! This balanced with holy love results in reverence for God. I see reverence for God as that holy ground on which to enjoy the fullness of God in Christ where I know God is capable of dealing with me severely but because of our genuine pure love for each other He will never harm me.

1Jn.4:17 ¶ And as we live in God, our love grows more perfect. So we will not be afraid on the day of judgment, but we can face him with confidence because we are like Christ here in this world. ¹⁸ Such love has no fear because perfect love expels all fear. If we are afraid, it is for fear of judgment, and this shows that his love has not been perfected in us.

The power of an intimate relationship with God with God is evident by the lack of terror one has when confronted with the truth of future judgment! Are we afraid of Christ's return? Does the thought of meeting up with Jesus face to face bring terror to my heart? Intimacy of relationship produces an assurance and confidence that is unshakable. Why? Because there is no such thing as an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ while there is "practicing sin" in my life. Intimacy with Jesus means life spent in the light! It means a life of separation from sin! There's an inseparable oneness that is assured by the power of God. Living close to the heart of God, assures that we are living a life of obedience to His Word. We have nothing to fear! It is well, It is well with my soul.

Does living in close relationship with the Lord mean I'll never sin? No it 'doesn't but it sure goes a long way to limiting how often one is required to repent. It goes an awful long way to making sure that we keep very short accounts with God. When sin is revealed in our lives we quickly repent and turn from it. The last thing we want to do is to put our love relationship with Jesus in jeopardy! The most valued thing we have during our earthly pilgrimage is this love relationship with the Lord. Why would I risk losing this just to flirt with sin? Is there anything this world has to offer that supersedes being loved by God? When asked, "What did you do with your life while on earth?" There can be no greater answer to that question than, "I spent my days loving God and being loved by God".

CAUTIOUS LIVING:

One might ask, "What is our greatest Spiritual need at present?" The Church in Canada desperately needs a genuine Holy Spirit revival. In general we have all but lost our fear of God! A very dangerous attitude has surfaced! "We'll sin now and get forgiveness later!" This attitude does not exist in the intimacy of a sincere love relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ but we must face the facts that at present much of Christianity per say is religion, not relationship! This is the common state of spiritual affairs that has preceded every revival or spiritual awakening!

Carelessness with the things of God is dangerous. It not only grieves the heart of God it abuses His grace and puts one in a very precarious situation! We need to see the seriousness of this! Here's what Hebrews chapter ten has to say. [Heb.10:26-31](#) - Dear friends, if we deliberately continue sinning after we have received a full knowledge of the truth, there is no other sacrifice that will cover these sins. ²⁷ There will be nothing to look forward to but the terrible expectation of God's judgment and the raging fire that will consume his enemies. ²⁸ Anyone who refused to obey the law of Moses was put to death without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. ²⁹ Think how much more terrible the punishment will be for those who have trampled on the Son of God and have treated the blood of the covenant as if it were common and unholy. Such people have insulted and enraged the Holy Spirit who brings God's mercy to his people. ³⁰ For we know the one who said, "I will take vengeance. I will repay those who deserve it." He also said, **"The Lord will judge his own people."** ³¹ **It is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the living God.**

The point to notice here is that, "God will judge His own people". These verses are not referring to the spiritually ignorant! This is talking about people who know the truth and yet choose to act contrary to God's will. It's very common to find this in the Church today. Ask the question, "Don't you realize that what you are doing is against the will of God?", and the response will often be, "Yes, but"! And then they go on to give the reason for their disobedience. After all we're only human you know. God understands and any who we have a special relationship together! WOW! We have to base our relationship with Christ on the Word of God, the revealed will of God. If our actions do not line up with the Scriptures then we need to change. We need to repent of our sinful ways and seek God for His strength and courage to do things His way!

Presently we have a great spiritual need for a fresh revelation of Jesus' suffering and death on the cross! We need to understand with the heart what our salvation cost Christ. Along with that it certainly would hurt to have a greater revelation of who this Jesus really is. Who was it that suffered bled and died on the cross to redeem my sin sick soul? Who was it that was beaten so severely that He was no longer recognizable. [Isa. 52:14](#) - Many were amazed when they saw him-beaten and bloodied, so disfigured one would scarcely know he was a person. Is your heart hearing what God is saying here? Jesus was beaten so severely one would scarcely know He was a person! And who was this Jesus, who hung on that cruel Roman cross? Was He just another prophet, a good man, a morally excellent person? Who was it that took our sin upon Himself and died in our place? Who was it that faced the righteous judgment of God?

[Heb.1:1-9](#) ¶ Long ago God spoke many times and in many ways to our ancestors through the prophets. ² But now in these final days, he has spoken to us through his Son. God promised everything to the Son as an inheritance, and through the Son he made the universe and everything in it. ³ The Son reflects God's own glory, and everything about him represents God exactly. He sustains the universe by the mighty power of his command. After he died to cleanse us from the stain of sin, he sat down in the place of honor at the right hand of the majestic God of heaven. ⁴ ¶ This shows that God's Son is far greater than the angels, just as the name God gave him is far greater than their names. ⁵ For God never said to any angel what he said to Jesus: "You are my Son. Today I have become your Father." And again God said, "I will be his Father, and he will be my Son." ⁶ And then, when he presented his honored Son to the world, God said, "Let all the angels of God worship him." ⁷ God calls his angels "messengers swift as the wind, and servants made of flaming fire." ⁸ But to his Son he says, "Your throne, O God, endures forever and ever. Your royal power is expressed in righteousness. ⁹ You love what is right and hate what is wrong. Therefore God, your God, has anointed you, pouring out the oil of joy on you more than on anyone else."

Jesus is not just another person, nor is He some second rate deity! This is the "Only begotten Son of the Father"! This is the Creator and Sustainer of all human life! What Jesus did for the

humanity on the cross, only God could do! The perfect sinless Lamb of God! We need to see clearly that Jesus 'didn't do this for Himself! He did it for us! How do thank Him for this for this great personal sacrifice? Do we choose to abuse God's love and grace or do we choose to live in obedience to His Word? Will we choose to lay down our lives to honor the King of Kings?

What value do we place on the person of Jesus? What value do we put on His sacrificial death? Is He worth honouring? Is what He did for us worthy of our gratitude? How do we best show our sincere love and appreciation? By choosing to obey at all costs!

1 P. 1:14 - Obey God because you are his children. Don't slip back into your old ways of doing evil; you didn't know any better then. ¹⁵ But now you must be holy in everything you do, just as God-who chose you to be his children-is holy. ¹⁶ For he himself has said, "You must be holy because I am holy." ¹⁷ And remember that **the heavenly Father to whom you pray has no favorites when he judges**. He will judge or reward you according to what you do. So **you must live in reverent fear of him during your time as foreigners here on earth**. ¹⁸ For you know that God paid a ransom to save you from the empty life you inherited from your ancestors. And the ransom he paid was not mere gold or silver. ¹⁹ He paid for you with the precious lifeblood of Christ, the sinless, spotless Lamb of God. ²⁰ God chose him for this purpose long before the world began, but now in these final days, he was sent to the earth for all to see. And he did this for you.

CONCLUSION:

It is by the fear of God that people depart from evil. To live free from sinning is the present vision of God for all His people. This the reason Jesus died! Jesus didn't just die so that we could escape the penalty of sin! He died so that we could escape the power of sin. So that we could experience the blessing of living as He did while here on earth. It was the inspired and anointed Apostle John who wrote, "**Those who say they live in God should live their lives as Christ did.**" (1Jn. 2:6) A deep reverence and fear of God will go along way in helping us achieve this! God bless you as you choose to honor the Lord through your life style in our generation.