

DOCTRINE OF FEAR

I. Introduction:

- A. Fear can be expressed in the form of sin fear or righteous fear when directed towards God, “*Fear of the Lord*” (often called sanctified or legitimate fear).
- B. This doctrine delineates the two denoting that which constitutes sin fear from righteous fear.

II. Vocabulary:

A. Hebrew words that express fear:

1. מֹרָא – mora; fear, terror, respect, reverence, who is to be feared.
2. יָרָא – yare; afraid, awesome, awesome acts, frightened, cautious, dismayed, terrifying, stand in awe, revere.
3. יִרְאָה – yir-ah; fear, awesome, reverence.
4. פָּחַד – pachad; dread, awe, disaster, fear, panic.
5. גִּירָא – gur; afraid, fear, dreaded, stand in awe.
6. אֵימָה – eymah; terror, dread, fear, fearsome.

B. Greek:

1. φοβέω – phobew; verb; to put to flight, to terrify, frighten, afraid, fear, filled with awe, respect.
2. φόβος – phobos; noun; fear, dread, terror, intimidation, respect, reverence, sense of awe.
3. ἀφόβως – aphobos; adverb as a neg. reference; without fear, without cause to be afraid.
4. ἐντρομος – entromos; terrified, to shake or tremble with fear.

III. Sin fear:

- A. Sin fear is not just a random feeling or emotion; it is a sin and it is prohibited by the Word of God.
- B. It is a mental attitude sin (MAS). Psa.4:4, “*tremble/stand in awe and do not sin*”.
- C. It can manifest itself overtly having a direct impact and influence in one’s thinking, speech and actions.
- D. It is a characteristic of unbelievers all whom exist in the sphere of spiritual death. Gen.3:7-10 cp. Heb.2:14,15; Rev.21:8
- E. Fear is a sign of national and personal reversionism. 1Sam.17:11,24; 18:12,29; 28:20 cp. Mat.8:26
- F. Fear neutralizes the believer in the Angelic Conflict; it is a symptom of maladjustment to BD and is not to be part of the believer’s MA.
- G. The word fear occurs some 390x in our English Bible and many of these verses contain commands for believers to stop being afraid. Gen.15:1; Exo.14:13,14; Deu.31:8; Isa.41:10; Mat.14:22-27; Luk.5:10
- H. Many times believers fail to receive the blessings that God wants to provide because they are afraid to move forward by making the proper

- application.
- I.** Fear is failure to apply doctrine, failure to believe the promises of God, failure to enter the faith-rest life. Num.13:1-14:31; Heb.3:12-4:13
 - J.** Mental attitude fear often leads to other mental attitude sins, sins of the tongue, or overt sins.
 - 1.** Operation patsy, blaming others. Gen.3:8-12
 - 2.** Lying. Gen.18:15; 26:7
 - 3.** Complaining, blasphemy. Exo.14:9-13
 - 4.** Rebellion against God. Num.13:25-14:9
 - 5.** Mental anguish, depression. Num.14:1
 - 6.** Physical violence, murder. Num.14:10
 - 7.** Rejecting or spurning God. Num.14:11
 - 8.** Partiality in judgment. Deu.1:17
 - K.** It is a fact of life that fear neutralizes believers in the Angelic Conflict, figuratively paralyzing them from making the correct applications. Ex.: Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, both prominent members of the Sanhedrin that refrained from making any notable defense on behalf of Jesus during the murder plot, trial and crucifixion, due to sin fear. Joh.19:38-39 cp. Joh.3:1ff
- IV.** Some things that believers are not to fear:
- A.** We are not to fear for our living grace provision. Mat.6:25,26
 - B.** Death. Mat.10:26-31; Psa.23:4
 - C.** Persecution. Mat.10:26-31; Heb.13:6; Rev.2:10
 - D.** We are not to fear the intimidation of human viewpoint. Gal.2:11-14, Peter's misapplication and venture into legalism came about because he was afraid of the Judaizers. On the other hand, Paul attacked the situation head on; 1Pet.3:13-15
 - E.** Sudden danger. Pro.3:25-26
 - F.** War, depression, famine, wild beasts, verbal maligning (the scourge of the tongue), loss. Job 5:17-24; Luk.21:9; Psa.27:3
 - G.** We are not to fear evil tidings (these things are the counterattack of evil against the mature believer). Psa.112:1-10 esp. vss.7-8
- V.** Righteous fear is seen in the expression "fear of the Lord" that does not indicate sinful fear.
- A.** It is a synonym for:
 - 1.** Positive volition (+V) at God consciousness and gospel hearing. Act.10:34-35
 - 2.** Positive volition to Bible doctrine. Pro.1:7; 15:33
 - 3.** Positive volition at point of application of Bible doctrine. Psa.112:1 cp. vss.4,5,9 that indicate application; Psa.119:63 that stresses both application and making your associations with those that are also +V.
 - B.** Those that operate on negative volition (-V) manifest a hatred for Bible doctrine. Pro.1:29
 - C.** Fear of the Lord simply put is occupation with Christ. Psa.119:38
 - D.** Righteous fear can be realized apart from an emotional response.

- E. That the fear of God initiates the seeking of God in understanding of His plan (Pro.1:7), it ignites volition placing one in the category as a potential seeker. Ex. the crew with Jonah aboard the ship; Jon.1:16
- VI.** Characteristics of "the fear of the Lord" (or how you can evaluate yourself and others concerning positive volition, despite any rhetoric that may be put forth on the subject):
- A. The believer that demonstrates the fear of the Lord is operating in the sphere of that which is "clean" versus false forms of attempting to gain the approbation of God, such as emotions, making ritual reality, legalism, etc. Ps.19:9
 - B. The believer that demonstrates the fear of the Lord recognizes and implements the Doctrine of the Importance of Bible Doctrine. Job 28:28; Ps.111:10; Pro.9:10
 - C. The believer that does not show up for face to face teaching on a consistent basis, demonstrates -V no matter how they or others may protest to the contrary and do not manifest fully the fear of God.
 - D. The believer that demonstrates the fear of the Lord is teachable; individuals that are -V despise instruction and are designated "fools" by God. Pro.1:7-33; Pro.15:31-33, teach-ability is a manifestation of true humility.
 - E. The believer who demonstrates the fear of the Lord will have strong confidence. Pro.14:26
 - F. The positive believer demonstrates the fear of the Lord through separation from, and hatred for, evil. Pro.3:7; 8:13; 16:6; 2Cor.6:14-18
 - G. The positive believer is living in the fear of the Lord and does not envy reversionists. Pro.23:17-23
 - H. The one that has the fear of the Lord demonstrates contentment with what he has (acclimation to one's niche). Pro.15:16,17 cp. Phi.4:10-13
- VII.** Some blessings associated with the fear of the Lord. Ps.115:13
- A. Prolonged life. Pro.10:27; 14:27
 - B. The details of life. Pro.22:4
 - C. Deliverance. Ps.34:4-7; 33:18-22
 - D. Every legitimate desire in accordance with God's will, spiritual matriculation and maximization of Divine good production. Ps.145:19
 - E. Bible doctrine itself is the greatest blessing that comes to those who are +V. Ps.25:12-14 cp. Pro.3:13-15
- VIII.** Occupation with Christ neutralizes fear; false doctrine enslaves to fear:
- A. Ps.56:3 *"What time I am afraid I will put my trust in you."* Cp. vs.11
 - B. Legalism is a yoke of slavery that promotes fear. Gal.5:1 cp. Rom.8:15
 - C. The soul with doctrine is not characterized by fear (timidity). 2Tim.1:7
 - D. Divine love expresses one's occupation with Christ and is the antidote to sin fear. 1Joh.4:18 (vs.17 establishes context), *"There is no fear in*

love (occupation with Christ by being in FHS and application of BD); *but perfect love* (mark of maturity) *casts out fear, because fear involves punishment* (DD and loss of SG₃), *and the one who fears is not perfected in love* (sin fear counters Divine love, while righteous fear is the losing of SG₃).

- IX.** Faith-rest is the MA prescription to sin fear. Psa.27:1; 56:3; Isa.41:10-13
- X.** Legitimate or sanctified fear is defined in Scripture; all other classifications of fear are sinful.
- A.** Fear of God. Ecc.12:13-14
- B.** We are to have a legitimate fear of our authorities. Pro.24:21; 1Pet.2:13-17 cp. Rom.13:1-7 that shows sanctified fear of civil authorities is manifest in obedience to the law of the land and that such obedience promotes the absence of sinful fear.
- C.** The believer should fear failure to reach spiritual maturity (Ph₂ sanctification). Phi.2:12; Heb.4:1
- D.** The believer should fear failure of completing a finished course. 1Pet.1:17
- E.** Paul's statement in Gal.4:11 demonstrates the sanctified (non-sinful) fear of a pastor when his congregation is failing to maintain spiritual momentum.

"There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love."

1 Joh.4:18

"Do not fear, for I am with you; Do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, Surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand."

Isa.41:10