

Section: Doctrine of God

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November 16, 2022

**Q17. What does it mean to fear God?**

For the saved, fearing God is not a fear of His wrath; rather, it is an awe—a reverence—for the holiness and majesty of God. It is also a humbleness and reasonable trembling towards God’s seriousness and power.

* **Introduction**

**Proverbs 14:27** The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, that one may turn away from the snares of death.

**Proverbs 10:27** The fear of the Lord prolongs life, but the years of the wicked will be short.

**Proverbs 22:4** The reward for humility and fear of the Lord is riches and honor and life.

* **For the Saved**

**John Gill**: “[The fear of God] is not meant a fear of God's wrath, of hell and damnation; nor a fearful distrust of his presence, power, providence, and grace; much less an hypocritical fear; but a reverential affection for God, and which is peculiar to the children of God, which springs from a sense of divine goodness, is attended with holiness of heart and life, is consistent with faith, even full assurance of it, and with spiritual joy in its highest degree; it stands opposed to pride and haughtiness, and is a blessing of the covenant of grace: now this is not to be found in unregenerate men, for this springs from grace, and not nature, and is only implanted in the heart in conversion; it appears from the whole life and conversation of unconverted men, that the fear of God is not in their hearts, nor before their eyes.”

**Romans 3:18** “There is no fear of God before their eyes.”

**Psalm 14:1a** The fool says in his heart, "There is no God."

**Matthew 10:28** “And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.”

**Exodus 20:18-20** Now when all the people saw the thunder and the flashes of lightning and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, the people were afraid and trembled, and they stood far off and said to Moses, "You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, lest we die." Moses said to the people, "Do not fear, for God has come to test you, that the fear of him may be before you, that you may not sin."

**Deuteronomy 5:23-29**

* **Not A Fear of His Wrath**

**Romans 5:9** Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.

**1 Thessalonians 5:9** For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ

* **Awe and Reverence for the Holiness and Majesty of God**

**Hebrews 12:28-29** Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire.

**Isaiah 6:1-5** In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!" And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke. And I said: "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!"

**Mark 4:41** And they were filled with great fear and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

* **Humbleness and Trembling**

**Exodus 20:18** Now when all the people saw the thunder and the flashes of lightning and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, the people were afraid and trembled, and they stood far off

**Philippians 2:12** Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling

**Psalm 96:9** Worship the Lord in the splendor of holiness; tremble before him, all the earth!

* **Application**
* **It makes us wise**

**Proverbs 9:10** The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight.

This is true wisdom—doing what God says even when my flesh or my personal experience tells me otherwise.

* **It humbles us**

**Proverbs 8:13** The fear of the Lord is hatred of evil. Pride and arrogance and the way of evil and perverted speech I hate.

It is not possible for us to have a right fear of God and be governed by pride at the same time.

* **It emboldens us**

**Proverbs 14:26** In the fear of the Lord one has strong confidence, and his children will have a refuge.

**Ecclesiastes 12:13** The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.