

Fear of God

Introduction:

As I considered what to speak on today, I thought about what would be the most important exhortation I could give to you. It would be to grow in the Lord.

Paul prays for the Colossians in Col. 1:9-10 [KJV] that they would "...*be filled...*"

In other words Paul wanted them to grow in their knowledge of God, not merely in facts about God but more importantly in their experience with Him.

It is every pastor's concern that some in the congregation only know about the Lord but do not know the Lord God personally.

This message is actually the first in a series of messages that are designed to help us do just that, to understand and apply practical theology.

What I want to do today is show us that God has to be the basis of our worldview.

It necessarily starts with the Fear of God. The fear of God is the beginning of knowledge.

What is the Fear of God? [Job 42:1-6]

I want to take a look at Job's response to see how that reveals the fear of God.

It is a recognition of His greatness [v. 2]

It is an admission of the truth of His sentence against us [vv. 3-4]

It results in the diminishing of ourselves in our own esteem. [vv. 5-6]

If I were to define it in my own terms I would say that it is our natural reaction to the honest realization of Who and what God is and who and what we are.

It goes way beyond mere reverential awe.

This is the initial reaction that we must have before God, real trembling fear of the power, magnificence and sovereign majesty of God. Fear that will make us crumble into a corner and hide.

What Does it Do For Us? [Prov. 1:7, Prov. 9:10, Prov. 8:13]

The fear of the Lord forms the basis for all real knowledge.

Here we are talking about real facts, real science, real history, real knowledge about us as humans and the world around us.

Most importantly we can know the truth about God Himself and about ourselves, because that knowledge humbles us to accept His testimony of us, which we saw above.

The fear of God also forms the basis for all wisdom. That is, the real application of the knowledge you have gained through observation.

Again this opens up the practical application of the knowledge of God which is true religion. We are no longer subject to the conjecture of men we know true wisdom.

The fear of God is the only adequate basis for all morality.

As you read through the opening chapters of Proverbs you are met with the fact that real knowledge and wisdom reveal themselves in godly morality.

The knowledge of the true God and His character gives you something upon which to build morality.

One of the reasons our world is in the moral turmoil it is in is because people (word "they" changed to people) have rejected God and His character as the only basis for morality, and are left with moral relativism: "What is right for you may not be right for me."

If man is nothing but a very complex pile of molecules, if life is nothing more than electro-chemical impulses in the brain, if we are no more than fortuitous accidents then what is wrong with murder? If someone doesn't suit my needs, get rid of them. Abortion, assisted suicide, genocide are the logical fruit.

If the chief end of man is to enjoy life then if someone wants to be a homosexual, let them be. They enjoy it. If someone wants to be a pedophile, let them. If someone wants to be a drug addict, let them.

The fear of God is the only basis on which true love for God can develop.

The fear of God alone keeps our sinful, greedy hearts from seeking to take advantage of the great goodness and love God gives.

Lessons for our Lives:

1. The Basis for all knowledge must be God. Knowing He exists, that He is Creator and sustainer of everything puts everything that we observe in His universe into proper perspective and relationship everything else.
2. Whoever does not hold to the above standard, no matter how educated or knowledgeable about facts of the universe, they do not rightly understand the universe.
3. Once we know facts and can place the facts into a framework so that they relate to each other properly and back to God.
4. The fear of God is also the only basis for morality. Only the Bible believer has a logical basis for saying this is right and that is wrong.
5. Beyond that, With the fear of God as the basis it forever gets rid of the idea that God could not cast into hell those who reject Him.