

Proverbs on Fear

Some of Christ's most often repeated words (13 times) in the Gospel were "Fear not". How do we understand this in light of a book based upon 'the fear of the Lord'? Does fear have any place in the life of a believer?

Fear is not a negative, sinful emotion in itself. Fear is simply the emotion a creature feels when threatened. A healthy sense of respect (and even terror) is right before the God of the Universe (Matthew 10:28) What we feel fear about, and how we respond makes it sinful or normal. To fear a legitimate threat is healthy. But to fear 'without hope' when a Very Present Help is there is to insult His ability and love. To fear something more than God is to demote God and idolize our fear.

What are the common fears of man?

- a) Sudden terror 3:25
- b) The wicked fear other men (29:25),
- c) The seeming chaos of life (28:5)
- d) Death itself (14:32)
- e) Imaginary, hypothetical fears (28:1)

Fear comes from the inability to control threats. If threats are completely under our control, then we feel little fear. However, when this apparent insulation from all threats is done without dependence on the Lord, God is not pleased, for it is another way man seeks to resist a world which is supposed to drive us to God.

Fear displays where your dependence is.

Fear displays where your priorities are.

Fear that disbelieves the promises of God will always result in a retreat – which displeases God (Hebrews 10:39).

The righteous fear God, and rest in His absolute control, and his faithful lovingkindness over life.

God's greatness

God plans and directs your life 16:9, 19:21, Psalm 37:23

Nothing happens by chance or by accident (16:33)

Even the wicked end up fulfilling His plans (16:4)

God controls human history (21:1; Eccl 7:13)

No one is wiser than God, and His sovereign rule cannot be comprehended (21:30; 20:24)

God's goodness

God preserves the way of His saints (2:8)

God recompenses His people (3:9-11)

God blesses the home of the righteous (Prov 3:32)

God gives ultimate deliverance to His own 24:16, 28:18

The correct responses to this sovereignty are:

- 1) Prayer (Proverbs 16:3, Philippians 4:6)
- 2) Continual Acknowledgement (Proverbs 3:5-6)
- 3) Trust & Surrender (Proverbs 3:5)
- 4) Making adequate plans, while leaving the end result to God (Proverbs 14:15; 21:31)
- 5) Do not focus on the wickedness of the wicked (Proverbs 23:17-18, Psalm 73)
- 6) Make God's glory your highest aim and goal in life (Proverbs 18:10)
- 7) Being courageous (2 Timothy 2:1; 1:7) Proverbs associates courage with the righteous, and fear with the wicked. (28:1, 3:24-26). Pushing past the threats (unknown, real & imagined) to obey God glorifies Him as our Strong Tower.