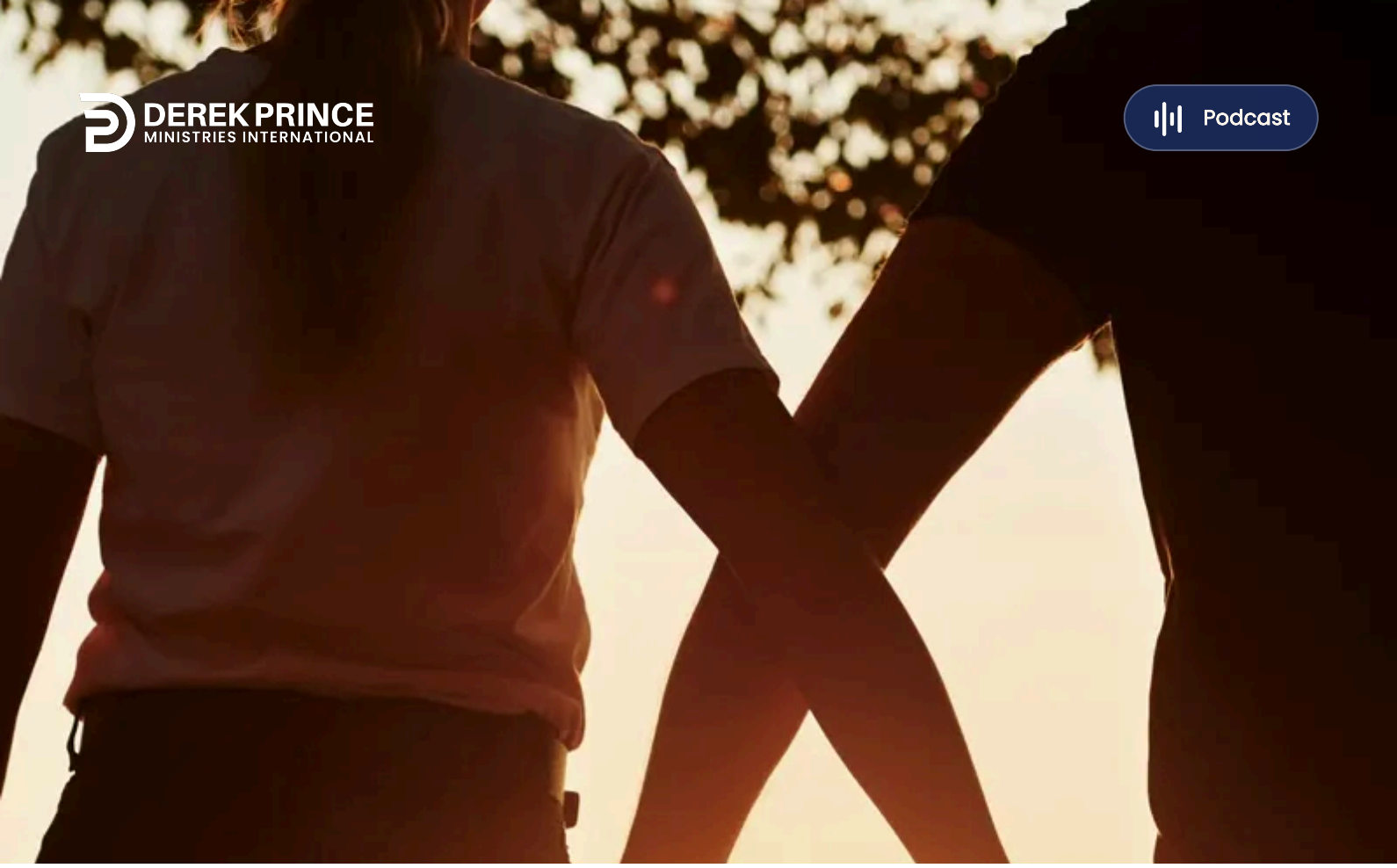

DEREK PRINCE
MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL

Podcast

The Pattern Of Jesus



Part 3/5

The Fear of the Lord
By Derek Prince

In my talk yesterday I discussed certain kinds of fear which we commonly experience but which are not the fear of the Lord. The fear of the Lord is beneficial and pleasing to God. But these other forms of fear are unpleasant and often harmful.

I mentioned specifically four other kinds of fear. First, what I call "natural fear," the fear you get on the roller coaster or the fear of thunder and lightning. I think we've all experienced fear like that. The second one I call "demonic fear," the mark of that is that it's unnatural, unreasonable, obsessive, enslaving. Perhaps the key word is "tormenting." I mentioned such things as claustrophobia and unreasoning fear of animals and many different kinds of fear. The third kind, religious fear, what I call "religious conformity," not motivated by genuine love of God. In fact, the people that have that kind of fear, their hearts are far from the Lord. And fourthly, fear of man, a fear that makes man seem bigger than God. Where you have to choose between man's opinion and God's opinion, you're swayed by man's opinion. That's the fear of man and it leads to disobeying God. One sure thing about the fear of the Lord is it never leads to disobeying God.

Well, in my talk today I'm going to return to the positive kind of fear, the fear of the Lord. And I'm going to explain how the fear of the Lord was manifested in the life of Jesus Himself and how it should be manifested also in our lives. I want to turn, first of all, to a prophetic preview of the Messiah found in Isaiah 11:1–3. Almost all Scripture commentators agree that this is a preview of the Messiah.

> "A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; and from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and of power, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; and he will delight in the fear of the Lord..."

For that last phrase, the Jerusalem Bible says, "The fear of Yahweh"—that's their version of "the Lord"—"the fear of the Lord is his breath."

To understand this passage fully, I believe we need to compare it with Revelation 5:6, where John the Revelator, speaking of his vision of heaven, says this:

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> "Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth."

And the alternative translation says, "which are the sevenfold spirit of God." So we see that the Spirit of God has seven primary forms or manifestations and these are the forms that are mentioned here in this prophecy of the Messiah which was fulfilled in Jesus.

Let's look at those seven forms of the Spirit of God—again, all of which rested on Jesus. First, the Spirit of the Lord, that's the Spirit that speaks in the first person as God. Now, the remaining six forms are mentioned in couples. The spirit of wisdom and the spirit of understanding. The next couple: the spirit of counsel and the spirit of power. The third couple: the spirit of knowledge and the spirit of the fear of the Lord.

You know, my reaction as I read and think about it is this: how dangerous to have knowledge without the fear of the Lord. How many people have been destroyed by knowledge because it wasn't combined with the fear of the Lord?

Now, the prophecy of Isaiah particularly focuses on that last aspect and says, "He will delight in the fear of the Lord." Or, "The fear of the Lord is his breath." We need to take this to heart that when this revelation is given of Jesus as the Messiah and the Holy Spirit coming upon him, though all seven forms of the Holy Spirit are specified, the particular form that is emphasized is the form of the Spirit of the fear of the Lord. How important that makes it!

Let's see briefly how this was fulfilled in the life of Jesus. In Hebrews 5:7, the writer of Hebrews is speaking about the days of Jesus in his flesh in his earthly ministry and he says this:

> "Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared..."

Notice what gave Jesus always access to the Father, why were his prayers always heard? Because of the fear of the Lord. That's what commended him in a unique way to the Father. An alternative translation to that verse says:

> "During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions, with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission."

That's what we're talking about. Reverent submission. Complete yielding to the will of God. Of course, this is expressed in the earthly life of Jesus primarily or chiefly at Gethsemane. Do you remember when he had to pray and yield his will to the will of the Father? We read this in Matthew 26:39:

> "Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."

And again in verse 42:

> "He went away a second time and prayed, My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done."

You see, that's the fear of the Lord. Never do we assert our will against the will of God. Never do we put anything else in our lives on a level with God. It's God, unique, supreme, first and foremost. That's the particular attitude of heart that was manifested always in the life of Jesus. That's the attitude of heart that God is looking for in the men and women that he particularly wants to bless and to strengthen.

Let me make this observation: If Jesus needed the fear of the Lord, how much more do you and I need it?

Now, I want to speak about the fear of the Lord in the life of God's people, in us as believers. I want to say, first of all, that God expects both honor and fear from his people. Malachi 1:6, God said to his people:

> "A son honors his father, and a servant his master. Then if I am a father, where is my

> honor? And if I am a master, where is my respect?"

But, the word that's translated "respect" is literally the word for fear. So, there's a kind of fear that God requires from his people and if we do not give it to him, we're lacking in that attitude toward God.

And then we read an account of the early church in Acts 9:31, at a time when God's favor and blessing was upon the church. This is what it says:

> "So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria enjoyed peace, being built up; and going on in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it continued to increase."

I'm deeply impressed by that combination: the fear of the Lord and the comfort of the Holy Spirit. That's what brought growth in the church. You see, we easily become one-sided. We've received the blessing of the Holy Spirit, we know a new kind of liberty and joy and power but we don't combine it with the fear of the Lord, and we get one- sided and there's a lack of real holiness and reverence and depth in our spiritual life. Let's make a resolution that we'll go on in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit.

And then the fear of the Lord is needed to motivate us rightly in our attitude toward one another. In Ephesians 5, Paul is speaking about what it means to be filled with the Spirit and he goes on to say that it will be expressed in our relationship to one another. So he says in verse 21:

> "...be subject to one another in the fear of Christ."

Then the next verse, of course, speaks about wives being subject to their husbands. I remember talking to a pastor once, a well known, successful pastor. He described how he and his wife were having what he described as "a church fight" in their bedroom. And he was saying, "You don't respect me, you don't submit to me." And she was saying, "Well, I'm not sure that I'm prepared to." And he said, "Why not?" And she said, "Well, you don't have too good a record!" And he said they were just about to have a real quarrel and it was like a cold wind blew into their bedroom and reminded them submitting to one another in the fear of God, reminding them that it wasn't their choice or decision, it was the motivation of the fear of God. They both dropped to their knees on either side of the bed and repented.

Why should we fear? Let me give you one, tremendous reason for us as Christians. 1 Peter 1:17–19:

> "And if you address as Father the one who impartially judges according to each man's word, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay upon earth; knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ."

You see, that's one great motivation for always living in the fear of the Lord, to think of the price that God had to pay for our redemption. May it never be that we grieve him or that we ever indicate that we don't appreciate the price that God paid.

Let me read, in closing, a verse from Psalm 2:11:

> "Worship the Lord with reverence, and rejoice with trembling."

Another translation says "with fear." You see, that's the combination. It's not one or the other. It's rejoicing with trembling. Whenever we get to just one or the other we get one-sided. When it's all just rejoicing or when it's all just trembling, we're one-sided. We need the fear of the Lord to keep up in spiritual balance.

Our time is up for today but I'll be back with you tomorrow at this time. Tomorrow I'll continue with this theme of the fear of the Lord. I'll be describing the special blessings we receive as we cultivate the fear of the Lord in our lives.

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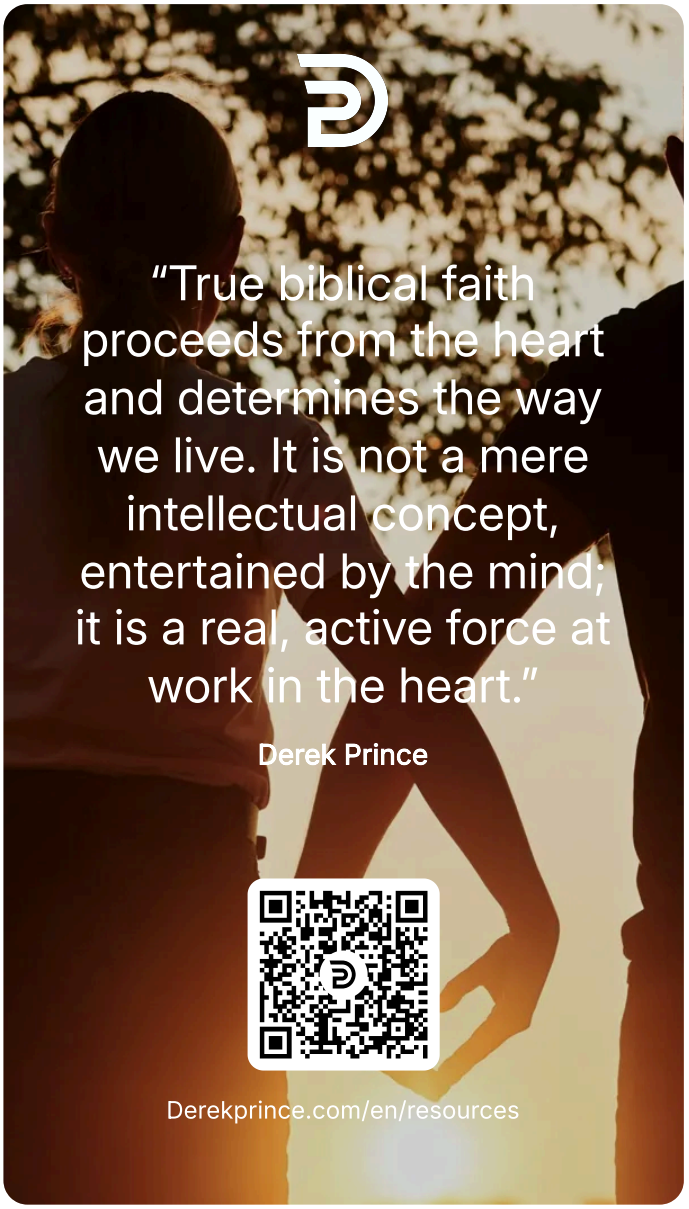
Podcast

Transcript: RP-R039-103-ENG
Last Updated: 28 Sept 2026
Website: Derekprince.com/en/resources



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