

# The Blessings That Follow



Part 4/5

## The Fear of the Lord
By Derek Prince

Yesterday we looked that prophetic preview of Jesus as the Messiah in Isaiah 11:2–3, where it says this:

> "And the Spirit of the Lord will rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding; the spirit of counsel and strength; the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, and he will delight in the fear of the Lord."

We see there the sevenfold fullness of the Holy Spirit, the seven aspects of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of the Lord, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and strength, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. And the particular aspect which Isaiah emphasizes in that prophecy is the last one, that's the only one that there's any additional comment on. It says "He [the Messiah, Jesus] will delight in the fear of the Lord." This was the seventh and culminating form of the fullness of the Holy Spirit manifested in Jesus.

Now, the New Testament makes it clear that the Holy Spirit will, likewise, impart the same fear of the Lord to all believers whom he conforms to the image of Jesus. We cannot really claim to be conformed to the image of Jesus if this aspect of the Holy Spirit, the fear of the Lord, is not in us. This will be manifested both in the corporate life of the church and in the individual life of each believer. We saw examples of that yesterday.

Today I'm going to go on to speak about the special blessing we receive as we cultivate the fear of the Lord in our lives. I don't know of any aspect of the spiritual life which carries with it more precious and wonderful blessings than the fear of the Lord. This is something that I've meditated in over many years. I just pray that I'll be able to share it with you in such a way that you'll desire what I'm talking about.

So we're going to look at some of the blessings which are directly associated in Scripture with the fear of the Lord. The first blessing is wisdom and this is emphasized again and again in the Scripture. For instance, in Job 28:28:

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> "And to man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding."

So the essence of true wisdom is the fear of the Lord. And we notice, as we saw before, that there's never neutrality with the fear of the Lord. It demands that we depart from evil. We cannot compromise with evil and have the fear of the Lord. Then in Psalm 111:10:

> "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom..."

We cannot even start to have true wisdom until we have the fear of the Lord.

Proverbs 1:7:

> "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction."

The implication is clear that any one that lacks the fear of the Lord is a fool.

And in Proverbs 9:10:

> "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding."

We need to distinguish between wisdom and certain things that are sometimes confused with it like cleverness or education. It's possible to be clever but to be a fool. It's possible to be educated but be an educated fool. I was in educational work, teacher training in East Africa for five years. I discovered a tremendous hunger amongst the African people for education. But I had to remind them, at times, it's one thing to be educated, it's another thing to be wise. I actually told them, "An educated mind is a wonderful thing; it's like a sharp knife. But it can be used for good or evil." One man may use that sharp knife to cut up meat or bread for his family, another man may use an identical knife to kill his neighbor. There's no difference in the knife, it's the use that it's put to. Wisdom enables us to make the right use of education and wisdom is not to be found apart from the fear of the Lord.

Then, the fear of the Lord brings spiritual cleansing. Psalm 19:9:

> "The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever."

Notice that, there's never going to be an end to the fear of the Lord. It's going to go on forever and ever, not just through this life but through eternity. It endures forever. And it's clean. To me, the fear of the Lord is like an antiseptic; it keeps away that which is impure, that which is harmful. It kills the destructive, corrupting influences that surround us in the world today. The fear of the Lord is a clean fear, it's a pure fear, it produces moral and spiritual cleanliness.

Then, the fear of the Lord produces guidance, instruction and prosperity. Listen to that list: guidance, instruction, prosperity. Listen to Psalm 25:12–14:

> "Who is the man who fears the Lord? He will instruct him in the way he should choose. His soul will abide in prosperity, and his descendants will inherit the land. The secret of the Lord is for those who fear him, and he will make them know his covenant."

You see, a person that fears the Lord, God will teach him the way he should choose, his soul will abide in prosperity. And, even beyond that, to those that fear Him, the Lord will reveal the secrets of His covenant. You see, all the wonderful secrets of God, all His provisions for His people are locked up in His covenant. The whole Bible consists of two covenants, the New Covenant and the Old Covenant. Now, covenant is one of God's secrets and He doesn't reveal it except to those who fear Him. And so, if you don't have the fear of the Lord, you're like somebody on the outside looking in; you can see the demonstrations of God's power, you can see that God is at work, you can even experience God's working in your own life but the real secret of what's going on, the inner understanding, is withheld from you.

You see, people can be enrolled in any college, even in a theological college, go through all the grades, pass all the examinations, get the degree and never have been enrolled in God's school because God chooses His students on the basis of character. And the first thing He looks for in those whom He's going to teach is the fear of the Lord.

Let me read those words to you again.

> "Who is the man who fears the Lord? He will instruct him in the way he should choose."

Do you want to be taught by God? Do you want to share God's secrets? Do you want to know the innermost depths of His covenant? The real place of hiding of God's power and purposes? You must cultivate the fear of the Lord. The way is closed against those who have not cultivated the fear of the Lord. This is the password. This is the key that brings us into this inner relationship where we know the secrets of God's covenant. The next great blessing that flows from the fear of the Lord is a long and a good life. Actually, there are many passages in the Bible where good life is associated with the fear of the Lord. Let me read to you from Psalm 34:11–14:

> "Come, you children [God is speaking to His children] listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord. Who is the man who desires life, and loves length of days that he may see good? Keep your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking deceit. Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it."

And again in Proverbs 10:27, there's this promise:

> "The fear of the Lord prolongs life, but the years of the wicked will be shortened."

Let's go back to Psalm 24 for a moment.

> "Come, you children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord."

You see, the fear of the Lord has to be taught. God teaches it to His children if we're willing to be taught. I believe we also have a responsibility to teach the fear of the Lord to our children if we're parents. If we're pastors or spiritual leaders, I believe we have a responsibility to teach the fear of the Lord to the people of God. It is something that has to be taught. But what follows in its train? "Who is the man who desires life, loves length of days that he may see good?" Life, length of days, and good days. I remember my first wife often used to say, "What's the good of living a long life if it isn't a good life? It's just so many more years of misery." But God gave her both a long life and a good life. She was a woman in whom the fear of the Lord was one of her distinguishing characteristics. I want to tell you, this works.

As always, this psalm indicates that the fear of the Lord forbids any compromise with evil. It goes on to say, "Keep your tongue from evil, your lips from speaking deceit. Depart from evil, and do good." You cannot cultivate the fear of the Lord and compromise with evil.

Then, another tremendous blessing that flows from the fear of the Lord is deliverance from other fears. Proverbs 14:26–27:

> "In the fear of the Lord there is strong confidence, and his children will have refuge. The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, that one may avoid the snares of death."

Meditate on those words. "In the fear of the Lord there is strong confidence." You see, it doesn't make you a fearful person, it takes fearfulness away from you. When you cultivate the fear of the Lord, you're delivered from other fears. "You have strong confidence." You have a place of refuge. "The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, that one may avoid the snares of death." It's a pure fountain of clean water that proceeds direct from God, it brings life, it brings health, it brings peace, it brings prosperity, it brings assurance. I don't know of any single aspect of the spiritual life or moral character that carries with it the greater blessing than the fear of the Lord.

I want to suggest to you: Meditate on these Scriptures, make a note of them, read them through for yourself, ponder on them, and then say, "Lord, please teach me the fear of the Lord. I'll be a willing pupil."

All right. Our time is up for today. I'll be back with you again tomorrow at this time. Tomorrow I'll continue with this theme, "The Fear of the Lord." We've not yet come to the end of the precious and wonderful blessings that flow from the fear of the Lord.

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