

The Only Source of Wisdom



The Fear of the Lord (Part 5)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you as we draw near to the close of another week. Our theme this week has been the fear of the Lord. I trust you've found it helpful and also challenging.

Throughout this week I've been sharing with you on the fear of the Lord. I've explained that in its essence the fear of the Lord is the keeping of the first commandment as stated in Exodus 20 verse 3, where God says, "You shall have no other gods before Me" (NKJ). The fear of the Lord is obeying that commandment, it's giving God His place of unique preeminence. Not letting anything else in our lives ever come before God or on the same level with God. The man who keeps that commandment walks in the fear of the Lord.

We've also looked together at the fear of the Lord as it was demonstrated, first in the life of Jesus Himself, and then in the early church as it's described in the New Testament.

In Isaiah's prophetic picture of Jesus as the coming Messiah, he speaks about the sevenfold Spirit of God that will rest upon Him. The culminating aspect of the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of the fear of the Lord. And then the next verse says, "His delight is in the fear of the Lord." Out of all the seven aspects of the Holy Spirit, the one that is principally emphasized is the fear of the Lord. And we saw how it was the fear of the Lord that enabled Jesus, always, to pray a prayer that God the Father would accept and answer because He set aside His own will in favor of the Father's will. That's the fear of the Lord.

We looked at the fear of the Lord in the early church and we saw the balance between two things, the fear of the Lord and the comfort or encouragement of the Holy Spirit. And we saw that where these two things were combined, there were three important results. First of all, the churches had peace. Second, they were edified or built up. And third, they were multiplied, they grew in numbers.

Well, today we'll be looking at the fear of the Lord from yet another aspect as the only source of wisdom. I'm reading now from Job chapter 28, verses 20-28:

> "From where then does wisdom come? And where is the place of understanding? It is hidden from the eyes of all living, and concealed from the birds of the air. [Notice, wisdom is not found in the sensible world, in the world of the senses, in the natural world. Then it says:] Destruction and Death say. 'We have heard a report about it with out ears.' [It's somewhere in that world beyond destruction and death, in the eternal world. And then Job goes on to say:] God understands its way, And He knows its place. For He looks to the ends of the earth, And sees under the whole heavens, [God views the whole of the created universe.] To establish a weight for the wind, And mete out the waters by measure. [Everything in the universe is measured and appointed by God with exact proportions.] When He made a law for the rain, And a path for the thunderbolt, [Even the storms are under the control of divine wisdom.] Then He saw wisdom and declared it; He prepared it, indeed, He searched it out. And to man He said, `Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, And to depart from evil is understanding.'" (NKJ)

You see, God's wisdom is expressed in the entire universe. Everything in the universe expresses some aspect of God's wisdom. And that total wisdom of God is staggering. Our finite minds cannot comprehend it. But God says, "If you want access to My wisdom, if you want Me to begin to release My wisdom into your life, then there's one channel through which it can come to you, that is the fear of the Lord." The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom for man. That's the only way that man can attain to true wisdom is through the fear of the Lord. And is joined with living a life of righteousness. To depart from evil is understanding. It's very important to see that wisdom has a moral foundation.

Today there's an attitude, just be clever and you'll make your way through life. It doesn't matter what kind of character you have, it doesn't matter what kind of life you lead, just if you're smart, well-educated, if you're unscrupulous, you'll succeed. That's not true. Ultimately, it is not true. Wisdom has a moral foundation. It begins with the fear of the Lord and is expressed in understanding by departing from evil.

And then again in the book of psalms, Psalm 111:10, the psalmist says,

> "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom [the word translated 'beginning' can also mean 'the principle part', it's the basis and foundation of all wisdom.] A good understanding have all those who do His commandments." (NKJ)

Again, understanding is linked with obedience to the commandments of God. It has a moral aspect.

Wisdom is the primary thing. Out of wisdom proceeds understanding. Understanding in its original Hebrew form means insight into the real nature and essence of persons and situations. That's much more than cleverness. A clever person can be easily fooled, sometimes by other people. But a person with understanding sees into the very nature of the person he's dealing with or the very essence of the situation that he has to handle.

And then the book of Proverbs takes this yet further. Proverbs chapter 1, verse 7:

> "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, But fools despise wisdom and instruction." (NKJ)

Again, the same word that's translated "beginning with" means the principle part of the fear of the Lord is the principle part of knowledge. So notice out of the fear of the Lord there developed, first of all, wisdom; then understanding or insight; and then knowledge. But the writer of Proverbs goes on to say, "But fools despise wisdom and instruction." To despise instruction, to be proud, self-sufficient, arrogant, unwilling to accept correction, that is folly. And that automatically excludes true wisdom, and is the exact opposite of the fear of the Lord.

And then again in the book of Proverbs, chapter 9 and verse 10:

> "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom [the same statement again] And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding." (NKJ)

We see that out of the fear of the Lord comes a wisdom that enables us to relate to God's holiness. And as we relate to God's holiness, we move and live in that cleansing, sanctifying fear of the Lord that causes us to depart from evil and to keep the Lord's commandments.

We need to distinguish wisdom from what I would call "intellectual education." A lot of people do not see the difference. But let me say, and I think you will find it's very obvious when you meditate on it, it's possible to be highly-educated and be a fool. There are a lot of highly-educated fools around us today. In fact, I once remarked that most of the trouble in the world today is

caused by educated fools. If they weren't educated, they couldn't make nearly as much trouble. But being fools, they still make trouble.

Now wisdom, spoken of in the Scriptures, is different. There's a statement in Psalm 51, verse 6, made by David, which comes to the very heart of this matter. He's speaking to the Lord out of a broken, penitent heart and he says this:

> "Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts, And in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom." (NKJ)

God desires truth in the inward parts. That comes from the fear of the Lord. And when we have truth in the inward part, when we're sincere and upright and open with God, then it goes on to say, "...in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom." You see, wisdom is not in the intellect. It's not in the mind. Wisdom is in the hidden part of man, the spirit of man, the inner most depths of man. And that's where God wants us to cultivate the fear of the Lord that we may receive His wisdom.

The only channel to receive the wisdom of God is the fear of the Lord. There's no other way that God's wisdom can come into our lives but through the fear of the Lord. And that wisdom will not come primarily into our intellect, although it will illuminate our intellect. It will not be a substitute for education. It will not do for us what education will do. It is unique, it is something entirely on its own. It comes into the spirit and enables us to begin to see God's purposes; to see our life, to see the things around us in the light of divine purpose, divine counsel. Counsel is something that is very closely in Scripture with wisdom. When we have this kind of wisdom we receive God's counsel; we know how to act in different situations; we know how to relate to different people; we know how to help people.

There's another statement in the book of Ecclesiastes, "Wisdom is profitable to direct." Wisdom shows us the way to go. Wisdom steers us past the pitfalls and snares of life, its hidden dangers. But this wisdom is in the hidden part. It's in the innermost chamber of man's spirit. There's only one avenue to that hidden part in man. We cannot achieve it by intellectual education. We can open up to God and the channel through which God will impart His wisdom into the hidden part in you and me is the fear of the Lord. Ask God to open that channel up to you.

Our time is up for today. I'll be back with you again next week at this same time, Monday through Friday. Next week I'll continue with this theme: The Fear of the Lord. I'll be sharing with you on the almost unbelievable benefits and blessings we can experience through cultivating the fear of the Lord.

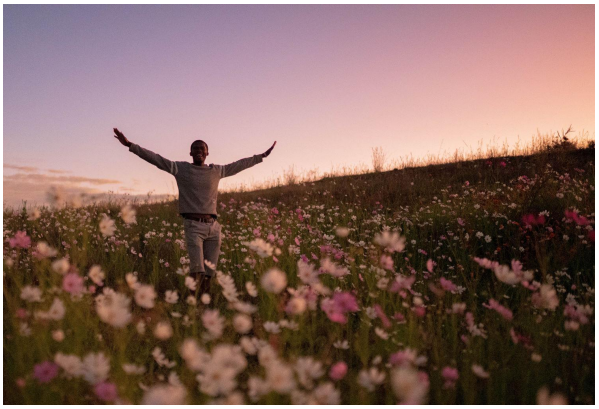


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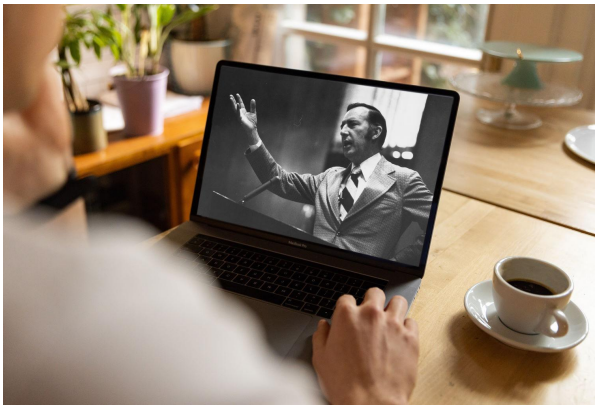
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