

In Proverbs (Part 2)



The Fear of the Lord (Part 8)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again, sharing with you on this week's inspiring, but also challenging theme: The Fear of the Lord.

My talk yesterday on this theme was based on the book of Proverbs. I shared with you how, in the first chapter of Proverbs, Wisdom is personified and makes a dramatic appeal to the whole human race. Accepted, Wisdom's appeal leads to peace, prosperity and endless blessings. But rejected, it condemns us to frustration and disaster. Those in this passage who rejected Wisdom's appeal committed one vital error which is stated in Proverbs 1:29. It says there:

> "They did not choose the fear of the Lord." (NKJ)

Let me repeat that very important statement: "They did not choose the fear of the Lord." The failure to make that choice set them on the path to disaster. This brings out two extremely important facts. First, the key to wisdom is the fear of the Lord. We've said that already in our talks last week.

Second, the fear of the Lord comes by a decision of our will. If we don't make the right choice, it won't happen. It's not something that happens automatically.

Further on in the book of Proverbs, yesterday, we were confronted by two further important facts about the fear of the Lord. First, the fear of the Lord leaves no room for compromise with evil. It causes us to hate evil and to depart from evil. Second, the fear of the Lord is the door to life in its fullness, both in quality and quantity, both a long life and a good life.

In my talk today I'm going to continue to draw from the book of Proverbs and to present to you yet further beautiful pictures of what the fear of the Lord will do for us. The first passage I'm going to turn to today is Proverbs 14, verses 26 and 27:

> "In the fear of the Lord there is strong confidence, and His children will have a place of refuge. The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to avoid the snares of death." (NKJ)

Those two verses present four specific benefits of the fear of the Lord. First of all, it gives us strong confidence. That is, it delivers us from all evil, negative fears; from worries, from

anxieties.

How many people do you know today that really have strong confidence? Oh, confidence is so important. The Bible says in the New Testament, "Don't cast away your confidence which has great recompense of reward." What's the key to confidence? It's the fear of the Lord. A person who walks into a room with confidence produces a different reaction from people who don't have confidence. A person who takes up a job with confidence is much more likely to succeed than someone who's full of inadequacy and fear and worry. So the fear of the Lord delivers us from all those evil, negative fears which inhibit us and render us many times, much less effective than we could be.

Second, it says, "God's children, in the fear of the Lord, will have a place of refuge." So the fear of the Lord points us to a place of security. That's one of the key words in the thinking of most people today. It's security. People are security oriented. They want their houses secure. They're very concerned about burglar alarms and burglar-proofing their houses. They want their investments secure. They want their retirements secure although, alas, inflation seems to be defeating that for so many people. But the true security which does not depend simply on material or financial issues, the key to that is the fear of the Lord. His children will have a place of refuge. I'm inclined to think that things may soon be happening in this world of ours that will make a place of refuge very, very important.

I spend a good part of my year in Israel in our home in Jerusalem and every time you walk through the streets of Israel, on every corner, on every house wall, you'll see a little sign usually painted in black or in red and it says in Hebrew, La Meclat. Do you know what that is? It's to the shelter because they're continually aware that they may be attacked without warning at any time by enemy forces. So every house has to have a shelter. Every community, every area has a shelter and their experiences have made them aware of the necessity of a shelter. But that is true really in the lives of all of us. Is there anything in your life that points you to the shelter? I want to suggest to you that the fear of the Lord is that arrow painted on the wall that shows you the place of refuge.

Third, the fear of the Lord is the source of life. The book of Proverbs says there in the passage we read, "The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life." That's a beautiful picture. A fountain is something that goes on flowing. It's not measured; it's not rationed. It's free; it just continues. There's a continual connection in the Scriptures between life and the fear of the Lord.

And then the fourth statement there in that passage of Proverbs we read is that the fear of the Lord keeps us from the snares that would entrap us and destroy us, the snares of death, the snares that would bring us to death, both physical death and more important still, spiritual death. Our way is beset with many snares but the fear of the Lord can keep us from those snares.

And then further on in Proverbs, in Proverbs 19:23:

> "The fear of the Lord leads to life, and he who has it will abide in satisfaction; he will not be visited with evil." (NKJ)

Those are almost breathtaking promises. The fear of the Lord leads to life. Notice again the connection between the fear of the Lord and life. It's the way to life. Second, "He who has it will abide in satisfaction." It produces abiding satisfaction. How many people do you know today who abide in satisfaction, who were never discontented, never frustrated, never grumble.

And then it says, "the one who has it will not be visited with evil." It will keep us from the visitation of evil. That's almost too good to be true but it is true. It's the Word of God. It's Scripture and the key to it all is the fear of the Lord.

We're going to go on to look at two further passages in the book of Proverbs that also speak about the fear of the Lord. The next one is Proverbs 22, verse 4, which says this:

> "By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches and honor and life." (NKJ)

Notice those benefits, riches, honor, and life. How foolish to turn that down. Notice again the continuing emphasis on life. The fear of the Lord is the way to life; it's a fountain of life, it's the key of life, not just long life, but good life. How different, as I said already yesterday, from contemporary ideas, of how to find life. The attitude of many people in the world today is if I want a real good, exciting, rich, full life, I've got to throw off all restraint; I've got to please myself; I've got to make myself number one; I'm not going to be tied down by any of those old-fashioned religious restrictions. That's really the kind of way people think and speak today. But it's a deception and I think as we look at the lives of people who talk like that, after a little while, we see them frustrated, disappointed, and wondering where the satisfaction is that they thought they would find.

We'll go on to one more passage in the book of Proverbs, Proverbs 23, verse 17 and 18:

> "Do not let your heart envy sinners, but in the fear of the Lord continue all day long; for surely there is a hereafter, and your hope will not be cut off." (NKJ)

That's counsel we need to hearken to, "Continue in the fear of the Lord all day long." I understand that to mean that the fear of the Lord should permeate our whole life and dictate our entire life style. I do believe that a person who lives and walks in the fear of the Lord will have a very distinctive and very attractive life style. So we have to continue in the fear of the Lord all day long. It's not something we just put on at certain moments like when we go to church. Some people become very reverent in church and when they walk out of church they lay aside their reverence and they begin to behave differently. But the Scripture says, "Continue in the fear of the Lord all day long and don't envy sinners; don't be enticed by the seeming pleasures of sin which are so temporary and so frustrating, but continue in the fear of the Lord."

And then the final promise, which is so beautiful, "For surely there is a hereafter, and your hope will not be cut off." There's a hereafter for everybody whether they want to acknowledge it or not. But there's a hereafter with hope for those who continue in the fear of the Lord. So that's the ultimate benefit of the fear of the Lord. It's not restricted to benefits in time, but it goes beyond time and into eternity. It gives us a hope that extends beyond the grave, a hope that will not be disappointed. That's the promise of God's Word.

Well, our time is up for today. I'll be back with you again tomorrow at this time. Tomorrow I'll continue with this wonderfully rich theme of The Fear of the Lord. I'll be sharing with you how it is The Key to Perfection.

Radio Program

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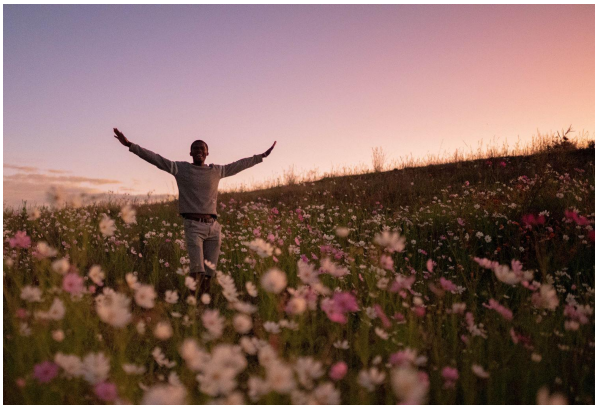

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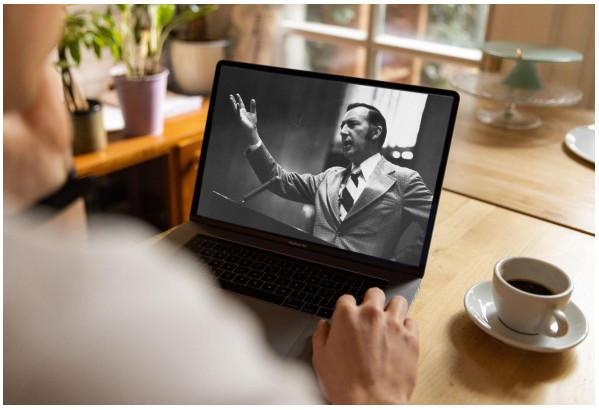

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