**Fearing God’s Word**

*Proverbs 13:13*

**Introduction**

1. As society progresses in secularism less find the Bible to be important, and perhaps even view it as destructive as it is at variance with their immoral agendas.
2. While this is itself a matter of concern, what is even more alarming is the deleterious effect this environment of skepticism has had on those who profess to be Christians.
   1. More who claim to be followers of Christ are setting their Bibles aside to project their own view of God and Christ.
   2. Ultimately, there is no veneration for God’s word, and certainly no fear.
   3. Even in the church these negative effects are being witnessed by those who still hold to the Biblical pattern.
      1. Authority is no longer an emphasis in the teaching of many congregations.
      2. Emotionalism has become the standard in many instances.
      3. Doctrines have been promoted from twisted scripture which ultimately prohibit all judgment if followed to their logical end, and puts all under the privilege of salvation except those who make such judgments.
3. We need to go back to the wisdom of Holy Script which advises a fear of the commandments of God – **Proverbs 13:13**
4. Why Many Don’t Fear God’s Word
5. They Don’t Believe in Inspiration
   1. The scriptures claim inspiration of God – **2 Timothy 3:16**
      1. Inspiration – *theopneustos*; divinely breathed in. (Strong) (Theos, “God,” pneo, “to breathe”)
         1. Not in the sense that we might say a song is inspired.
         2. God-breathed, i.e. a product of God’s work – coming from Him, from His mouth, thus His mind.
      2. **2 Peter 1:20-21** – Use of men in revelation. (Not of private origin – i.e. comes from God)
      3. To what degree is scripture inspired?
         1. Partial? If so, how do we determine which is from God?
         2. ***“WHICH THINGS WE ALSO SPEAK, NOT IN WORDS TAUGHT BY HUMAN WISDOM, BUT IN THOSE TAUGHT BY THE SPIRIT, COMBINING SPIRITUAL THOUGHTS WITH SPIRITUAL WORDS” (1 Corinthians 2:13; NASB).***
         3. Plenary verbal inspiration – each word is chosen by God specifically, thus complete inspiration. **(EX: Galatians 3:16** – argument based on single word)
   2. If one does not believe in the inspiration of scripture:
      1. He has freedom to accept or reject any passage he wants.
      2. There is no right or wrong “interpretation” of passages, and all must be accepted.
      3. He then essentially makes his own will rule.
      4. Then the Bible is insignificant and unreliable.
6. They Misunderstand its Author
   1. Many approach scripture as if it is one long love letter from God to man.
      1. The implications of this is that the salvation communicated is unconditional.
      2. The content of scripture then is not to be taken as precept, but as poetic communication of love.
   2. **1 John 4:8** – God is love. But does this mean scripture is void of precept?
      1. **2 Timothy 3:16 –** scripture is meant to teach and instruct.
      2. **1 Corinthians 9:21** – law of Christ.
   3. Jesus communicating love by instructing – **Mark 10:17-22** – Jesus cared for the man’s soul, and knew his riches were a vice for him.
   4. God’s love is unconditional in its provision, but conditional in its ultimate beneficence – **John 3:16; 14:21, 23-24** – implication is that if one doesn’t keep His commandments he won’t be loved.
   5. **Jude 20-21** – One must keep self in God’s love, and that is done by submitting to scripture.
7. They Misunderstand Christ’s Sacrifice
   1. **Romans 6:23** – we deserve death, but the gift of Christ’s death frees us from such.
   2. **Romans 6:14** – partly Christ’s death puts us under grace instead of law. (**Romans 10:4** – Christ is the end of the law.)
      1. However, there is still something to submit to – **Romans 10:1-3, 16** – the gospel.
      2. NOT…BUT STATEMENT – not MERELY under law, but ESPECIALLY grace.
      3. WHERE THERE WAS NO PROVISION FOR SIN UNDER THE OLD LAW, THERE IS PROVISION FOR SIN UNDER THE GOSPEL.
   3. When we live without Christ’s direction in the gospel we becomes slaves to sin again – **Romans 6:15-19**
8. They Underestimate its Power in Judgment
   1. Most do not take God seriously when He speaks of judgment. They think God will be lenient. However, God has clearly expressed the severity of judgment, and the inescapability of His word.
   2. **Hebrews 9:27** – all will be judged.
   3. **John 12:48** – the word will judge.
   4. **Hebrews 4:11-13** – none will be hidden, but will give account of their deeds.
9. Why All Should Fear God’s Word
10. Faithful Men of God Did
    1. Jesus’ warning regarding the keeping of God’s word – **Matthew 5:17-20** – faithful obedience is required by God. (**Matthew 7:21** – only those who do the will of the Father will make it to heaven.)
    2. Paul – **1 Corinthians 11:1** – imitated Christ, and calls for others to do the same – **Hebrews 5:8-9** – Christ was obedient, and is the savior of the obedient.
    3. **1 Corinthians 9:21** – Paul considered himself under law toward Christ.
    4. **1 Corinthians 4:1-5** – Concerning himself and Apollos as stewards of the word, Paul said he was careful to be pleasing to God!
    5. Abraham obeyed by faith – **Hebrews 11:8**
    6. Why should anyone think God operates differently with men now than He did in the past?
11. Consistent Punishment of Disobedience is Recorded in History
    1. God has been absolutely consistent in His punishment of disobedient men. This will continue.
    2. **Hebrews 3:16-19; 4:1-2, 11** – The Israelites are given as an example countless times of people being punished.
       1. **Hebrews 2:2-4** – how shall we escape?
       2. **Hebrews 10:28-31** – how much worse punishment?
    3. These occurrences of disobedience should strike fear in us – **Acts 5:1-11** – GREAT FEAR was the result of the death of Ananias and Sapphira.
    4. God will show no partiality – **Romans 2:6-11**
12. It is an Immutable Law
    1. God’s law cannot be changed, and those who challenge it will always suffer the consequences.
    2. This is true for the natural laws God implemented in the beginning:
       1. A law of nature is by definition inviolable.
       2. Gravity – who has defeated gravity?
       3. Two objects cannot occupy the same place at the same time. (EX: Smash finger with hammer/car door.)
       4. Humans must have oxygen to live.
       5. So many more.
    3. The same is true for God’s spiritual law. When it is challenged in opposition, the challenger fails.
       1. **John 10:34** – it cannot be broken.
       2. **Matthew 21:42-44** – Jews were rejecting the cornerstone to their own detriment.
       3. **Mark 16:15-16** – this law cannot be broken.
       4. **Hebrews 10:36-38** – must endure faithfully – this law cannot be broken.
13. It is the Only Power to Salvation
    1. **Romans 1:16** – this statement is exclusive – this is what God has chosen to save men.
    2. What if one does not submit to it? What if one looks for salvation elsewhere?
       1. **Romans 9:30-33** – Jews did not submit to God’s righteousness and were lost.
       2. **Romans 11:19-24** – (concerning the Gentiles being saved) the Jews were cut off because of unbelief (severity of God), but the Gentiles grafted in because of belief (goodness of God).
          1. This is an impartial truth.
          2. It does not matter who we are, if we reject God’s plan of salvation we will not be saved.
          3. CONSIDER THE GOODNESS AND SEVERITY OF GOD.

**Conclusion**

1. We must have a fear of God’s word – **Proverbs 13:13**
2. We need to recognize the Bible as the inspired word of God which can save us, and will judge us in the end.
3. Do we take sin seriously? Do we abide by God’s law? Are we ready to be placed beside God’s word in judgment?