**The Place for Fear**

**Introduction**

1. We are commanded not to fear – ***“do not fear”*** (NKJV, 53x); ***“do not be afraid”*** (NKJV, 50x)
   1. Fear can be debilitating – **Revelation 21:8** (“cowardly” – *deilos* (3x) – translated “fearful” 2x) (The cowardly shrink from duty when adversity or opposition presents itself.)
      1. ***“but for the fearful” (ASV); “But the fearful” (KJV)***
   2. Fear can show lack of faith – **Matthew 8:23-26**
2. We do not have to fear:
   1. When God is with us – **Joshua 1:9; Psalm 23:4**
   2. Because God has not given us a spirit of fear – **2 Timothy 1:7**
3. Yet, fear is real, and is a part of human nature. How are we deal with something like fear which is natural part of our existence?
   1. Fear, like other parts of this life, can be channeled.
   2. What is the place for fear in the life of a Christian?
4. Fear God
5. Fear Defined
   1. *Phobos*
      1. “first had the meaning of “flight,” that which is caused by being scared; then, “that which may cause flight,” (a) “fear, dread, terror,” (VINE)
         1. **Hebrews 2:15** – Fear of death.
         2. **Romans 13:3** – Fear of authorities for the worker of evil. (By metonymy)
      2. “reverential fear,” (VINE) (deep respect)
         1. Of God – **Acts 9:31** (Early church walking in fear of God)
         2. Of superiors – **Romans 13:7** (Gov’t); **1 Peter 2:18** (masters)
      3. These two concepts are not mutually exclusive. In the fear we are to have for God it is the working of both angles.
   2. *Deilia*
      1. “fearfulness” (from deos, “fright”) (VINE)
      2. Adjective – *deilos* – **Revelation 21:8** (“cowardly”)
      3. Not given of God, always negative/sinful.
   3. *Eulabeia*
      1. signifies, firstly, “caution”; then, “reverence, godly fear,” (VINE)
      2. “that mingled fear and love which, combined, constitute the piety of man toward God; the OT places its emphasis on the fear, the NT... on the love, though there was love in the fear of God’s saints then, as there must be fear in their love now” (Trench, Syn. Sec.xlviii)
      3. Only 2x – **Hebrews 5:7; 12:28** – ***“godly fear”***
6. Reasons to Fear God
   1. NOTE: The idea of terror in *phobos*, as well as reverence in *phobos* and *eulabeia* are intertwined in our fear of God.
      1. We certainly have a profound respect for Him and His Divine nature coupled with our love for Him.
      2. However, we also acknowledge the immense power He wields, and tremble before Him accordingly.
   2. He is our Creator
      1. The power of God in creation should strike awe, wonder, and reverential fear – **Psalm 89:5-11**
   3. He is our Benefactor
      1. The knowledge of what God has done for us through His Son should incite reverence, but also a dread of undervaluing the gift with unfaithfulness.
      2. **1 Peter 1:17-21** – the conduct in fear is not simply due to knowledge of God’s impartial judgment, but the value of the price paid.
         1. “What prompts this fear and must ever be its source is the preciousness of the ransom paid for us. The participle is causal: "conduct yourselves in fear because you know" (the participle is an aorist like the imperative)” (Lenski)
         2. Reverence for His love and care in paying the price – **1 Corinthians 6:20**
         3. Dread/fear of receiving such in vain, and profaning it – **Hebrews 10:28-29**
   4. He is our Law Giver
      1. There is one law giver – **James 4:12** – Context: We have no right to dictate law in judgment of another.
         1. His law is to be held in respect, and submission must be complete – **James 2:10-11**
         2. Fear the commandment – **Proverbs 13:13**
      2. **Ecclesiastes 12:13** – Man’s all, fearing Him and/by keeping commandments.
      3. Paul – **1 Corinthians 9:21** – would never conduct self as if he was without law toward Christ.
         1. **Philippians 2:12** – fear and trembling.
      4. There should be a reverence of God as He is in supreme authority, but also fear of transgression of His law.
   5. He is our Judge
      1. **Ecclesiastes 12:13-14** – We fear because He will judge our deeds.
      2. Fearful to fall into His hands – **Hebrews 10:30-31**
      3. Able to save or destroy – **James 4:12**
      4. Know the terror – **2 Corinthians 5:9-11**
      5. Men know to respect/reverence a judge (“your honor”). There is also a fear/terror/dread knowing he is the decision maker in your case.
   6. He is the Executioner
      1. John the baptizer warned – **Matthew 3:7-12** – Jesus is ready to cut down the fruitless and burn them.
      2. Jesus encouraging His disciples – **Matthew 10:28** – He has the ability to destroy body and soul.
      3. Those who recognize this power and position will tremble if fear lest they receive the wrath.
7. The Effects of Fearing God
   1. Beginning of knowledge – **Proverbs 1:7**
   2. Hate evil – **Proverbs 8:13**
   3. Prolong life – **Proverbs 10:27**
   4. Strong confidence – **Proverbs 14:26-27**
   5. Depart from evil – **Proverbs 16:6**
   6. Satisfying life, spared from evil – **Proverbs 19:23**
   7. Enjoy riches, honor, life – **Proverbs 22:4**
8. Do Not Fear:
9. God has not given us a spirit of fear – **2 Timothy 1:7**
10. The Adversary
    1. **1 Peter 5:8** – the Devil is seeking to devour us.
       1. Sobriety and vigilance indicate an awareness of threat.
       2. However, there is not a tone of fear.
    2. We’re given the armor to defeat him – **Ephesians 6:10-13**
    3. **Revelation 2:10** – do not fear.
       1. Do not fear what Satan is doing and is going to do to you.
       2. However, be aware.
11. Man
    1. **Hebrews 13:5-6** – what can man do to me?
    2. Concerning physical harm – **Matthew 10:27-31**
       1. They can only do so much.
       2. **1 Peter 3:13-14** – who can harm you?
    3. Concerning those opposing the truth – **2 Corinthians 10:4-6** – the weapons God has supplied us with are sufficient.
    4. Concerning defamation from those who think our moral values are strange – **1 Peter 4:3-6**
12. The Future
    1. One of the greatest fears in man is that of the unknown.
    2. **Proverbs 27:1** – we do not, and cannot know what will happen.
    3. **James 4:14** – we do not even know if there will be a tomorrow for us.
    4. **Matthew 6:34** – the troubles within the day we have are enough.
    5. And yet, we do know what the future holds – **John 16:33; 1 John 5:4-5** – Jesus has overcome (victorious) and we will overcome by faith in Him.
13. Death
    1. At the seat of all our fears is our mortality – **Hebrews 2:15** – subject to bondage in fear of death.
    2. **Hebrews 2:10-18** – The Captain of our salvation has defeated death, and we don’t have to be afraid.
       1. **1 Corinthians 15:54-58** – victory in Jesus.

**Conclusion**

1. Fear is a natural tendency within man.
2. However, God has told us not to fear many times.
3. Fear, like many things, is to be channeled. It is to be limited within the sphere God has given.
4. We should fear God, but we should not fear anyone or anything else.