

## “Should the Christian ‘Fear God?’”

**FOCUS:** Let us seek out answers to three primary questions concerning the “Fear of the Lord.”

1. Is the “Fear of the Lord” \_\_\_\_\_ Only?

Well, it certainly IS OT, found hundreds of times in the OT. And, as mentioned earlier, often in reference to God’s command to fear Him. Let’s examine some OT scriptures.

- **Proverbs 1:7** (NIV 2011) – *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge,..*
  - Knowing the **Mind** of your Master!
- **Proverbs 9:10** – *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.*
  - Knowing the **Heart** of your Master!
  - **2 Thessalonians 3:10**
- Mary, the mother of Jesus, sang this in her song: *“for the Mighty One has done great things for me – holy is his name. His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation.”* – **Luke 1:50**
- **Acts 9:31** – *Then the church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria enjoyed a time of peace and was strengthened. Living in the fear of the Lord and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it increased in numbers.*

2. Is the “Fear of the Lord” the \_\_\_\_\_ in OT and NT? Well, “Yes”...and, well,...“No.”

You see, the Fear of the Lord can mean different things in the OT alone, and in the NT alone, but also different between OT and NT. Let me show you what I mean.

Someone has said, “Fear can mean terror, dread, and horror; but it also can mean awe, reverence, and respect.”

When the Bible says that the *fear of the Lord* is the beginning of wisdom/knowledge, it is talking about a REVERENCE for God. That reverence is based on God’s Transcendence and holiness. It brings about a consciousness of God’s judgment and right to that judgment.

This is quite different from what is sometimes claimed and practiced as seen in **Isaiah 66:2-3**

- What they should have known was this: **Proverbs 8:13** – *To fear the LORD is to hate evil;..*

3. Have We \_\_\_\_\_ the “Fear of the Lord” In This NT Era?

I believe that answer is “No, not completely.”

- **John 3:36** – *Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God’s wrath remains on them.*
- *So judgment is still VERY real, as should be the fear of God’s judgment!*
- **But...**to those who are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, there is no more fear of judgment.
- **Romans 8:1** – *Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,..*

As we started this morning, *perfect love casts out fear*. Because we have passed from condemned to redeemed, we have no fear of judgment. We know God is love, and He loves us eternally in Christ, so we are **free to live fully in that Love!**