

# WALKING IN THE FEAR OF THE LORD

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**TEXT: Acts 9:31**

## INTRODUCTION

1. Note that they were "walking in the fear of the Lord"!
2. In writing to the church at Philippi, Paul told them in **Philippians 2:12**, *"Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;"*
3. The concept of "fear and trembling" in connection with God is not a popular concept today.
  - a. People prefer to hear about God's love, longsuffering and mercy.
  - b. Sometimes, when we point out God's righteous indignation, holiness, and justice, people reply "My God is not like that!"
4. The emphasis on God's love and mercy today is probably the result of the "hell, fire, and brimstone" preaching of earlier generations.
5. But could it be that we have gone to the other extreme?
  - a. No longer is there a concept of "fear and trembling" as it relates to the Christian.
  - b. This is why many Christians are apathetic in their service to God.
  - c. We have forgotten Whom we should fear if we are negligent in our service.
6. In this lesson, I want to accomplish three things:
  - a. Define the "fear of the Lord."
  - b. Point out why the "fear of the Lord" is important to the Christian.
  - c. How we can develop a healthy "fear of the Lord" without going to one extreme or the other.

## I. DEFINING THE "FEAR OF THE LORD"

### A. THE WORD "FEAR".

1. In the Hebrew it speaks of fear, terror, fright, dread, to be afraid, awesome or terrifying, fear of God, respect, and reverence.
2. In the Greek it means to fear, to be fearful, to dread, to be terrified, to be afraid.

### B. THE "FEAR OF THE LORD", IS OFTEN DEFINED JUST AS "REVERENCE" OR "AWE".

1. But this definition doesn't go far enough as revealed in God's Word.
2. It does imply "reverence" and "awe", but it also implies "trembling."

### C. THE "FEAR OF THE LORD" SHOULD INCLUDE A PLACE FOR "TREMBLING".

1. Paul indicated this in **Philippians 2:12**, by combining "fear and trembling."

2. The Greek word for "trembling" means "a trembling or quaking with fear"
3. Just as one would likely tremble in the presence of one who could take your life, so Jesus taught us to fear the Lord - **Matthew 10:28**.

#### D. A PROPER "FEAR OF THE LORD" WOULD THEN INCLUDE...

1. Reverence and awe.
2. Being afraid to offend God in any way.
3. A trembling and quaking if one knows they have sinned against God and have not ask for forgiveness! - **Hebrews 10:30-31; 12:28-29**.

## II. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE "FEAR OF THE LORD"

### A. FROM THE BOOK OF PROVERBS, WE LEARN...

1. The "fear of the Lord" is the beginning of knowledge - **Proverbs 1:7**.
2. The "fear of the Lord" will cause one to hate evil - **Proverbs 8:13**.
3. The "fear of the Lord" will prolong life – **Proverbs 10:27**.
4. The "fear of the Lord" prompts one to depart from evil – **Proverbs 16:6**.
5. The "fear of the Lord" is the way to riches, honor, and life! - **Proverbs 22:4**.

### B. WITHOUT THE "FEAR OF THE LORD"...

1. We miss the treasures of God's wisdom and knowledge.
2. We will find it easy to flirt with evil and become corrupted.
3. When we sin, we will not be motivated to repent and turn to God.
4. Only the person who has the fear of the Lord and trembles at His Word will respect God and who He is.

## III. HOW WE DEVELOP THE "FEAR OF THE LORD" IN OUR LIFE

### A. THE "FEAR OF THE LORD" COMES THROUGH THE WORD OF GOD!

1. Just as faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, the same can be said for the "fear of the Lord".
3. In **Deuteronomy 31:10-13** the children of Israel were told to gather every seven years to read and hear the Word.
3. The purpose was so they could learn to fear the Lord.
4. As one reads and studies the Word of God, it teaches them to fear the Lord.

### B. THE WORD OF GOD, PROPERLY USED, WILL MAINTAIN A PROPER BALANCE.

1. Some read only those portions that reveal God's love and mercy, and have no "fear of the Lord".
2. Others emphasize the "fire, hell and brimstone" passages, and know nothing of God's everlasting love.
3. The one develops an attitude of permissiveness.
4. While the other develops an attitude of terror that forgets God's grace and compassion.

## CONCLUSION: