

## ***“Fearing God” Pt 6***

### **Fearing God**

Various Scriptures

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September 8, 2020

**Bruce:** I’d like to direct your attention, please, to Hebrews chapter 12 verse 28. The author of Hebrews in Hebrews 12:28 says this. *“Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe.”* Now the words “reverence and awe” mean *fear*.

We discussed in our opening session several weeks ago that the word *fear* means many different things in the Scripture. But you always have to interpret it by the context of the passage in which it’s found.

Generally speaking, when we’re talking about fearing God or the fear of God, we’re talking about this reverence, this awe. It’s what’s known as a holy trembling because of who God is.

Now notice Hebrews 12:28. The writer of Hebrews tells us that it is a sweet and blessed work of the Holy Spirit given by God to His children. Notice the text. *Therefore, since we receive a kingdom.”*

When God was pleased to regenerate us, to save us from ourselves, He transferred us into the Kingdom of His Son. We were transferred from the kingdom of darkness into the Kingdom of His Son. And so when God gives us a kingdom it means that it cannot be shaken. It cannot be destroyed; it cannot be removed from us.

And notice the response to this applicationally. *“Let us show gratitude.”* If we understand what God has done for us and who He is, our first response should always be gratitude. And then notice how this gratitude is reflected. *“By which we may offer to God an acceptable service, with reverence and awe.”*

Gratitude must be done acceptably with reverence and awe. It’s not because we deserve it. It’s because it’s a sweet and blessed work of the Holy Spirit that God gives to His children. And our response as we understand the greater depths of fearing God, our primary response is one of gratitude. And that gratitude will manifest itself with acceptable service. However the Lord is pleased through the Holy Spirit to guide you into service for the Kingdom, it will be done with reverence and awe.

I was talking with a friend the other day. While he was quite evangelical, she would sometimes get abusive. And when she was saying that she was in a situation where she got somebody to pray the prayer for salvation, her response was, “There I go; I get another crown in my horn.”

And I said, “Do you really believe that?”

And she said, “Yes. I just led somebody to Christ and I get one more credit.”

Now that’s not acceptable, folks. Our service is done with reverence and awe. Yes, she may have led that person to Christ. She may have been there when God granted her saving faith. But I don’t know that; that may be the case. But the issue is not her getting a reward. The issue is God’s glory. And so what we need to make sure of is that our

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response to fearing God is acceptable, with reverence and awe as we go into serving Him for His glory.

Here are some applications. Take a look at your handout, please. *God is pleased with a trembling heart in spite of our limitations.* He is pleased with a trembling heart in spite of our limitations. Now what I mean by *a trembling heart* is the proper balance between who God is in all of His glory and what He has done for us in all of His grace. It's the proper balance between who God is in all of His glory and what God has done for us in all of His grace. And when we merge those two together we have a trembling heart, because we keep in balance the right perspective of who God is in all of His glory, but realize also at the same time that it is by grace by which I am saved and not works of myself. And so a trembling heart is that perfect balance on one hand between grace and fear. And this fear is a sense of reverence and awe for who God is.

And so God is pleased with a trembling heart because of our limitations. Our limitations are such that we think that it might be about us where we can't do anything. But in spite of those limitations God is pleased with a trembling heart when we achieve that balance between God's grace and the fear of God. When we balance those two things together with who God is, That's the trembling heart. In spite of those limitations God is pleased with that.

Notice that in Isaiah chapter 66 verse 2 that God offers consolation and compassion to those who tremble at His word. I refer you to Isaiah chapter 6 verse 2.

*“Has not My hand made all these things?  
And so they came into being, declares the LORD.  
This is the one I esteem.”*

That means “finds favor with.” This is whom God finds favor with:  
*“He who is humble and contrite in spirit,  
And trembles at My word.”*

Now the word *humble* there can be defined as “poor in spirit.” Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount: *“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”* Another definition of humility is *seeing that which is perfect—the Person and work of Christ—and realizing that I can't achieve it myself.* It's seeing that which is perfect and seeing that I can't accomplish that myself. That's the person whom God holds in high esteem, with whom He finds favor, because that's the person who has a perfect balance between God's grace and the fear of God, those two things in balance. “Contrite in spirit: means that you have a broken heart because of your sin and you tremble at His word.

Now why is it that He finds esteem and finds favor for those who tremble at His word? It's because in His word that's who God reveals. The Scripture primarily reveals who God is in all of His glory. And the person who trembles at His word is actually trembling at whom? He's trembling at God Himself, because Scripture is the means by which God reveals Himself.

The person with whom God finds favor is the person whose humble, who is contrite in spirit and who trembles at His word. Notice next that for the person who fears God *he will vindicate those who obey rather than those who follow the crowd.* I draw your

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attention again to Isaiah 66, verse 5. He will vindicate—that means protect—those who obey rather than those who follow the crowd.

*“Hear the word of the LORD,  
You who tremble at His word.”*

Now this is what the world may say:

*“Your brothers who hate you  
And exclude you because of My name have said,  
‘Let the LORD be glorified  
That we may see your joy.’  
Yet they will be put to shame.”*

In other words, there are people who are going to say, “Follow the crowd.” They want you to do this so that God is going to be glorified, but they have no desire for that to happen. He’s just a crowd follower. And God will vindicate those who obey rather than those who follow the crowd. The crowd may say, “Let God be glorified that we may see your joy.” Yet they will be put to shame because they don’t want to sincerely desire that request.

Another application of fearing God that we’ve learned so far is that God not only offers consolation to those who tremble at His word because it reveals who He is and that He will vindicate those who obey rather than those who follow the crowd, but that *His word is the ground of our prayers*. Let me call your attention to Psalm 33:22.

*“May Your unfailing love rest upon us, O LORD,  
Even as we put our hope in You.”*

That’s the basis of our prayer. Our prayer is based upon hope. And our hope is based upon God’s unfailing love for us. Because God loves us so much we can have great confidence in our prayer life even as we put our hope in Him. Hope does not mean wishful thinking. Hope means confident expectation that it will occur. And why is it that we can have hope? It’s because God’s unfailing love rests upon us.

I would also call your attention to Psalm 51, something very similar—Psalm 51 verse 1.

*“Have mercy on me, O God,  
According to Your unfailing love;  
According to Your great compassion  
Blot out my transgressions.”*

If we ask God to forgive us of our sin, why is He willing to do that? It’s because of His unfailing love. And so as we call for mercy we have the hope that God will do that exactly because the basis of our prayer life is God’s unfailing love for us.

*“According to Your great compassion,  
Blot out my transgressions.”*

I don’t know about you, but sometimes thoughts come back to my mind of the sins that I’ve committed in my previous life, or something that I’ve done frequently. And sometimes I say, “Lord, remove those thoughts from my mind.” But at the same time I need to say, “Thank You for reminding me of my sin because it reminds me of how

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quickly I can sin again.” And so as we look at God’s mercy, that’s the basis of our prayer life, asking him to blot out our transgressions.

His word comforts us in our affliction. And why is that? Because God is giving us Himself through His word. He is giving us Himself through His word. And therefore we find comfort in the Word because that’s God giving Himself to us.

Another application for your consideration would be that *God’s word permits us to evaluate pretended revelations*. In other words we need to evaluate things that people say are directly from God. We need to say, “Is that really true?”

Jesus said this in John 7:17. *“If anyone chooses to do God’s will, he will find out whether My teaching comes from God or whether I speak on My own.”* In other words, as you and I fulfill our obedience, we will see that God was the One speaking to us because of the impact of the obedience has in our lives for God’s glory.

I think it’s important that we also take a look at 1 John 4:1-6, because a lot of people say, “God told me this; God did that.” God gets a lot of credit and a lot of blame for things He may not have ever done. And we need to be discerning. One of the things that we need to do in the church in America today is to be more discerning than we are. Remember, it’s not about us; it’s about God and His glory. So I call your attention to 1 John chapter 4:1-6.

*“Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. This is how you know you can recognize the Spirit of God. Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God. But every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world. You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the One who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. They are from the world and therefore speak from the viewpoint of the world, and the world listens to them. We are from God, and whoever knows God listens to us. But whoever is not from God does not listen to us. This is how we recognize the spirit of truth and the spirit of falsehood.”*

One of the things that we need to ask ourselves is what do I listen to? I’m being convicted of late that I’m watching too much of the news. Now I need to be made aware of what’s going on in the world. But I need to fill myself with other things than the news because it’s speaking from the system of this world.

In John 10 Jesus gives the illustration. *“My sheep know My voice.”* “And they turn away from the world system and listen to My voice.”

One of the things we need to do to evaluate ourselves in our fellowship with Christ is this: to whom do I listen? Am I listening to the system of this world? Or are we listening to the word of God because we hold it in reverence and awe because of who He is? We need to be very discerning with what people say. And the way we do that, one of the tests we can use is to say, “Do they believe me when I’m speaking the Scripture?”

Now we have to be careful here. I’m not speaking from my own point of view; I’m speaking from the Scriptural point of view. If I speak the word of God or read the Scripture to somebody and they reject it, that’s an indication that they are not from God.

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And if somebody reads the same Scripture and listens to it, it’s an indication that they are from God. So we need to be very discerning about who we listen to and how we encourage people to understand the Scripture.

Now one of the things that I think we ought to do for a few minutes is to contrast the fear of God for the believer versus the unbeliever because most people have a fear of God. But some are not believers and some are. So let’s take an examination of that.

Go to James chapter 2 verse 19. *“You believe there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder!”* Now they have a trembling heart; they have a trembling spirit; they shudder. That’s what the word *shudder* means; it’s trembling. Even demons do that. But do they believe in God? No, but even the demons shudder.

Remember, the word *believe* means this—dart—depend upon, adhere to, rely upon and trust in. Now they shudder at God but they don’t believe in Him. You say there is one God? Good; even the demons believe that.

Sometimes you ask somebody, “Do you believe in God?”

“Yes, I do.” It may be that they only have demonic faith. Are they trusting in the Person and work of Christ for salvation? Do they understand regeneration and what it means to be reborn? You see, with a lot of people we need to be very, very discerning about what they say as the reason for their faith. Even the demons believe, and they shudder.

And then look at Acts chapter 22, verses 24-25.. The situation was Paul speaking to Felix. We’re told in 22:24-25 of Acts that Felix trembled. But he didn’t do anything about it. And that’s the difference.

22:24-25 of Acts: *“As Paul discoursed on righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and said, ‘That’s enough for now; you may leave. When I find it convenient I will send for you.’”*

Now Felix and his wife were committing adultery; she was married to another man. If devils and corrupt judges like Felix tremble, what does that say because we’re exposed to the word of God? It means this, friends. It’s a sign that the Word has power over the heart. They might even shudder at the word of God. But that does not mean that they’re believers at all, because there is a difference between the non-believer’s fear of God and the true believer’s fear of God. They have a fear of judgment, but they don’t fear His Person. And they don’t do anything about it.

Now here’s a phrase from one of my great Puritan friends Jeremiah Burrows in his book called *Fearing God*. This is what he writes. *“No one who has grace can be without this fear in some measure, though some who have this fear in some measure have no grace. Yet there is no one who has grace but has some of this fear in some measure.”* That’s because the fear of God was something God gave us at our conversion; He planted it in our hearts. It’s a work of the Holy Spirit. So some people may have fear but they don’t have grace. And our definition of the trembling heart is the balance between the fear of who God is in His glory and the grace that God gives us to live a life for His glory.

True believers see the breach between themselves and God and trust Christ the Mediator. In other words, I see myself as poor in spirit; I bring nothing to the table. It’s all of grace. And I balance that out with the fear that I have for His judgments. But I do

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something about it. And that’s when I see the breach between myself and who God is. And that’s when I trust Christ to be my Mediator, to be my Savior and my Lord.

So the trembling of the sincere differs from the trembling of the wicked or the lost. Let’s explore that for a few minutes.

#3. The fear of God for the believer versus the fear of God for the unsaved. *The fear of God of the believer perceives better the greatness of evil and how hard it is to overcome it.* I see how quickly I can sin and how hard it is to overcome that. I see that chasm; I see that breach between myself and God to be the greatest evil. There’s a breach between myself and God, and I notice that. The person who is fearing God with the balance of a trembling heart between grace and fear is the one who sees the greatness of evil and how hard it is to overcome it myself apart from the work of the Holy Spirit. It sees the difficulty of making peace with God.

People try to do that on their own. But the person who truly fears God and who has the balance of grace sees how difficult that is because you can’t do it yourself.

The one thing I’ll be eternally grateful for is this. Christ accomplished for me something that I could not accomplish myself. There’s the balance you have of the fear of God’s judgment, but also the grace to embrace God in His glory and to trust Christ as your Lord and Savior.

So we see the difficulty of making that peace with God. That’s the difference between the person who is sincere in his fearing God and the person who is not sincere, the person who is not in Christ. Now is this making sense? Are you following what I’m saying so far? Are we okay?

All right. The second thing that I would bring to your attention is this. The trembling of the sincere differs from the trembling of the wicked or the lost because *it agrees with God in His judgments against himself.* One of my best definitions of repentance is *taking sides with God against yourself.* You see, the person who is trembling at God’s word is going to agree with God in His judgments against himself. When God says, “That is sin,” you agree with it. And that’s why we repent of our sin. I take sides with God against myself.

Repentance is a style of life. It’s not something you do just once to become a Christian. It’s something you do all the time because you realize the chasm that exists between myself and God. I fear His judgments and I apply them against myself by God’s grace, and trust Him as my Savior and my Lord.

It means this. Though the Word speaks dreadful things against me, very hard things against me, I realize this: that God’s word is just. And righteous is God in His word. Though the Word speaks dreadful things against me and exposes my sin, I realize that the word of God is just. It’s not fair; it’s just. And God is righteous in His word; His word is just. And therefore, even though I read dreadful things about His dealing with my sin, I realize that it is all just. And I apply it to myself.

Repentance is simply this. I’m taking sides with God against myself. Now because the trembling heart agrees with God in His judgments against ourselves, the next thing is this. *The trembling heart fears the loss of communion with God more than anything else.* We fear the loss of communion with God more than anything else.

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Now folks, the greatest loss is the loss of communion with God. We might lose our finances and become poor. We might lose our health and not be able to live a better lifestyle. But the one thing we cannot lose is our communion with God. We fear as much hell and its judgments as we do the fact that God will remove His presence from us. The person who is truly fearing God who has the balance between the fear of God and His e, the trembling heart, fears the loss of His presence more than anything else.

Consider somebody who you really love in the world system—your wife, your mother, your father, whoever it may be. The one thing that you want more than anything else is just to be in their presence. And that’s the way it is with our relationship with God. The thing that we desire more than anything else. And the thing that I fear most of all with a trembling heart is God removing His presence from me.

Read the Psalms where David talks about that. “Do not remove Your presence from me.” And so we fear the loss of His presence more than anything else.

And next I would offer this. *The fear of God is quieted by nothing more than reconciliation with God.* You know how it is when you’re not in fellowship. You’re not spending time in the Word. You’re not worshipping; you’re not in fellowship with your brothers and sisters in Christ, and you want to do it on your own. Sometimes you get a sense of this loss of God’s presence. The only thing that’s going to quiet that is reconciliation with God and realizing this. God has reconciled me to Himself through the Person and work of Christ. And that’s what quiets us about the fear of the loss of His presence, realizing that reconciliation has occurred through God’s regeneration of us.

You know, somebody in the world may do this. In their afflictions they’re going to tremble. But in prosperity they are quieted. But God’s presence quiets in any situation.

Let me give you that again. The persons in the world in their afflictions tremble in their afflictions. When they don’t have the job they want, when they don’t have the finances that they want, when they don’t have the health they want, whatever it may be, in those afflictions they may tremble before God. But in prosperity they are quieted. In other words they say, “If I just had the right job, the right amount of money, a better relationship I’ll be quieted in my spirit.” But for the believer who has the trembling heart, who is in the balance of fear and the balance of grace, God’s presence quiets him in any situation. So whether you’re in prosperity or you’re in affliction, God’s presence quiets in any situation the fears that we might have.

And as a result of that the fear of God *drives us back to God.* It doesn’t drive us away from God; it drives us back to Him. The trembling heart, the balance between grace and fear, drives us back to God. It doesn’t drive us away when we don’t understand things or can’t figure things out. It drives us to Him but not from Him.

Now that’s a critical point. When the Scripture convicts you of your sin through the Word, it may be that it’s going to drive you back to God. That’s an indication that you’ve got the correct balance between the fear of God in His judgments and His grace in His mercy. There’s that balance between them. And what that does is that it drives you back to God, not away from Him.

Some people say this. I remember years ago that someone said to me after a Bible study that we had at the bank, “If that’s the way God acts, then I don’t want to have

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anything to do with Him, because until I get my job then I won't trust Him.” You see, when you fear God in the balance between grace and trembling fear, God's grace quiets us in both situations. It drives us back to God, not away from Him.

So what does it mean when we say we have a sanctified fear of God by trembling at His word? What does it look like? The word *sanctified* means *holy*. When we talk about a holy fear of God we're talking about the balance between God's grace in His understanding and the fear of God in His judgments as we deal with the Scripture. So what is a true sanctified fear of God by trembling at His word? What does it look like?

First of all I would say this. *It is a trembling in which the soul is active*. It's not forced upon you. It's a trembling, but the soul has an inward principle in it. It acts and responds with trembling. In other words, there's something in you that God has given you as we've seen before. God plants this fear in you as part of the New Covenant. He gives you this fear of God, this holy trembling. And this isn't something that's forced upon you. But there is something in your soul that's an inward principle. All of a sudden you begin to act or respond with trembling. But there is balance between fear and grace.

It means this. The Lord has caused my heart to see in His word that which makes me tremble, and I'm glad of it. Now that's the key: *I'm glad of it*. The Lord has caused me in my heart to see in His word that which makes me tremble. I'm exposed; I realize I'm doing the wrong thing. I've been exposed and I tremble at that.

And the next response is this: I'm glad for it. I'm glad for it because it's the means which is going to draw me back to God, not draw me away from God. And we view this as an act of mercy, and we act accordingly. We don't try to get out from under it. You don't try to manipulate things. You don't try to get out from under the situation. You say, “Lord, You've convicted me. Your Scripture has exposed me, and I'm glad of it.” So I don't try to get out from under it or come up with new ways of getting away from the situation. I'm drawn back to God. I say, “God, have mercy upon me, the sinner.” Probably the most powerful prayer that one can say is “God, have mercy on me, a sinner.”

Notice Psalm 86 verse 11:  
*“Teach me Your way, O LORD,  
And I will walk in Your truth.  
Give me an undivided heart  
That I may fear Your name.  
Unite my heart,  
That I might walk in Your truth.”*

Teach me, O Lord, that I might walk in Your truth. *Walk* means the direction of your life. Your life is a life of holiness interrupted by occasional sin. It used to be a life of sin interrupted by occasional goodness. But now it's different. We're moving towards holiness interrupted by occasional sin. So teach me Your way, O Lord, and I will walk in Your truth.

*“Give me an undivided heart,  
That I might fear Your name.”*



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An undivided heart means that it's for Your glory. That's the balance between grace and fear; it's a trembling heart.

How about Jeremiah 32 verse 39? *“I will give them singleness of heart and action, so that they will always fear Me for their own good, and the good of their children after them.”*

Now notice. *“I will give them singleness of heart and action.”* Not only is there the thinking correctly; there's the acting correctly. Two people, a believer and an unbeliever, may fear the same judgment of God. The one is going to act on it; the other is not.

Notice: singleness of heart means that you have the right disposition to want to act, and you've been given the grace to act. And that's the benefit of a trembling heart.

*“So that they will always fear Me for their own good, and for the good of their children.”* Sometimes people think that they can just make themselves have the fear of God. You can't do that; it's something that God gives us. It's a grace that God gives us. And that's why a trembling heart is something we need to be grateful for. As we're exposed by the Scripture we need to be grateful for it and act upon it, because it's God's grace.

Did you ever listen to a sermon or attend a Bible study or read a book or something? And all of a sudden you say this: “I couldn't get the word out of my conscience for a whole week,” or longer. This is not something that is forced work. But it's a heart that gathers in the truth.

Sometimes we need to have our consciences filled with the things we've done filled with the things that we've done in the past so that we understand God's glory, and how we should avoid them in the future. And so I couldn't get that word out of my conscience. Sometimes with our consciences we don't need to clear them; we need to act upon them. And we ask God to give us a new heart and the singleness of mind so that we can walk in His ways.

Secondly, *it's a trembling in which the soul is made active.* Not only is it active; we do something about it. Notice: it's a singleness of heart and action. We think right and we act right. It's also a trembling in which the soul is made active.

Usually this is how it works. The fear of the godly enlarges their souls and makes their hearts more active for God, ready to serve. In other words, the fear that we have for God enlarges our souls. And when God exposes us and we act upon it, confess our sin, walk in God's grace, it makes us more active for Himself, ready to serve Him more. And we serve Him now with more purity. And we serve Him now with a greater sense of purity and a greater sense of reverence.

Remember, that's what pleases God. He certainly enjoys and appreciates our service. But the service that He really appreciates is the service that is done with reverence and awe.

What a joy it is to serve the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords, that God has let us be the ones who serve Him. And that is something that is a function of gratitude. I don't deserve that activity. But it's why God enlarges my soul and makes my heart more ready to serve Him because I understand more clearly what it means to have the balance between grace and fear. And that is a trembling heart.

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Let me give you an example. I call your attention to Ezra chapter 9, verses 3-5. *“When I heard this, I tore my tunic and cloak, pulled hair from my head and beard, and sat down, appalled. And everyone who trembled at the words of the God of Israel gathered around me because of the unfaithfulness of the exiles. And I sat there appalled until the evening sacrifice.*

*“Then at the evening sacrifice I arose from my self-abasement. With my tunic and cloak torn I fell on my knees with my hands spread out to the Lord my God.”* In other words, they were troubled by the things they had been doing because the word of God was disobeyed.

But notice how he responded. He responded with a sense of reverence and awe. When we are struck in a gracious manner with the trembling at God’s word, we’re not hindered but encouraged in our duty and our service. It makes the heart more active. That’s why I say that the heart is made active, because when we’re exposed by God’s word we’re not hindered by it; we’re encouraged in our duty.

Isaiah chapter 60 verse 5 is another reference for us.

*“To Me you will look and be radiant;  
Your heart will throb and swell with joy.  
The wealth of the seas will be brought to you,  
To you the riches of the nations will come.”*

That can be translated, *“Then you will look and tremble and be enlarged.”* In other words, friends, whenever you and I are exposed to the balance between grace and fear, fear being reverence and awe for who God is, balanced with a trembling heart, that’s when it enlarges your desire to serve Him. It’s the balance of being struck with fear and being made ready for service. That’s the balance of what it means to have a trembling heart.

And lastly let me close with this. *The trembling heart is one that is joined with love.* It’s a mixture of love and fear. It trembles at the Word but loves the Word. It’s joined with love because we remember what God has done for us in His grace and in His love. When I tremble at His word because of who He is and His revelation in Scripture, I love the Word. It means you’re going to side with God when somebody speaks against Him. You’ll side with the Word when somebody speaks against the Word.

It kind of works out this way. In the world system those who are most feared are not the ones most loved. In the world system they hate those whom they fear. But in the kingdom of God the One we fear most is the One we love most. That’s God Himself. The world does not do that. Those who are most feared are not the ones most loved. They hate those who they fear. They may hear the Word but they do not love it because they are not joined together. When the fear of the Word and the love of the Word go together, there’s the trembling heart.

They fear and hate because it’s too strict. The person who is not in Christ would say, *“I fear the Word because it’s too strict.”* They’re basically saying this: I wish God were not so holy. What they’re really saying is this: I wish there were no God at all.

I call your attention to 1 Kings chapter 22 at verse 21, the illustration of Ahab. In chapter 22 Ahab says that he hates the prophet of the Lord. In chapter 21 Ahab was struck

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with fear. Three years later he says that he hates the Word because it was not what he wanted to hear. In other words he was struck with fear but he didn't do anything about it because he didn't get what he wanted to hear.

Now the gracious heart that has the balance of a trembling heart trembles at His word and yet loves it. He rejoices in it as a good Word that applies to Himself. In other words, when we apply the Word to ourselves it's a good word. I might not like it the moment I read it because it exposes my sin. But when I apply it to myself I have to say I love it because it reveals who God is in all of His mercy. And so the heart that trembles at His word and yet loves it rejoices at the good when it's applied to yourself. The Lord applied this to me.

Well, to wrap this up a bit quickly, the trembling heart is the balance between God's grace and trembling fear. Remember, fear is this: a sense of reverence and awe for who God is in all of His glory. When I balance those two things out, at times I'm going to fear when God speaks to me in His word. But I'm going to balance it out by God's loving grace. And when you put those two together you begin to act on that and do something about it.

The difference between the Biblical examples that I gave you and those non-believers who had fear is that they didn't do anything about it. That's because they did not have the balance between grace and fear of who God is in all of His glory.

So the trembling heart is what pleases God. Who is He going to find favor with? The humble, the contrite of heart, and those who tremble at His word. The balance between grace and fear is the trembling heart. May God be pleased to apply that to our lives for Jesus' sake. Amen.

I gave you an awful lot, folks. But I hope you take your notes and just read those Scriptures and just meditate on them, and ask God to give you a trembling heart, to have the balance between grace and fear. May God be pleased to do so for His glory.

Thanks very much, folks. Any comments or questions or concerns? Okay, my question is this. What are you going to do about what you've just learned?

**Nancy Cochran:** Bruce, one of the things that I really loved today is your quote, “God is giving us Himself through His word. And so I just have this passion to go be with God through His word.

**Bruce:** Amen; good application. Thank you. Others, please? Well, not hearing any other comments I'll just trust that the Lord will work in our hearts for his glory. And I'll see you next week.

**Sig Tragard:** Nancy has a question.

**Bruce:** Hi, Nancy.

**Nancy Tragard:** Hi. I guess I just feel concerned about one part of the theme. And that is that we should fear the loss of God. I don't fear the loss of God. It's we who walk away, not Him. So I'm always convinced that He's there. It's me in my sin who loses Him for the day, you know? That was my concern.

**Bruce:** That's a good concern, Nancy; well said. We're the ones who leave Him; He does not leave us.

**Nancy:** Great.

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**Bruce:** Amen to that.

**Corky Semler:** Bruce, I liked what you said about watching too much news. It certainly pulls us down and ruins the day.

**Bruce:** I agree, Corky; I agree with that.

**Doug Wicker:** Bruce?

**Bruce:** Yes, Doug?

**Doug:** My takeaway from the teaching today is as I read the Word I have to be cautious not to apply it to other people in my life, but to apply it to myself, and not look at the faults of others, but realize that what I’m reading is God speaking to me.

**Bruce:** Well said, Doug. Thank you very much. That’s a good application. Remember, ask yourself the question, folks. What am I going to do about what I just learned? May God give us the grace to do that.

**Don Maurer:** Bruce?

**Bruce:** Yes, Don?

**Don:** Martin Luther had something interesting to say about the world’s fear versus godly fear. The world’s fear fears punishment and judgment. And that’s why, for example, militant atheists or people in Communist countries don’t want anything to do with the Bible and don’t want anything to do with God. Like you said, they hate God. But fear drives a Christian to God. We fear offending Him. But at the same time we want to be driven to Him because we know that He’s the Source of grace. I thought that was very helpful.

**Bruce:** Thank you Don. Good comment; thank you much. Well folks, I’ll look forward to being with you next week. I hope this is working out well for you. Blessings to all of you.

**Group:** Thank you, Bruce. Thank you.