

Three Benefits of Walking in the Fear of the LORD

Proverbs 19:23 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

The fear of the Lord leads to life, So that one may sleep satisfied, untouched by evil.

Psalms 34:7 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear Him, And rescues them.

Proverbs 1:7 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; Fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Introduction

I am going to present my sermon this morning in two parts: first, a diagnosis of our present times, then, three benefits of walking in the fear of the Lord.

First, a diagnosis of our times.

Last Sunday, I spoke about five sure-fire time wasters (unforgiving, comparing, grumbling, doubt, and worry). I also encouraged you to be wise and make the most of your time because the days are evil. Ephesians 5:15-17. ¹⁵ *So then, be careful how you walk, not as unwise people but as wise,* ¹⁶ *making the most of your time, because **the days are evil.*** ¹⁷ *Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.* Indeed, we are living in the days of evil.

The more I think about our times, the more I ponder the ways people conduct their lives today, and I keep coming back to one thought: people need the LORD. Everyone needs the fear of the LORD in their hearts, in their homes, in their workplaces, and in our nation. Here's why: when people walk in the healthy reverence and awe of the LORD and the accountability thereof, they will stay away from evil. The more people walk in the fear of the Lord, the less evil will there be, and the better our society will become and vice versa. The fear of the Lord is the best deterrent of evil. Let me introduce to you two books that I have been reading lately.

The first one is "The Josiah Manifesto" written by Pastor Jonathan Cahn. In his book, he diagnoses the times we are living in America as follows: *"We live in an inverted civilization. It has fallen from the God of its foundation. American civilization now exists in a state of spiritual schizophrenia—. It is a nation that takes good for evil and evil for good, the sacred for profane and the profane for the sacred, life for death*

and death for life,...” (p. 189). Here’s the reason behind his diagnosis: *“American and Western civilization turned away from God and monotheism, in its place has risen a form of revived paganism. ... The civilization that had once been known as a beacon of Christian values has now become the world’s central conduit for the promulgation of a brazenly anti-Christian morality and gospels”* (Ibid, p. 190-191).

The second book is entitled, *“How Now Shall We Live?”* written by Charles Colson and Nancy Pearcey. Chuck Colson is the founder of Prison Fellowship. Although the book was written over 20 years ago, it diagnosed our times accurately. Their diagnosis is the same as Pastor Cahn’s: *our nation has become a godless society*. They further point out to a clash between Christianity and Naturalism in America. Many folks today live under the influence of naturalism whether they admit it or not. In fact, it caused many believers to fall away from their faith. One recent survey says that 70% of Americans consider themselves *“NONE,”* meaning they have no affiliation of any religion. It is quite a reversal of what it used to be in America. We can say no longer that America is a Christian nation. We are living in a godless society.

In my humble opinion, such a shift was rooted in naturalism. What is naturalism? It is *“the idea that nature is all that exists, that life arose from a chance collision of atoms, evolving eventually into human life as we know it today”* (How Now Shall We Live, p. 20). In its core, there is no God or gods. Since there’s no God in their mindset, there’s no supreme Giver of moral codes. There’s no absolute truth, either. Consequently, it results in relativism. You heard about this expression before. If there’s no God, then, *“there is no transcendent source of moral truth, and we are left to construct morality on our own. Every principle is reduced to a personal preference”* (Ibid, p. 21). Since *“naturalists deny any transcendent moral standards, they tend to take a pragmatic approach to life: whatever works best is right. Actions and policies are judged on utilitarian grounds alone”* (Ibid). Naturalism further embraces the Enlightenment notion that human nature is essentially good, which leads to Utopianism. Utopianism says: *“If only we create the right social and economic structures, we can usher in an age of harmony and prosperity”* (Ibid). Finally, naturalists are only concerned about what happens in this world, this age, this life. The life after death is no concern to them. Failing to look at everything from an eternal perspective and devoid of accountability and divine judgment after death, people operate from their own self-interests that result in all kinds of confusion and nonsense every day. Someone once called such lifestyle, *“Everyone is dancing to their own DNA’s.”*

So, the bottom line is this: when you exclude God from your life and your way of thinking, you are on your own. There’s no moral code you need to comply with. Everyone, therefore, is on their own. You create your own moral codes. You follow whatever your heart desires. Sometimes, your own right clashes with other’s right. Who’s right, then? E.g., A teacher was fired after she corrected a student who

insisted that 2+2 is 22. She was reprimanded by her principal who demanded her to apologize to the student and his parents. Refusing to do so, she was fired.

Welcome to America! Ordinary folks like you and me groan and suffer from the consequences of excluding God from the ways of life. We cry out to God, how long this will continue? We all long for a permanent solution to our social evils. So, what is the answer? We know that when the Messiah returns, He will set everything straight. What can we do, and how shall we live, while we await His return? As for one, the answer has been around us and under our nose. All these times. The answer is found in Proverbs 16:6. *By mercy and truth atonement is made for wrongdoing, **And by the fear of the Lord one keeps away from evil.*** It is time that we turned our hearts back to the LORD. It is time that we brought back the fear of the Lord into everyone's heart in our society. And it must begin with us first.

Next, the benefits of walking in the fear of the Lord.

Before we talk about the benefits of walking in the fear of the Lord, we must debunk a misunderstanding about walking in God's ways. Some folks call the Bible full of rules and regulations, so they don't like following it. But to us walking and living according to God's ways is a sure blessing rather than constriction. It provides boundaries and freedom to stay within God's will. So, Psalmist declares: *Blessed is everyone who fears the Lord, who walks in His ways* (Psalm 128:1). Let's begin with a notion that the fear of the Lord is a blessing. God promises to those who walk in the fear of the Lord, prosperity, happiness at home, and the blessings on their descendants.

With that understanding, let's talk about three benefits of walking in the fear of the Lord: *Security, Protection, and Wisdom.*

First, **security and confidence.** Proverbs 19:23 says, *"The fear of the Lord leads to life, so that one may sleep satisfied, untouched by evil."* If there's one thing that I really desire nowadays, it is a peaceful sleep at night. Not worrying about anything, nor being afraid of anything. Who doesn't want that, right? The question is how to get it. There we go, thousands of years ago, the Lord already gave us an answer in His Word. That is to walk in the fear of the LORD, and it will lead us to life. We will sleep at night satisfied, untouched by evil. Only those who lose their sleep at night due to life's challenges, worries, and touched by evil would appreciate this promise. Do you want to *sleep at night satisfied and untouched by evil?* Fear the Lord.

I also believe that security comes from confidence. I am not talking about human confidence that comes from our own power and might. E.g., Think about the confidence we achieve through health and wealth. They can disappear rather quickly. They don't last, either. I'd rather have a strong confidence that comes from the LORD that transcends circumstances. Only those who walk in the fear of the Lord

understand, experience, and have it in their lives. God's Word says so. ***In the fear of the Lord there is strong confidence, and his children will have refuge*** (Proverbs 14:26). When it comes down to a confidence builder, you don't have to look far. It is the Lord Himself. King David is a good example. Do you remember what he said to Goliath when he was walking toward this giant in battle? 1 Samuel 17:44-47.

⁴⁴ *The Philistine also said to David, "Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the sky and the wild animals."* ⁴⁵ *But David said to the Philistine, "You come to me with a sword, a spear, and a saber, but I come to you in the name of the Lord of armies, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. ⁴⁶ This day the Lord will hand you over to me, and I will strike you and remove your head from you. Then I will give the dead bodies of the army of the Philistines this day to the birds of the sky and the wild animals of the earth, so that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, ⁴⁷ and that this entire assembly may know that the Lord does not save by sword or by spear; for the battle is the Lord's, and He will hand you over to us!"*

Some may be impressed with David's confidence against his enemy but let me remind you that his confidence is not based on his skills or youth. Instead, it is firmly rooted in the Lord who gives him a victory! There's security and confidence in everyone who walks in the fear of the LORD.

Next, **protection**. Have you seen our President always surrounded and accompanied by the security forces wherever he goes? Even some celebrities have their own bodyguards around for protection. Let me tell you this. You too can have such a strong protection, not by any human agency, but by the angel of the Lord. Listen again to God's promise in Psalm 34:7: *The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear Him, And rescues them.* You didn't know it, did you? The angel of the Lord encamps those who fear the LORD and rescues them. Can we ask for any better protection than this?

Now, as much as we all desire and pray for such divine protection, let us not forget our part: that is, to walk in the ways of the Lord and in the fear of His name. What's that mean to walk in the fear of God's name? It means, we walk in the ways that please the Lord. It means to keep His ways (Mark 7:5) and live according to His commands. It also means to bring honor and respect to His name in all we do and say. For instance, if you walk in the fear of the Lord, you will be careful with what you say. You will not say something that dishonors the Lord or makes Him cringe. You won't lie. You won't curse. You won't cheat. When you please Him with your life on your part, then the Lord will keep His promise on His part. He will protect you through His angel. Here's another great verse for you. Psalm 33:18: ***Behold, the eye of the Lord is on those who fear Him, on those who wait for His faithfulness.*** His eyes are on you 24/7 when you fear Him. His ears are attentive to your prayer when you walk in the fear of His name (1 Peter 3:12). How about one more promise from the Lord? 2 Kings 17:39: *But you shall fear the Lord your God; and He will save you from the hand of all*

your enemies. So, if you want protection from the hand of all your enemies, and if you want to have an angel of the Lord encamp around you, walk in the fear of the Lord.

Finally, **wisdom.** The fear of the Lord makes you wise. Your knowledge and wisdom begin with the fear of the Lord in your heart. Proverbs 1:7 says, *“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; Fools despise wisdom and instruction.”* Let me rephrase the verse in my own words and read it back to you. Fools who deny the existence of the Lord despise wisdom and instruction, but those who walk in the fear of the Lord will have knowledge and understanding. All the wise people in my life have one thing in common: the fear of the Lord in their hearts. I want to be like them by walking in the fear of the Lord and in His ways.

Conclusion

Imagine you are a doctor. You examine a patient to your best ability and prescribe medicine for the patient’s recovery. Your patient is the very society we are living in. It has been quite sick caused by all evils in our world today. What would you prescribe to help our world? As for one, I would give the pill of the fear of the Lord to everyone in our society with an instruction: *take it every day for the rest of your life. Walk in it. Then, all will be well with you.* Let me repeat: When everyone suffers from evil, the best remedy is the fear of the LORD. It is time that we turned away from evil and turned our hearts to the Lord and walk humbly with Him.

Let us pray.