

Week 16: "The Fear of the Lord"

Memory Verse

"Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands. This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God." I John 5:1-5

Day One

Sunday, February 2, 2003

"The Fear of the Lord"

Read: Isaiah 8:12-14 (p. 761) and Commentary (p. 763)

Reflect: What does the word "reverence" mean to you? In what circumstances do you normally experience this emotion?

Dig: Study Exodus 20:18-21 (p. 86) and notice the two different uses of the concept of "fear" in these verses and the paradox of both being commanded not to fear and yet to fear God. Can you explain the difference?

Study Proverbs 1:7 (p. 693) and notice how the second line of the couplet in that verse helps you to understand the first line.

Study Psalm 34:8-14 (p. 614) and notice the benefits that accrue to those who fear the Lord.

Apply: Ask God for a proper fear of him (awe mixed with love) and that you would live today in awe of his person and majesty.

Day Two

Monday, February 3, 2003

"Overcoming the Fear of Death"

Read: 1 Corinthians 15:50-55 (p. 1323) and Commentary (p. 1324)

Reflect: Do you fear death? Have you ever witnessed someone dying? If so, did they die as if they feared death?

Dig: Look up the two Old Testament quotations from this passage and answer these questions:

1. Isaiah 25:8 (p. 778) What does the surrounding context and the "Freedom Point" tell you about the strong hints in the O.T. regarding eternal life?
2. Hosea 13:14 (p. 990) What does the explanation of 1 Cor. 15:56-57 tell you about the prophecy of Hosea?
3. How should we live because death is defeated as a fear object? (hint: see the "therefore" of verse 58).

Apply: Turn to page 1534 of your Freedom Bible and repeat out loud the prayer in bold print on that page. Thank God for your freedom!!

Day Three
Tuesday, February 4, 2003
"Overcoming the 'Fear of Man'"

Read: Proverbs 29:25 (p. 726) and Commentary (p. 727)

Reflect: Has "people pleasing" been a problem for you? What does fear of what people think decrease your sense of freedom?

Dig: What does looking to the context (verses 23,24 and 26) contribute to your understanding of verse 25?

What does looking up the cross-reference (Proverbs 28:25) contribute to your understanding of our verse?

Why might the writer of this Proverb use the word "snare" to describe the power of "fear of man"? Look this verse up in other versions to help you understand.

Apply: Sit in silence for a full minute asking the Holy Spirit to reveal to you how you are snared by the fear of what people think. Confess this sin and ask God for the freedom of fearing him instead.

Day Four

Wednesday, February 5, 2003
"Overcoming Fear of Failure"

Read: I Samuel 17 (p. 314) and Commentary (p. 316)

Reflect: Where does fear of failure tempt you to hide or quit or be passive?

Dig: What is the main point or message of this story? See the challenge that David speaks in verses 45-47.

Why did David not fear Goliath? (hint, see what the commentary says at the close of the first paragraph).

What does this story have to do with I Peter 3:14-17 (p. 1453)?

Apply: List those challenges that could turn into failures for you.

Now ask God for the power to see all these challenges in relationship to Him.

Now go do the right thing!

Day Five
Thursday, February 6, 2003
"Freedom from Fear"

Read: 2 Timothy 1 (p. 1404) and Commentary (p. 1404)

Reflect: When you are caught up in fear, what habits of mind do you follow to overcome them? Is this effective?

Dig: How is the "For," which begins the sentence in verse seven, related to the verse that precedes it?

And how is verse seven related to the following verse?

In the margin, Romans 8:15 (p. 1290) is given as a cross-reference. Look it up and decide why this is an appropriate cross-reference.

Apply: Identify a major controlling fear in your life. Quickly go through the six steps listed in the commentary to help you overcome that fear.

Ask God to give you a spirit of power, love and self-discipline.