

Feared Correctly

“And do not *fear* those who kill the *body* but cannot kill the *soul*. Rather *fear him* who can destroy both *soul and body* in hell.” Matthew 10:28 (ESV)

Have you considered, that if each believer feared correctly, he or she would love God and love people more? A telltale sign that you are growing is when God places you into situations that produce fear — the good kind of fear, the kind that makes you respect Him more deeply. Your devotion and obedience increases. Your motivation to serve Him intensifies and you sin less. Almost every believer thinks to be mature, he needs to become a fearless Christian, but there is no such thing as a fearless Christian. There never should be a Christian without the correct kind of fear, the fear of God.

Faith and fear are often taught as opposites. However, the kind of fear the Bible commands for each believer (Deuteronomy 6:13) is born out of faith. Fearing God is the result of believing a promise or threat. Fear is the result of *truth that we possess*. God reveals His will, His heart and we respond in faith. That personal faith yields godly fear and respect. Faith produces the good work of fearing God and a walk more in harmony with His will.

The wrong kind of fear is the fear of the insignificant, material things. The Lord Jesus reminded His disciples that they can be motivated by the wrong fear. Do not fear people who can only kill you, but who cannot rescue you from the second death. Do fear God who not only can take your life, but can cast your soul into hell. Putting one's faith in the wrong thing, in this case powerful men, produces the wrong fear. Faith in the wrong thing becomes the root of so many of our problems, the worst of our miseries, and the heart of so much of our sinning: “*For whatever does not proceed from faith [trust in and reliance on God] is sin.*” (Romans 14:23) That's why there should never be a fearless Christian. God designed us to experience fear in some measure, because He designed us to live by faith (Romans 1:17). In fact, the object of our faith is revealed by which of the two kinds of fear most often motivate us.

The fear of the Lord that comes out of trust in him and that produces obedience also results in joy: “*Blessed [happy] is everyone who fears the Lord, who walks in his ways*” (Psalm 128:1) and it produces rest for our souls (Proverbs. 19:23). One of the Spirit's highest sanctification priorities in each believer is to teach him or her to fear the Lord.