

The Fear of the Lord from a Kingdom Perspective

The fear of the Lord teaching needs correcting to bring it out of religion and have it properly corrected and placed inside the Kingdom where it belongs.

In the past, the church has taught us to fear God, rather than to be his sons or even his friends¹. The holiness movement, hell-fire-&-brimstone preachers and the church universally have presented us with the picture of an angry God. He's a cosmic policeman just waiting for us to step out of line so he can whip our backsides.

The fact that he is love is incongruous with this angry-God concept. It's seen as a mystery and we never seem to get a hold of it.

This is why Roman Catholics venerate and pray to Mary. They think that she is able to cajole Jesus into being nice to us because he and Father God are angry beings.

Even John 3:16 is explained away under this paradigm. It was just his is God's love-gift to mankind 2 millennia ago, but he's still angry with the sins and misdemeanours in our lives today.

The OT sets the scene for the angry God, Jehovah, and this flows over into the NT with statements such as:

Romans 11:22 (NKJV) – *Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness,² if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off.*

Serving an angry God: what a miserable way to live. Christian religion is no different in this context to any other religion – past or present – they were/are all about placating an angry god.

Added to this erroneous picture is the choice of words the translators have used to convey our attitude towards this angry God:

2 Corinthians 5:11 (NKJV) – *Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are well known to God, and I also trust are well known in your consciences.*

Word-of-God adherents take this and other verses literally and instil in their congregations the idea that God is terrible. He's just looking for any opportunity to send us to hell and when he does, he's happy.

How can anyone have an intimate relationship with such a being?

How would anyone want to be “one”³ with such a being?

The Greek word used in 2 Corinthians 5:11 is *phobos* (φόβος). The word can be translated fear, dread, terror, or reverence. So why use 'terror' here instead of 'reverence' in Romans 11:22?

According to Vine, *phobos* for God is “reverential fear”:

...as a controlling motive of the life, in matters spiritual and moral, not a mere "fear" of His power and righteous retribution, but a wholesome dread of displeasing Him, a "fear" which

1 – John 15:15

2 – NU-Text adds: “of God”

3 – John 17:20-23

*banishes the terror that shrinks from His presence, Rom. 8:15, and which influences the disposition and attitude of one whose circumstances are guided by trust in God, through the indwelling Spirit of God, Acts 9:31; Rom. 3:18; 2 Cor. 7:1; Eph. 5:21 (RV, "the fear of Christ"); Phil. 2:12; 1 Pet. 1:17 (a comprehensive phrase: the reverential "fear" of God will inspire a constant carefulness in dealing with others in His "fear"); 3:2,15; the association of "fear and trembling", as e.g., in Phil. 2:12, has in the Sept. a much sterner import, e.g., Gen. 9:2; Exod. 15:16; Deut. 2:25; 11:25; Ps. 55:5; Isa. 19:16;*⁴

The same word is used of Herod's feared of John the Baptist.⁵ Was Herod terrified of John? Or was he respectfully fearful of this 'holy' man?

The terror of the Lord **does not** engender sonship. Instead, this is what it produces in believers – prostrate servants or slaves.



We are royalty and royals acknowledge seniority but do not prostrate before them.



commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:P390-Edward_the_Black_Prince_presenting_King_John_of_France_to_his_father.jpg (public domain)

4 – Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words (www.menfak.no/bibelprog/vines?word=%Aft0001014)

5 – Mark 6:20

We are sons of the Most High God and we are free to come into Father's presence any time. We are free to come into the presence of our brother and King also.

As Kingdom sons we have a lot of liberty that others don't have. Because we are family we can do the following in the spirit:

- Access the King without bowing
- Sit on a chair in Father's throne room
- Hold Father's hand as a young son
- Sit on Father's lap
- Lean against Jesus' breast

As incomprehensible as that may seem, here's what occurred when a non-believer had a near-death experience:⁶

This was how I understood God, this was how I was taught God was, was this really, really nice guy – Jesus, loved me and cared about me, and when I was a little boy I prayed to Him, and you know, “Help me, I’m scared”, you know, stuff like that. And I really felt like it was my only shot. I mean, this is either going to work or it’s going to be what I think it’s going to be, which is this darkness and torment forever. So I called out, “Jesus, please help me”, and with that, light came into the darkness, came upon me, hands and arms, this beam of light reached down and touched me, and when He touched me, all of my gore, which was much more profound than I had known, it was very gross, kind of just slowly dissolved away and I became whole and intact.

That was very secondary to what His touch did which was eternally it filled me with His love, which there is no possible way to describe that, because it is far more intense than any human experience of love. I mean, if I took my mother’s love and multiplied it by a hundred or a thousand times, that might be somewhat like His love was. And His hands went under me, while I’m feeling this healing and love, and He lifted me up without any effort and embraced me and He held me. I just wanted to be held by Him because this may sound strange, but I also knew that He liked me very much. This love wasn’t like this abstract sentimental thing, it was like He knew me and He liked me and He cared about me even though I had been very very mean to Him for my entire adult life. And I was aware that I had utterly and completely rejected Him, and He was going, “That’s okay, that’s okay, don’t worry about it. You’re all right, you’re all right, I’m here now”.

When I asked all the questions that I could think of to ask, even making up questions just to perpetuate the fun of being with Jesus and these people, because it was like wonderful, you know getting all this attention, I’m getting all this information, and I have retained all that, that whole thing. I just wanted that to go on forever, but when I couldn’t think of anything more to ask, I asked the one question that had been troubling me for a long time, which was I said as a statement, “I’m ready to go to heaven”. Jesus said, “No, you’ve got to go back to the world and try to do what you were created to do in the first place”. So we had a huge argument, and I’m here to tell you that I argued as strongly with Jesus as I possibly could, for me to go to heaven, and He persuaded patiently and kindly and with good reasons why that wasn’t going to happen and I was going to come back here. And it was a really interesting conversation because – I have to fall back on this stuff all the time in my life when I get discouraged, depressed, lose my way, I go back to the things that He said, try and restore myself, to explain to myself and re-energise myself of why I’m here.

Ultimately He persuaded me that I was going back to go back and that’s all there was to it, and

6 – Transcript of a section of an interview with L.A. Marzulli: “Watchers 4” DVD, chapter 9 'The Near Death Experience'

so I agreed to that, and when I agreed to that, there was no transition, I was just very rudely back in the bed...

Notice what occurred while this man was in a pre-hell holding area:

1. **He was rescued and sent back to life on Earth when he called out to Jesus** – What happened to the theology that evil people are punished unmercifully once they make their choice before they die? Kills that idea doesn't it.
2. **He was shown great love in that pre-hell environment** – This contradicts the terrible God who just wants to punish the evil doers.
3. **He was consoled in that pre-hell environment** – Like a tender mother, Jesus settled him there. Notice he didn't shake his finger at him as say, “You got what you deserved, fella”.
4. **Jesus liked him as a person** – He was liked for who he was – sins and all. The holiness proponents declare that God only likes God-fearing, perfectly righteous people. Kills that idea also.
5. **He argued with God** – If you are terrified in the presence of God, you won't think of arguing with him. How can a person be allowed to contend with God like that? Only friends, family and favoured-ones would be allowed to. Whoops, there goes another theology.

What an amazing encounter. But it's not the only one you can hear about.

Ian Clayton⁷ records⁸ his experience of being translated in the spirit⁹ to a beach where he rumbled in the surf with Lord Jesus for a considerable period of time.

Rumbling with Jesus is not something a person experiences due to the “terror of the Lord”. This is what friends¹⁰ do. This what mates¹¹ do.

Actually, Ian's experience is similar to Jacob wrestling with the Lord¹² when he was tested and renamed Israel. In Jacob's case, he wasn't translated anywhere – as far as we can tell from the OT.

Of course, there are bible verses telling us to fear God. There's no denying that.

Luke 12:5 (NKJV) – *But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear Him who, after He has killed, has power to cast into hell; yes, I say to you, fear Him!*

*Phobeo*¹³ (GK) is used in this verse. In the passive voice¹⁴ it means to be alarmed, in awe, revere.¹⁵

The same Greek word is used in the previous verse, but it refers to men:

Luke 12:4 (NKJV) – *“And I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do.*

Interestingly, *phobeo*, is also used to describe a wife's attitude towards her husband:

7 – sonofthunder.org

8 – “Out of the Deep” conference, session 3 (December 2014 in Maleny, Queensland) [MP3 audio]

9 – Like John did during his revelation of Lord Jesus (Revelation 4:1)

10 – John 15:15

11 – Australian slang for 'best friends'

12 – Genesis 32:22-30 (Church bible teaching has this as a fight with an angel, but that's not what really happened. More on that at a later date.)

13 – Derived from *phobos*

14 – “to put to flight” (see A, No. 1), in the NT is always in the Passive Voice (Vine: www.menfak.no/bibelprog/vines?word=%AFt0001014)

15 – Strong's definition

Ephesians 5:33 (NKJV) – *Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects¹⁶ her husband.*

So, there's too much FEAR in the theology of the church and not enough family, friendship, camaraderie and community with Almighty God. Genuine Kingdom sons fit into these latter relationships, not the former fearful attitude.

CHANGE YOUR ATTITUDE SO YOU CAN ENJOY GOD AND HAVE A FRUITFUL, INTIMATE, LOVE-FILLED RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM.

Laurence

19-9-2016

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16 – πλην και υμεις οι καθ ενα εκαστος την εαυτου γυναικα ουτως αγαπατω ως εαυτον η δε γυνη ινα **φοβηται** τον ανδρα (Westcott-Hort New Testament)