

WORSHIP

SUGGESTED WORSHIP SONGS:

How Great Thou Art, Indescribable, Holy (Jesus You Are)

WELCOME

Does the word “fear” evoke mostly or generally negative or positive emotions in you? Why?

WORD

PSALM 128

How blessed is everyone who fears the Lord, Who walks in His ways. ² When you shall eat of the fruit of your hands, You will be happy and it will be well with you. ³ Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine Within your house, Your children like olive plants Around your table. ⁴ Behold, for thus shall the man be blessed Who fears the Lord. ⁵ The Lord bless you from Zion, And may you see the prosperity of Jerusalem all the days of your life. ⁶ Indeed, may you see your children’s children. Peace be upon Israel!

Can fear and happiness go together? Is it possible for fear and blessing to co-exist? What enters your mind when you think of the word blessing? For many people, it’s about material things. Today, we look at the Bible and see what “blessings” are from God’s perspective, and how the fear of the Lord relates to His blessings. The word **BLESSED** (Heb. ‘Esher), is a word written in plural form emphasizing multiplicity. Here we are given a hint: the fear of the Lord involves obedience to GOD. The blessing of God and fear of the Lord are interconnected. True blessings in life will *always involve God*. This is the principle seen in the book of Genesis, with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. What made the place so perfect? It was the presence of God!

Psalm 31:19 makes mention about the **fear of the LORD** – and God’s great goodness is shown in how He prepared great things for those who fear Him. So, what does the Bible mean when it talks about **FEAR** (Hebrew word **YARÉ** or Greek word **PHOBOS**)? It can mean dread or terror, but can also mean reverence, awe, and respect. When it comes to our relationship with GOD, the emphasis is reverence, respect, and honor. **Deuteronomy 10:12-13** uses the same word (*Heb. yaré*) – to fear means to respect and revere, and the way you do this is **you obey and do what He wants**. The fear of God is a great motivation that can motivate you to stop doing certain things that are displeasing to Him. Love can also be a powerful motivation to do what pleases God. Both motivations are in place when it comes to relating with God since we understand that it is for our good to fear, love, and serve Him.

In the New Testament, the fear of God is not like your reaction to a poisonous snake but refers to respect and reverence. **Luke 5:8-11** tells us an important story when Jesus spent time with His disciples to teach them who He was. When they unexpectedly saw a glimpse of who Jesus really was, the response of Peter was an admission of his own sin. Jesus assured them there was nothing to fear, and the result was that

they left everything to follow Him. In the presence of a holy God, you will be overcome with amazement; you will be awed, you develop the right kind of fear for God. In a few chapters down (**Luke 12:4-5**), Jesus defines who it is to **fear**: The One who has authority over our lives! We have to have a balanced view of the sovereignty of God (**Romans 11:22**) – both His kindness, patience, goodness; but at the same time, we have to understand God’s severity – the seriousness of how God deals with SIN. **Hebrews 10:26-27** shows the quality of a person who doesn’t fear the LORD: they do not care about what God thinks. But when you treat sin lightly, there are consequences. The verses go on towards **vv. 30-31** reminding readers that the Lord will judge His people. A true Christian will feel convicted of sin and will want to change. **A.W. Tozer** said *“when men no longer fear God, they transgress His laws without hesitation. The fear of consequences is no deterrent when the fear of God is gone”*.

The fear of GOD is very important for a life that is blessed – and **Proverbs 8:13** shows us the effect of this fear – to hate evil. **Galatians 6:7** was written to believers and it warns against making a mockery of God. The opposite of reverential fear of GOD is mocking Him. It is also true that once we follow Jesus, we will be able to see clearly what is right and wrong. As **Proverbs 9:10** says *“the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom”!*

Many people carelessly mock God whether in jest or in seriousness. **Charles Finney** said this: *“to mock God is to pretend to love and serve Him when we do not; to act in a false manner, to be insincere and hypocritical in our professions, pretending to obey Him, love and worship Him... when we do not...”*

To fear God is to honor, reverence, and obey Him. What are the promised blessings that come with the fear of God?

1. BLESSING OF WORK

WORD (cont'd)

Psalm 128:1-2 tells us that those who fear the Lord and walk in His ways will “eat” and “be happy” because of the fruits of his labor. In reality, many rich people are not happy, because as **Proverbs 10:22** reminds us, it is the “*blessing of the Lord*” that makes us rich. The Bible repeats this reality in **Ecclesiastes 2:24-25**. The blessing of the fear of God is the ability to enjoy the fruit of your labor! God gives you both the ability to make money and also enjoy the benefits that you gain from the work you’ve exerted to do. God wants to remind us through **Deuteronomy 8:16-18** that we are being tested if we do good at work because He is the one empowering us to do such thing. When we fear God, we will do our best for the Lord (**Colossians 3:23**)!

2. BLESSING OF FAMILY

Psalm 128:3-4 reminds us that if we fear the Lord, our family will be blessed as well! How spouses treat each other will be honoring to God. Children are also a form of blessing, and the kind that can’t be bought by money. When we fear God in the family, we will be able to forbear, listen, care, and understand. We will be able to fulfill the roles expected of us. Indeed, the family is the place where true spirituality is tested. The fear of the Lord will make husbands fulfill their roles to love, honor, provide, and respect their wives (**Ephesians 5:25, 6:4, 1 Peter**

3:7). The same fear allows a wife to be submissive, loving, and caring (**Ephesians 5:22-23,33**); and the fear of the Lord would remind children no matter what age to hold their parents in high regard (**Ephesians 6:1-3**).

3. BLESSING OF COMMUNITY

Psalm 128:5-6 continues: the blessings will not be limited in your own life and family but will continue to your community! It is an overwhelming legacy that will impact not just the future, but eternity. When you live a life that will bless future generations, as the Bible tells us in **Psalm 25:12-14** – we will be given guidance, wisdom, inheritance, principles, and certain secrets and promises (*ex. Matthew 6:33, Luke 6:38, Matthew 5:8*). Blessings are not to be kept to ourselves, we must bless others!

4. BLESSING OF POSTERITY

Psalm 34:9-11 shows us that when we fear God, we will seek Him. The greatest blessing is God Himself! Fearing God is indeed a blessing – to love Him, bless Him, and take Him seriously as we follow the Lord. It is something progressive. **We impact generations after us when we fear the Lord.** Keep growing, keep learning, and above all, keep fearing God wholeheartedly!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. **Self-Check.** How do you exhibit your fear of the Lord? How does this help you live a God-glorifying life?
2. **Setting It Right.** Have you ever “mocked” God either by your words, decisions, or actions? Confess this to the Lord and make a legitimate commitment to give Him due respect and honor as your personal Lord and King.
3. **Living It Out.** How will you a blessing to your family and community? Extend the love of God to them this week!

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray that God will work in our hearts and the hearts of the people we pray for. Treat them in a way that honors God and be a blessing to your family and community. Share the gospel and let people know that God’s presence in their lives is the greatest blessing on earth and for eternity.

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives

II. Country and the World

- Effectiveness of tighter community quarantine measures in the next 2 weeks
- Repentance and Salvation

III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples
- Elders, Pastors, Leaders, and Families
- Ministries and Churches worldwide

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God
- Righteous living
- Salvation of family and friends