

W O R D A T W O R K

VOLUME XL NUMBER XI Fear of the Lord

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 1

Scripture: Psalms 111:10

Consider an average news cycle in mid-2020. We won't find much in the way of hope in the news. What we WILL find are stories of doom and gloom. Stories of a global pandemic, of racial unrest, political upheaval and economic devastation fill the headlines. Never mind that the last great global pandemic, the Spanish Flu of 1918, killed an estimated 50,000,000 people in two years and that just about a year into the COVID-19 pandemic, the total global death toll sits at 960,000. Yet we are being told that this plague is far worse than those that have come before and are being indoctrinated to fear – to fear our fellow man, to fear going outside, to fear the consequences of disobeying the state, to fear everything EXCEPT for God. This is nothing less than the latest attempt by the enemy to teach people to fear man and circumstances rather than God. This month we are looking at the fear of the Lord, and its proper place in our lives, to equip ourselves with scriptural ammunition to deflect the lies of the enemy. We must gird ourselves with courage to face increasing trials and adversity so we can stand as the warriors God has called us to be!

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 2

Scripture: Proverbs 9:10

From the news and social media, we know that the world wants us to fear all the wrong things. People who are afraid are easier to control. Despite evidence that wearing masks while **alone** is pointless, in Southern California we often see fellow drivers alone in their vehicles wearing masks. But why? Because people have been filled with a spirit of fear by the media and their allies in government and business. Not all fear is identical, however. Proverbs 9:10 says: *“The fear of the LORD is the **beginning** of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.”* This phrase also appears earlier in the Bible in Psalms 111:10 and this bit of wisdom is foundational. It does not say that the fear of the Lord leads to wisdom, ends with wisdom, or simply ‘is wise.’ According to Proverbs, wisdom **begins** with the fear of the Lord.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3

Scripture: 1 John 4:7-21

DO YOUR KINGDOM DUTY, AND GO VOTE! EVERY VOTE IS IMPORTANT!

What is the fear of the Lord, and how can it ever be a good thing to be fearful? For most of us when we hear the phrase the ‘fear of the Lord,’ what is the first thing we think about? Usually, it’s respect. We like to exchange the word fear for respect because many have been taught a lifetime of doctrines built upon a misunderstanding and misapplication of 1 John 4:7-21. The cornerstone verse here is 1 John 4:8 which says: *“He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.”* We remold fear into respect in our minds because of the natural paradox between God being love, and God being an Entity whom we should fear. This is only the case because we as believers have come to accept the world’s definition of love and applied it to God. As we know if we’ve read God’s Layered Love (Al

Houghton, 2014), God's love for His people frequently meant judgment and death for Israel's oppressors under the Old Covenant. God's love for all humans in the Gospel message established by Christ required the judgment and death of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5 to bring the fear of the Lord into the early church. God struck Saul of Tarsus with blindness in Acts 9 to mold him into Paul the Apostle. It required affliction against the sorcerer, Elymas in Acts 13. In the writings of the early church fathers others asked God to strike their enemies, like Arius who sought to halt the Gospel and to elevate the Father above Christ. God intervened and Arius died!

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 4

Scripture: Acts 20:27

Failure to recognize and deal with this paradox intellectually is the state in which many believers find themselves. It's more comfortable to confine all of the stories of judgment and death in a box labeled 'Old Covenant.' It allows evangelicals to keep the modern perception of God as a kind, benevolent old bureaucrat with a rubber stamp who is waiting to approve our requests if only we come to Him in prayer. The absence of the fear of the Lord has grown part and parcel with diminishing belief in hell or the afterlife in western countries. Many young people who profess to love the Lord are taught to discount hell and that there are many paths to eternal life so long as you are a "good person". The logical connection is easy to spot and impossible to ignore. If God is Love, and there is "no hell below us... above us only sky," why should anyone fear God? John Lennon's famous song Imagine epitomizes the great decline of the fear of the Lord in our nation. The media has succeeded in turning the name of Jesus into a curse word. If our kids or grandkids are watching YouTube, they are being subtly trained from a young age to use the name of Jesus Christ as a curse. We need to be vigilantly monitoring the culture of our younger ones. There is little doubt that overuse of media can undermine Christian growth and maturity.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 5

Scripture: Matthew 10:28

Though the concept of the **fear** of the Lord as respect is a good application of the phrase in Proverbs 9:10, it does not paint a complete picture. The word used in the Greek Old Testament is **φοβος**, or **phobos**, meaning "exceedingly afraid", "fear" or "terror." It is quite literally the root from which we get our borrowed English word phobia. Why is this word used? We can find a key in the words of Christ at Matthew 10:28, which says: *"And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."* God is our Ultimate Judge. By His word are we saved or condemned. Jonathan Edwards, famous theologian of the Great Awakening is perhaps best known amongst the modern body-politic for his sermon entitled 'Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God,' which we encourage everyone to read. Fear of the Lord does not just mean honor or respect; it also means a literal fear of the Creator. How can humans being the sinful creatures that we are, not be afraid of our Ultimate Judge? The modern church in the West has been so coddled in the doctrines of a loving, benevolent God that we have lost not only the fear of the Lord, but our respect for the Lord, and along with it, our wisdom!

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 6

Scripture: Proverbs 14:27

How can fear possibly lead to wisdom? Let's take a worldly analogy before we move to the spiritual. A young child has a typical fascination with fire. Its untamed beauty is, after all, mesmerizing to many little kids and adults alike. The child puts his hand in the flame simply to see what it feels like and is burned. To a sound mind, that experience is going to create a healthy respect, or fear, of the flame. Hopefully not a fear that is paralyzing, but sufficient to overcome the curiosity so that child will not put his hand in the flame a second time. Fire is, that child found out, dangerous. This experience leads the child to become just a little bit wiser than he was before. Proverbs 14:27 says: *"The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, To turn one away from the snares of death."* The example given of the child experiencing fire could serve as a metaphor of this verse. Fear can act as a shield for us in the right

circumstances to warn us about dangers which lie in wait and help us to act appropriately under the circumstances. The fear of the Lord brings us life, because it illuminates through His Word, those things which lead to eternal death and point us in the direction of eternal life. Studying the Word of God and applying its principles in our life will lead us away from sin and from temptation. If we read from Genesis through Revelation, it illuminates God's plan for humanity, and leads, to a choice about Christ, to either accept or reject Bible truth.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7

Scripture: Proverbs 1:29,33

The fear of the Lord is a choice just like putting our hand in fire is a choice. Verse 33 promises, *"But whoever listens to me will dwell safely, And will be secure, without fear of evil."* When a child does put his hand into flame, logic and common sense teaches him that fire means pain. But what of circumstances where evil is disguised? Listening to God's voice is essential! Developing a relationship with our Father and the Holy Spirit means learning to hear that still, small voice, regardless of the chaos that surrounds us. Are there riots outside of our dwelling? Has the loss of a job caused our rent to go unpaid? Has a family member fallen severely ill? Learning to listen despite our circumstances is a key foundation to operating as a son or daughter of God without fear. Fearing God is the only way we can learn to turn aside from the evil and the darkness the enemy offers. Choosing the fear of the Lord brings divine protection!

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 8

Scripture: Proverbs 3:7-8

When we fear the Lord, we walk away from evil and Proverbs 3:8 promises, *"It will be health to your flesh, And strength to your bones."* Proverbs 14:27 states, *"The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, To turn one away from the snares of death."* The benefits keep adding up in both length and quality of life! Proverbs assures us that the fear of the Lord is connected to security, health and strength. The value of this promise is clear in this season where turmoil, trials and danger prevail. Our nation and many of our households, are facing economic insecurity. People across the nation are facing health battles across the board. And the strength to fight these battles wanes due to discouragement. However, we are given the key we need to access supernatural security, health and strength! Our 'come-what-may' commitment to the Lord, even in the midst of end-time trials, gives us the steadfastness to receive the confidence we need to face whatever battles may come. Knowing and fearing the God, of both mercy and wrath, gives us confidence in our security and strength. The fear of the Lord is a foundation for blessing!

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 9

Scripture: Proverbs 1:28-29

There are consequences for not fearing the Lord. The most obvious of which is a departure of wisdom. We read in Proverbs 1:28-29, *"Then they will call on me, but I will not answer; They will seek me diligently, but they will not find me. Because they hated knowledge And did not choose the fear of the LORD,..."* When Solomon discussed the call of wisdom, he imagined wisdom as a human figure calling out to mankind. These words spoken by Wisdom tell us that failing to fear the Lord leads to a loss of freedom. Look at all of the heresies which have sprung up in the last half century. We see the rise of liberation theology to pervert the church in South America, we see the rise of the prosperity gospel to weaken and indulge the church in the west, we see the rise of the emergent church to sow universalist heresy throughout the world. In particular, the emergent church is a perfect example of what we get when we lose the fear of the Lord.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 10

Scripture: Proverbs 1:28-29

What is universalism and why is it so wrong? The emergent church, also referred to as progressive Christianity

and popular among younger groups reject ideas of Christ's divinity and Jesus as the only path to salvation. Universalism at its core means all men will be saved regardless of their actions and choices. based on universalism, which leads to the question, what is it and why is it wrong? Does it spring from a refusal to fear the Lord? Universalism is characterized by a belief that there are many paths to God, or to salvation. Sometimes we'll hear a preacher get on a national interview or talk show prattle on about how God is going to save everyone. This is accompanied by a rejection of sin, a rejection of hell, and by logical association the rejection of a need for a savior. After all, if there is nothing to be saved from, why would one need a savior? The promoters of this emerging religion give it a post-modern superstructure, which dilutes the concept of truth and promotes relativism. The result leads to questions regarding the divinity of Christ the Son, doubts about the creation, the resurrection, and the ascension. It is in effect the reframing of God the Father into a deity who likes and dislikes all of the same things that the so-called believer likes and dislikes. Losing the fear of the Lord leads to a loss of wisdom.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 11

Scripture: Proverbs 1:28-29

Millennials are possibly the most self-obsessed and selfish generation in history. Everything from their food, clothing, and entertainment preferences are centered on detailed personal preferences and self-perceived 'needs.' And this culture spread like wildfire between 2010 and 2020 because most millennials have gotten used to having it "their way." Is it any wonder that we see people of this generation only choosing to believe in a Jesus who thinks, speaks, and looks like them? Their Jesus believes it's okay to be gay, God made me this way! Regardless of what it says in the Bible, the millennial Jesus sees nothing wrong with "shacking up," divorcing your spouse because the chemistry just isn't there anymore, doing drugs because it feels good, and telling lies, because the ends justify the means. Millennial Jesus doesn't call anyone to repentance, because he doesn't believe that there is anything to repent FROM. Except maybe white supremacy and white privilege. In other words, millennial Jesus is just another idol, an idol that the younger generation has set up to make themselves feel better about their rejection of the God of the Bible and of His standards. In life, we often **can't** get our own way, and that is something that the many millennials have yet to figure out. Our walk with God is supposed to be about us conforming to Him, not making Him conform to us. Trying to make God fit into a box of our design is foolishness, and it comes from not fearing the Lord.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 12

Scripture: Proverbs 8:13

We know that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom, but what else does scripture teach us about the fear of the Lord? Proverbs 8:13 says that: "*The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way And the perverse mouth I hate.*" Word-truth like this completely turns the emergent church theology on its head. The only evils that an emergent church pastor is willing to hate are bigotry and intolerance, evils which offend man's sensibilities rather than God, that are not explicitly condemned in the Bible. When it comes to hating the evils that are actually enumerated in the Bible, especially the ones dealing with sexual morality, the emergent church does the opposite. It enables people in their sin and convinces them that they have no need of a savior. God does not want us to meekly turn the other cheek to evil. Fearing the Lord means hating evil. We must take a stand against this modernism and moral relativism and restate the core tenets of the faith. Salvation is by faith alone through Christ alone!

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 13

Scripture: Proverbs 14:26

Does a fear of the Lord mean that we are to live our lives on pins and needles, terrified of what God will do next? Not in the slightest. For those who are walking with God, it is just the opposite. Proverbs 14:26 says: "*In the fear of the LORD there is strong confidence, And His children will have a place of refuge.*" We know from our study of the Sonship Gifts in Ephesians 1 (See the archived Word at Work starting in February of 2018) that we are made sons

and daughters of God when we make Christ the Lord of our lives. Rather than living in a state of perpetual terror, the fear of the Lord is a place of refuge for true sons and daughters of God. When the children of Israel were living in a state where God was feared and loved, God blessed the land, and there was peace.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14

Scripture: Proverbs 8:13

The Bible defines the fear of the Lord in Proverbs 8:13, *“The fear of the Lord is to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way And the perverse mouth I hate.”* Many a believer shies away from the concept of hatred. But the Lord hates that which costs Him eternal Kingdom lives for His Family in eternity! Imagine losing a child – the flesh of your flesh, bone of your bone. Every time evil steals a soul, Jesus experiences this anguish. And if we truly fear our Lord, we have to hate what He hates and love what He loves. Evils, pride, arrogance and a perverse mouth steal our potential brothers and sisters from the Kingdom! Do we hate evil the way God does? Do we fear God enough to judge evil in prayer when prompted by the Holy Spirit?

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 15

Scripture: Proverbs 9:10-13, Proverbs 14:27

Proverbs 9:10-13 declares fearing God is a personal choice – one that brings blessing. Verse 11 declares, *“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. For by me your days will be multiplied, And years of life will be added to you.”* The enemy’s ultimate goal is to steal, kill and destroy the harvest and thwart potential progress we may make for the Kingdom. Through layers of stealth and strategy, he works evil into the lives of believers and unbelievers to accomplish this task. He tries in every way he can to shorten our lives, but fearing the Lord lays a foundation for us to combat his strategy. Fearing God means **listening** to Him (Proverbs 1:33) and that means receiving guidance from the Holy Spirit in ways that will help us finish our race! Proverbs 14:27 states, *“The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, To turn one away from the snares of death.”* To fear God lengthens our life! The benefits keep adding up in both length and quality of life!

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 16

Scripture: Proverbs 14:26, Genesis 22:14, Philippians 4:19

Why is the fear of the Lord a place of refuge for His children, as we read in Proverbs 14:26? Who was God to Abraham? In Genesis 22:14, we see God named as Jehovah-Jireh by Abraham – the God who sees ahead and provides. Philippians 4:19 says that the Lord will supply all our needs according to His riches in glory. Would that those who have preached Biblical covenantal prosperity acted on it in such a way they didn’t focus on money and the outward trappings. Prosperous lifestyles including sports cars and private jets are great when God provides it. Not so great if it is gained by the wrong motivation of heart. We must have a well-developed ear to hear the Spirit and learn the difference between faith and manipulation. God does provide for the needs of His children. Let God provide honorably and there will be no complaints. Ask God not man to supply. It is not a sin to be blessed with such luxuries, but is God not answering our prayers if we have safe lodging and transport, but lack the extras? We are entering an age where opportunity and success are beginning to dwindle for those who refuse to compromise their faith. Many believers around the world live in harsh conditions or under intense persecution. As adversity progresses, God may very well challenge many of us to live below our means in order to supply others with necessities. We will be judged on how we use our faith. Obey the Holy Spirit. Be like that tree planted by the rivers of water with and eternal mindset and eternal fruit!

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 17

Scripture: Job 1:8-21

The first chapter in Job relates the story of God holding court and giving a strong endorsement of Job as a

man of faith and righteousness. Satan makes a point that is easily true of the vast majority of professing Christians. In Job 1:8-11, Satan says of Job: *“Then the LORD said to Satan, ‘Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?’ So Satan answered the LORD and said, ‘Does Job fear God for nothing? Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face!’”* Isn’t it interesting that when Satan talked about Job and all of his blessings, that he mentioned Job’s fear of God? We are not suggesting correlation equals causation here, but Satan’s first response was to note Job’s fear of the Lord. We all know how the rest of the story goes. Job was given into Satan’s hands, and all that he had was destroyed. His land, his servants, his property, his children. All of it is stripped away in brutal fashion. And how does Job react? We read in Job 1:20-21, *“Then Job arose, tore his robe, and shaved his head; and he fell **to the ground and worshiped**. And he said: ‘Naked I came from my mother’s womb, And naked shall I return there. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; Blessed be the name of the LORD.’”* How could one possibly have your entire life stripped away and still be praising God? Many of us grew up in a church that focused on a pleasant, comfortable gospel. If we weren’t being blessed by God on a weekly or monthly basis with answered prayer we must have sin in our life, not be praying hard enough or have enough faith. Even though other believers didn’t use those precise words, that was the spirit and the attitude towards those who lacked the trappings of earthly success, or those who were experiencing suffering. We will see as the study continues why this is so damaging.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18

Scripture: Job 1:20-21, 1 Peter 4

The challenge of the church is teaching a balanced gospel where both prosperity and suffering have their proper place. The Abrahamic covenant promises provision for God’s purpose and defines the suffering according to 1 Peter 4:19. This verse says, *“Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls *to Him* in doing good, as to a faithful Creator.”* God wills it for a purpose. 1 Peter 4:1-2 defines that purpose for suffering saying, *“Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God.”* Suffering delivers us from ourself to surrender to serve God’s will. Suffering applies the cross and we taste the surrender to God’s will that Jesus faced. The Word says that even Jesus learned obedience through the things He suffered. Some of us, fortunately, had strong families who never gave up praying that their children would come back to Christ and to foundational truth, and their faith was rewarded. Most of us have endured suffering, whether spiritual, financial, physical, or emotional, and that brings a true understanding of Job’s fear of the Lord. And walking through that kind of affliction highlights the paradox of praising God in the midst of suffering. If we have made Jesus the Lord of our life, and love Him beyond all else, there is no trial that the enemy can bring which will ever overcome us. Christ makes us more than conquerors when we walk in the fear of the Lord. And like Job, we will be restored, whether in this life or in the life to come.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19

Scripture: Isaiah 33:6

The prophet Isaiah was born in unique times. The nation of Israel had lived in wickedness for years. Much like the America of today, hedonism and idol worship were the central pillars of society during the reign of Hoshea in Israel, the kingdom fell and its inhabitants were taken into captivity in Assyria. The kingdom of Judah would endure for a time under Hezekiah. In writing a related prophecy, Isaiah 33:6 says, *“Wisdom and knowledge will be the stability of your times, And the strength of salvation; The fear of the LORD is His treasure.”* The fear of the Lord should be as a key to us and be as a treasure to us, as it no doubt was to Isaiah. When we fear the Lord, we are at a starting line for God to develop wisdom within us. Undergirded by nothing but human logic or reason, we are unable to reason rightly with wise reasoning due to our sin nature. Only when there is a fear of the Lord do we have a foundation for the beginnings of true wisdom.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20

Scripture: 2 Timothy 1:7

As we wrote earlier, God does not want us to live our lives in perpetual fear of losing our souls. This is why faith in Christ is also called in some circles a ‘blessed assurance.’ Indeed, this is also why the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, rather than the end. In 2 Timothy 1:7, Paul tells us: “*For God has not given us a spirit (G4151) of fear (G1167), but of power (G1411) and of love (G26) and of a sound mind (G4995).*” The word for spirit here is the Strong’s Greek #G4151, **πνευμα**, or **pneuma**, which is the Greek word for the spirit, or the spiritual being. The word used for fear, rather than being the same **pho’-bos** used when referring to the fear of the Lord is instead Strong’s Greek #G1167, **δειλιας**, or **di-lee’-ah**, which also means “fear,” but comes from the Greek root word **di-los’**, which means “timidity.” In our spiritual being, God did not create us to be timid, afraid, or fearful. While fearing the Lord is appropriate and necessary to develop wisdom, God made us to be bold, to be courageous by centering our lives on Him. The rest of 2 Timothy 1:7 tells us some primary characteristics which should be found in the spiritually-healthy Christian’s heart and soul replacing timidity.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 21

Scripture: 2 Timothy 1:7

God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love, and of a sound mind. The word for power is G1411, or **δύναμις**, pronounced **doonam-is**, and should immediately be recognizable to Word at Work veterans as one of the four levels of power mentioned throughout scripture. **δύναμις** represents miraculous power, strength, or mighty works. The word for love is #G26, **αγαπης**, or **agapē**, and is the kind of love represented by a willingness to lay down our life for a friend. The word for sound mind is #G4995, **σωφρονισμός**, pronounced **so-fron-is-mos’**, and comes from the root word **so-fron-id’-zo**, which means discipline or self-control. Characteristics of our spiritual being when we are spiritually healthy are a mighty power, agape love, and a disciplined mind. These characteristics enable us to endure circumstances which would otherwise leave us in a state of natural fear.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 22

Scripture: 2 Timothy

Paul’s second epistle to Timothy was written at the end of Paul’s life. In prison and awaiting execution under the mad emperor Nero, Paul wrote to encourage Timothy, his favorite son in the faith. It was a time of intense persecution of the church which was only just beginning, and would last for two-and-a-half centuries. As we know from the historical record, Christians were the favorite scapegoat of the Roman elite at this time, and Nero himself blamed Christians for the great fire which swept through Rome. History tells us that Christians would be subjected to many gruesome tortures and deaths during this time. Paul was facing the end of his race, as he himself noted in 2 Timothy 4:7. Nonetheless, Paul used this letter to exhort Timothy to take up his calling in ministry and to continue spreading the Gospel once Paul has gone. From the tone of 2 Timothy, it is apparent that Paul faced his end with courage. Indeed, there are few servants of God in the Bible who lived their lives in excessive natural fear and trembling. And there are many, like today, who overcame difficult circumstances that would engender natural fear in their contemporaries. Surrender and obedience led to courage and boldness! These Bible saints serve as role models during a time when uncertainty seems like the *only* certainty. Let’s choose surrender and obedience which will lead us to boldness and courage!

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 23

Scripture: 2 Timothy 4:1-8

Apart from a fear of the Lord, which leads to wisdom, God does not want us to live our lives in fear. Yet fear is a currently a staple of the culture in the West despite the unprecedented freedom and prosperity that we have heretofore enjoyed. What have the earthly authorities tried to do in the Western nations during 2020? As we

discussed earlier in the month, through the pandemic, they have taught the fear of one's fellow man, and the fear of the state. They want us to be afraid when we go outside, afraid when we open our doors or windows, afraid when we get into our car, afraid to go anywhere without wearing a mask. With the virus as an excuse, we are subtly being taught to be ashamed to go to church to worship God at the same time that some authorities give people a pass for gathering *en masse* to riot. Using racial unrest and the social justice movement, they have taught people to fear and hate each other based on skin color. Through a controlled demolition of the global economy, they are training people to be afraid for their provision. Again, fear makes people easier to control. We must not allow ourselves to be overcome with fear, for this fear is not from the Lord, but instead we must gird ourselves with courage to face the trials that the enemy brings our way.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 24

Scripture: Genesis 12; Genesis 20

What happens when we allow ourselves to be overcome by fear? Normally, it ends up leading us into sin, or we end up making mistakes that need divine repair. Look at Abraham during two separate periods of his life. The first is just after Abram receives his call from the Lord and is found in Genesis 12. Abram was fearful that the beauty of Sarai would be irresistible to Pharaoh, and counseled her to lie, saying that she was Abram's sister. God's intervention prevented Abram from pulling off the ruse, and Abram was kicked out of Egypt as a result. Many years later in Genesis 20, Abraham faced the same test again, this time with Abimelech, the king of Gerar. Again, acting out of fear for his life, Abraham let his fear of man overcome his fear of God, and he failed that test too. God turned Abraham's failure into a success, despite his deception, Abraham left Abimelech's house a thousand pieces of silver in the black side of the ledger and with an offer to take any piece of real estate within Abimelech's domain. It is encouraging to know that even after many years of walking with the Lord, if we make mistakes God's provision will cover those mistakes. The same covenant of Sure Mercy that God had with David was also with Abraham. And at our repentance God's Sure Mercy can turn our failures into successes too! We must learn from Abraham's mistakes, and strive to ensure that the primary fear in our lives is a fear of God rather than a fear of man.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 25

Scripture: Proverbs 3:7-8

When we fear the Lord, we walk away from evil. Proverbs 3:8 promises, "*It will be health to our flesh, And strength to our bones.*" Evil comes in some very surprising packages! Throughout Scripture evil hunts lives as a seductress attempting to neutralize our covenant with God so evil leaders can prevail by taking people into captivity. The doctrine of Balaam comes to mind as Balaam taught Balak to lead the Israelites into sexual sin then attack and the enemy would then prevail. The fear of the Lord is our greatest asset in defeating the doctrine of Balaam wherever and whenever it manifests.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 26

Scripture: Proverbs 8:13-21

The Bible defines the fear of the Lord in Proverbs 8:13-21. Proverbs 8:13 says "*The fear of the Lord is to hate evil, pride, arrogance and the evil way, and the perverse mouth I hate.*" The hatred of evil opens the doors to a host of benefits described in verses 14-21. Counsel, sound wisdom and strength tie in to what is offered in this passage. Will we hate evil the way God does? Hatred of evil may very well progress to fill our treasuries and supply needed provision! When we choose to hate what God hates the benefits add up! That hatred leads us to walk in righteousness and do judgment! The doing of judgment through prayer opens the door to divine provision. That provision comes as we follow the Spirit's guidance down certain paths! The Holy Spirit knows where the provision is and promises to lead us there.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 27

Scripture: Proverbs 15:16

Proverbs 15:16 states, *“Better is a little with the fear of the Lord, Than great treasure with trouble.”* Whom among us would not prefer having our bills paid or our personal desires fulfilled? Our finances can be a major inroad for the enemy to pull our focus away from God's purpose and away from our prayer lives and Kingdom destiny. It is an easy trap to fall into. However, when the rubber meets the road, would we choose even endless resources over a relationship with the Most High? Fearing the Lord is a choice that makes *“A little”* with God is far preferable to even *“great treasure...”* The quality of true life is greatly increased by the fear of the Lord! Make the choice!

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 28

Scripture: Malachi 3:16-18

Malachi 3:16-18 says, *“Then those who **feared the Lord spoke to one another, And the Lord listened and heard them; So a book of remembrance was written before Him For those who fear the Lord And who meditate on His name. ‘They shall be Mine,’ says the Lord of hosts, ‘On the day that I make them My jewels. And I will spare them As a man spares his own son who serves him. Then you shall again discern Between the righteous and the wicked, Between one who serves God And one who does not serve Him.’”*** Let's take note that those who feared the Lord spoke to one another. That is a key for us to heed! We are vehicles for our brethren in the Lord to be strengthened and encouraged. When we are God-fearing, God listens and He hears. He knows His Own who rise above the circumstances and are not defined by them. He keeps and honors those who have an eternal mindset who have chosen surrender over self! As we take the time to encourage each other, God hears and rewards accordingly!

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29

Scripture: Malachi 3:16, Hebrews 3:13

Malachi 3:16 says, *“Then those who **feared the Lord spoke to one another, And the Lord listened and heard them; So a **book of remembrance was written before Him For those who fear the Lord And who meditate on His name.**”*** Notice again that the sons and daughters spoke to one another. These exhortations are being recorded in heaven and reserved in a book of remembrance. We know that according to Proverbs an encouraging word makes the heart glad. Hebrews 3:13 challenges us to encourage one another daily. The communication of the brethren to one another is a key no doubt to strengthen and bring life to one another! That transfer of life and hope may be exactly what is needed for a brother at a crucial moment in their path. When the name or face of a brother or sister comes to mind, our redemptive prayers or words may be essential! Who is God calling us to encourage today?

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 30

Scripture: I Peter 1:17-18

As our team writes the Word at Work for November 2020, the Presidential election is less than a month away. As you first read this study, we will likely be calling down God's angels over the results. God has not given us any special insight into the direction the country will take over the next four years. The mission here at Work at Work remains unchanged no matter who sits in the White House: *“Obey Me, teach the Word and prepare My people for persecution.”* There is much fear IN the world and much fear OF the world right now. The darkness cannot be ignored. Not since the first American Civil War has the country been so divided, and at no time from the country's founding onward, has the church been so weak as it is today. Many leaders continue to be more interested in building their own work than in building an effective fighting force which could resist these cultural pushes toward destruction. Christ is the only way! I Peter 1:17-18 says, *“And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here **in fear**, knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers,...”* The Passion Translation puts it this way in verse 17b, *“...live each day with holy awe and reverence*

throughout your time on earth.” Sons and daughters, let’s arise not in our own strength, but in the Lord’s! Walking with God by the Spirit often puts us in the right place at the right time to experience God’s divine best. Those who know their God as both Savior and Lord shall be strong and accomplish exploits!

Don't live your life in fear of man.

That's fear that's misdirected.

To fear the Holy, Mighty God,

Is fear that's been perfected!

By Jayne Houghton

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| 11/6 – 11/7 | Midland, TX | Desert Wind Church 2813 Maxwell Dr. Midland TX 79705 Friday 7 PM; Saturday 10 AM - 1 PM | Pastor Keith McLelland 432-967-3470 |
| 11/8 – 11/9 | Andrews, TX | City of Refuge 1876 N US Highway 385, 79714 Sunday 10:30 AM, 6 PM; Monday 7 PM | Pastor Larry Brewer 432-523-3316 |