

THE FEAR OF THE LORD IN THE NEW TESTAMENT
A Motivating Factor in Religious Behavior

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by
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They who fear the Lord
need fear nothing else but the Lord

PREFACE

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A seed must be sown before the fruit can be produced. The small plant must be nurtured in order to grow unto fruition and to reap the harvest. The Living Lord is glorified in every aspect of this process.

This thesis might be compared to such a process. To paraphrase Paul, "A searching question planted the seed, the research watered the seed, but the Lord has given the increase."

A. A seed sown and nurtured. The seed for this thesis was planted on an early Spring Sunday morning in 1955, in a Baptist Church in Northeast Missouri. The pastor of this church was teaching a Sunday school class. A question was asked. "If God is a God of love, why, then, are we taught to fear Him?" The author admits that a ready answer was not available at that moment. He kindly deferred the question until a more opportune time, i.e., until he could find an adequate answer.

A hurried study produced an answer which was given at the next class meeting. It satisfied the young people. The answer only partially satisfied the pastor. He was motivated to further study. Through the succeeding months and years, he has been concerned with the concept of "the fear of the Lord."

The study was nurtured again and again in studies at Central Baptist Seminary, Kansas City, Kansas. The I Peter 1:17 passage was the subject of a sermon, which resulted in some opposition to the concept. The results of the message from the pulpit stimulated the desire to give further study to the subject.

The pastor was still nurturing the subject when he enrolled in the Southern Baptist Seminary. When a subject was needed for the Th.M. thesis, the concept of "the fear of the Lord" was thought of immediately.

B. Growth, fruition and harvest. The method of development--growth--of "The Fear of the Lord in the New Testament" will follow a simple, logical progression of thought. First, an Old Testament study will lay the foundation of the subject. Then, the New Testament study will include a Greek word-study, an exegesis of pertinent New Testament passages of scripture, and the use of fear in the early church. The third section will attempt to make the study practical, through an application of the study to the twentieth century.

The fruition--purpose--of this research is to acquire an adequate understanding of the Biblical concept of "the fear of the Lord." The author has found very little written on the subject, outside the commentaries. Even in the

commentaries, many did not dwell on "the fear passages," or passed over them hurriedly. For this reason, the author is convinced that this study is needed. It has been fruitful to his life. He prays that it will be the same to the reader.

The harvest does not come from the hands of just one laborer. It takes many to produce a harvest. This is true in this thesis. Acknowledgements include: to the Lord for grace and mercy; to Southern Baptists for providing Southern Seminary and its library; to the faculty for wise guidance and insight; to Dr. Heber Peacock, in particular, who directed this study and has been readily available for consultation; to my parents for patience and encouragement through the years; to countless friends who have become a part of my life; and, to Betty for love and devotion.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
PREFACE	v
A seed sown and nurtured	vi
Growth, fruition and harvest	vii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	ix
INTRODUCTION	xiii
CHAPTER	
I. THE OLD TESTAMENT "FEAR OF THE LORD"	1
The Old Testament Related to the New Testament.	2
A Hebrew Word-Study	2
Live in Spiritual Fear: Man's Whole Duty and	
Requirement	4
The Hebrew and fear	4
Commands to fear God	5
The initial experience: wisdom and knowledge.	7
The continual experience: service to God . .	8
The blessedness of fearing the Lord	9
Conclusion	10
II. THE NEW TESTAMENT "FEAR OF THE LORD"	12
The Relationship of the Love and the Fear of	
the Lord	13
Phobos: A Greek Word-Study	16
The Fear of the Lord According to Christ . . .	19

CHAPTER	PAGE
Christ and the Father	19
Matthew 10:28--Luke 12:5: an admonition to cultivate the fear of the Lord	21
The Fear of the Lord According to Peter	27
I Peter 1:17: live in the fear of the Lord in light of the judgment and the cross	28
I Peter 2:17: through spiritual fear, be a good citizen	33
The Fear of the Lord According to Paul	35
Philippians 2:12-13: in fear and trembling, work out what God has worked in	36
II Corinthians 6:17-7:1: in spiritual fear, complete and perfect your holiness	40
Ephesians 5:21--Colossians 3:22: in spiritual fear, live in subjection	45
The Fear of the Lord in the Early Church	48
The early kerygma	48
Fear and growth	49
God-fearers and the expansion of the church	52
Conclusion	55
III. THE TWENTIETH CENTURY "FEAR OF THE LORD"	58
Modern Man and His Religion	59
Security and the Wisdom of Insecurity	61
The Battle of Every Generation	64

CHAPTER	PAGE
CONCLUSION	66
BIBLIOGRAPHY	70

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

The first reference to fear in the Bible is a tragic passage of scripture. God had created the world. Man had been created for fellowship with God. All of this was termed as good (Genesis 1:31). Then, the fellowship was broken by the sin of man. "God called unto man and said, 'Where are you?' Man replied, 'I heard His voice, but I was afraid'" (Genesis 3:9-10). This is a tragic verse in that fear did not exist in the original beautiful companionship between God and Adam. Only when Adam broke God's Law did fear become part and parcel of man's life. God then used fear to bring man back into fellowship with Him and to motivate man to continue in fellowship through his upright religious behavior.

Fear is used to express emotions which differ widely in their ethical character. At one end of the scale, there is "the fear of the Lord." At the opposite, there is a fear of man. In order to distinguish the differences in meaning, the author has separated fear into two categories: (1) the physical-human fear, and (2) the spiritual-divine fear. Fear is commonly thought of as having to do with physical emotions, i.e., physical danger. Oscar Pfister, in his monumental work on fear, deals with this aspect of fear.¹ The fear of the

¹Oscar Pfister, Christianity and Fear (London: George

Lord is spiritual-divine fear.

There are several other ways in which we might term our two aspects of fear: a higher or a lower fear; a wholesome or an unwholesome fear; a filial or a slavish fear; a trusting or a cowardly fear; an humble or a selfish fear; a reverent or a servile fear; an ethical or an immoral fear; a legitimate or a needless fear; a fear which respects the world to come or a fear which respects this world. Each of these connotations expresses the differences in fear in its own way. The author chooses to separate the two aspects into the spiritual-divine and the physical-human.

Fear plays no little part in our physical lives. Fear plays a far greater part than any other emotion, not excepting love. Fear affects our health and happiness.²

If fear plays a commanding role in the physical emotions, how much does or should fear control a man's spiritual emotions, i.e., a man's religious behavior? Some scholars have given fear first place as the emotion upon which all religion is based.³ Others believe that fear is the parent of religion and love is its child.⁴

Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1944).

²William Sadler, Theory and Practice of Psychiatry (St. Louis: C. V. Mosley, 1936), p. 133.

³Ibid.

⁴George Arthur Buttrick, Prayer (Nashville: Abingdon

There is more to religion than fear. The author does not exclude the divine role of love in religion, nor does he seek to minimize its importance. He feels that the love of God and the fear of God have received and are receiving an unequal proportion of emphasis. If fear is the mainspring of religion, then a thorough study of it is warranted. A. T. Robertson was concerned with this matter for he believed that there is no more needed lesson than a proper study of the fear of the Lord.⁵

Press, 1942), p. 42.

⁵Archibald Thomas Robertson, Word Pictures of the New Testament (Nashville: The Sunday School Board, 1933), VI, 83.

CHAPTER I

THE OLD TESTAMENT "FEAR OF THE LORD"

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I. THE OLD TESTAMENT RELATED TO THE NEW TESTAMENT

Even to the very casual student of the Bible, there is a very close relationship and interdependence between the Old Testament and the New Testament. Without the Old Testament, the New Testament would be incomplete. The Old Testament laid the foundation upon which the New Testament was built. The Old anticipates the New, while the New presupposes and uses the Old. Each in its own way explains and interprets the other.

The New Testament leaders and teachers were heirs of a rich heritage. What they were experiencing and saying was a fulfillment of what was begun in the Old Testament times. Jesus and the Apostles accepted the teachings of Jewish scriptures and related their work as the completion of God's revelation of himself to the Jewish people.

Therefore, the student entering upon the study of the fear of the Lord in the New Testament must have an adequate understanding of the Hebrew conception of the fear of the Lord.

II. HEBREW WORD-STUDY

The kind of fear found in the Old Testament period is

abundantly illustrated in the Hebrew words describing fear. The picturesque language is marked frequently by hyperbole. Each word did not reveal the exact shade of emotion in every case. Today we say, "scared to death," when we are no more than just frightened or terrified.

The strong words for fear are:

אָרָא , (1) to fear, to be afraid; (2) to fear, to reverence, (a) to fear God (אָרָא אֱלֹהִים), (b) to reverence him, as the avenger of wrong; hence to be godly, upright; (3) to tremble for joy. Niphal (אָרָא), (1) to be feared, terrible, dreadful; (2) venerable, august; (3) stupendous, admirable, wonderful or illustrious. Piel (אָרָא), to terrify, to put in fear. Yare' appears 309 times in the Old Testament.

אָרָא , (1) to fear, to reverence; (2) reverence, holy, fear towards God.

אָרָא , (1) trembling, fearful, afraid; (2) applied to the fear of God and piety; reverence.

אָרָא , (1) terror, fear of the person who is feared; or to him who inspires fear; (2) care, concern.

אָרָא , (1) tremble, to be frightened; (2) to fear for anyone, to follow one trembling; (3) to come trembling, to hasten. Hiphil (אָרָא), to terrify, to make afraid.

אָרָא , (1) to writhe, to be in pain; (2) to fear, to tremble, to shake; (3) to twist oneself; (4) to bring forth.

וַיִּירָא , (1) to fear; (2) to flee for refuge;
 (3) violent internal emotion.¹

III. LIVE IN SPIRITUAL FEAR: MAN'S WHOLE DUTY AND REQUIREMENT

A. The Hebrew and fear. Fear was a daily companion of the Hebrew. The puzzles of nature bound him to uncertainty as to whether tomorrow would dawn or whether harvest would come again. He had difficulty in knowing just how to react to the natural forces in this world. Everything which went beyond the normal everyday experience was a miracle. He was filled with uncertainty in his soul. This world was sinister, full of phantoms and evil spirits, ready to envelop him in fear and anxiety.²

This slavish fear of the Hebrew held him in emotional bondage. This fear of the world and its elements turned the Hebrew toward his fear of the Lord.

The Hebrew lived in a land of many and varied gods.

¹The following works were consulted: William Gesenius, Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament Scriptures, trans. Samuel Prideaux Tregelles (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1957); B. Davidson, The Analytical Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956); Alexander Harkavy, Student's Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary to the Old Testament (New York: Hebrew Publishing Company, 1914).

²Ludwig Köhler, Hebrew Man, trans. Peter R. Ackroyd (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1946), p. 117.

There was only one God to the Hebrew. Monotheism was the corner-stone of Judaism. It was the doctrine of the soleness of God, in contradiction to polytheism. God was a spirit, while he was holy, just and good. He was absolute righteousness, but condescending to man. He was a personal God, not a mere influence. God dwelt everywhere and no one could escape his presence. God could thunder at Sinai, or he could speak in the still small voice at Horeb.³ Only the Hebrew could say, "What great nation has a God so near as ours!"⁴

The Hebrew did live in a world full of powers, most of which he feared as potentially hurtful to himself. With some, though, he had established friendly relations. His friendly relations with God did not take away the fear, the awe and the reverence for God. The fear of God יְרֵאָה אֱלֹהִים was the equivalent of religion for the Hebrew. It was the mainspring of his religion.⁵

b. Commands to fear God. There are many direct commands to fear God in the Old Testament. The following are

³George Foot Moore, Judaism (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950), I, 360.

⁴Deuteronomy 4:7.

⁵Adolf Guttmacher, "Fear of God," Isidore Singer, editor, The Jewish Encyclopedia (New York: Funk and Wagnalls Company, 1903), V, 354.

some of the more noteworthy passages.

"You shall not curse the deaf or put a stumbling block before the blind, but you shall fear your God" (Leviticus 19:14). "You shall not wrong one another, but you shall fear your God" (Leviticus 25:17). "You shall fear the Lord your God . . ." (Deuteronomy 6:13). "You shall keep the commandments of the Lord your God, by walking in his ways and by fearing him" (Deuteronomy 8:6).

"You shall walk after the Lord your God and fear him, and keep his commandments and obey his voice" (Deuteronomy 13:4). "Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness . . ." (Joshua 24:14). "Only fear the Lord, and serve him faithfully with all your heart" (I Samuel 12:24). "You shall not fear other gods or bow yourselves to them or serve them or sacrifice to them; but you shall fear the Lord, who brought you out of the land of Egypt . . ." (II Kings 17:35-36). "Let all the earth fear the Lord, let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him" (Psalm 33:8). "Serve the Lord with fear . . ." (Psalm 2:11). "God has blessed us; let all the ends of the earth fear him" (Psalm 67:7).

"Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord, and turn away from evil" (Proverbs 3:7). "My son, fear the Lord and the king, and do not disobey either of them" (Proverbs 24:21). "Let not your heart envy sinners, but continue in the fear

of the Lord all the day" (Proverbs 23:17). "The Lord of hosts, him you shall regard as holy; let him be your fear, and let him be your dread" (Isaiah 8:13).

The fear of the Lord influenced the life of the Hebrew.

C. The initial experience: wisdom and knowledge.

Fear was the starting point of all wisdom and knowledge.

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (Psalm 111:

10). "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge"

(Proverbs 1:7). "The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of wisdom; And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding"

(Proverbs 9:10). No amount of keen insight, nor wide expe-

rience, nor the practical skill of the schools would be of any avail, unless one started at the beginning. The begin-

ning--חֵשֶׁב אֱלֹהִים--expresses commencement or origin the same way as in the Greek ἀρχή. Wisdom has its origin in God.

Whoever fears Him receives wisdom. All who would advance to knowledge must first have a reverence or holy fear of God.

Without the fear of God, teaching is of no avail.

Oesterley translates it, "the zenith of wisdom is the fear of Jehovah." Fear is the consummation of wisdom. Fear gives understanding, insight and is profitable to all who cultivate it.⁶

⁶W. O. E. Oesterley, The Psalms (London: Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge, 1955), p. 466.

All true wisdom is summed up in the fear of God. True wisdom cannot be obtained without its price. It must be wrought by a holy and pious life. Religious behavior will determine true wisdom. The knowledge of the Lord (Proverbs 2:5) and the fear of God act reciprocally on each other. Just as without fear of God there can be no knowledge of Him, so the knowledge of God will increase and deepen the feeling of reverence and fear.

The Hebrew knew where to begin his living, i.e. in the fear of God. It is also a continual experience.

D. Continual experience: service to God. God has shown great mercy to Israel. What does He require in return? "And now, Israel, what doth Jehovah thy God require of thee, but to fear Jehovah thy God to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve Jehovah thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Deuteronomy 10:12). Fear coupled with love prompts obedient service to God.

The preacher in Ecclesiastes sums up the whole teaching of his book in 12:13. "This is the end of the matter; all hath been heard: Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man" (Ecclesiastes 12:13). The Hebrew was (1) to fear God, and (2) to keep His commandments. In the midst of afflictions and difficulties in this world, fear ends in the practical result of service. Man was made for this and placed in the world. Service is his real object

of life.

The fear of God is synonymous with a genuine heartfelt service to Him. The expression of obedience is motivated because of judgment.⁷ God's mercies make one ashamed of his sins and point him toward the judgment to come.

The Hebrew had no option in the matter. Fear of God was required. Fear of God was his whole duty. Obedience was the motive for all fear of God.

What are the results of the fear of the Lord?

E. The blessedness of fearing the Lord. There are promised results in the fear of God. A fountain of life: "The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life" (Proverbs 14:27). Riches and honor: "The reward for humility and fear of the Lord is riches and honor and life" (Proverbs 22:4). Happiness: "Happy is the man who fears the Lord" (Proverbs 28:14). Friendship: "The friendship of the Lord is for those who fear him" (Psalm 25:14).

Goodness: "O how abundant is thy goodness, which you have laid up for those who fear you" (Psalm 31:19). Salvation: "Surely his salvation is at hand for those who fear him . . ." (Psalm 85:9). Blessing: "He will bless those who fear the Lord" (Psalm 115:13). Banner: "You have set up a

⁷Ecclesiastes 12:14.

banner for those who fear you . . ." (Psalm 60:4). Pity: "As a father pities his children, so the Lord pities those who fear him" (Psalm 103:13).

Book of remembrance: "Then those who feared the Lord spoke with one another; the Lord heeded and heard them, and a book of remembrance was written before those who feared the Lord and thought on his name" (Malachi 3:16). All to be well: "Though a sinner does evil a hundred times and prolongs his life, yet I know that it will be well with those who fear God, because they fear before him" (Ecclesiastes 8:12).

IV. CONCLUSION

The fear of the Lord was one of the dominating thoughts in the Old Testament. Fear was one of the basic responses to God's demand upon the Hebrew.⁸

The fear of this world was a daily companion to the Hebrew. This unwholesome fear led to the wholesome fear of the Lord. This fear of the Lord did not make the Hebrew shrink from Him as one would from a tyrant or wild beast. It drew him nearer to his God and filled him with reverential awe.

⁸Alan Richardson, A Theological Word Book of the Bible (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1950), p. 81.

The Hebrew had many direct commands from God to fear Him. These admonitions told him that the starting point in life was the fear of the Lord. After the initial experience, there was the continual experience as well. God's requirement--man's whole duty--was to fear and love and be obedient to Him. Fear of the Lord was synonymous with service to Him. Blessings were promised to the Hebrew as the result of the fear of the Lord.

Consequently, the fear of the Lord was a motivating factor in the Hebrew's religious behavior.

CHAPTER II

THE NEW TESTAMENT "FEAR OF THE LORD"

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I. THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE LOVE AND THE FEAR OF THE LORD

The love of God holds the central position in the Christian religion. This love of God nurtured the Israelite nation through the Old Testament, whereas it visited the earth in the New Testament through the Incarnation of Christ. The center and climax of the New Testament was God's love in Jesus Christ upon the Cross bearing the redemption for the sins of all mankind.¹

If love holds a central position in the New Testament, what role does "the fear of the Lord" play in God's relations to man and man's relations to God? Is fear relegated to a relatively unimportant position? If so, our study is unwarranted. Or, does fear hold a prominent place in man's relationship to the Lord and the Gospel of Good News?

There is a prevalent attempt to distinguish between the Old Testament as emphasizing the fear of God and the New Testament as emphasizing the divine mercy and love. Fear of the Lord in the New Testament is even considered a dangerous

¹G. Wauschope Stewart, "Love," James Hastings, editor, A Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1907), II, 78.

principle by some. Others feel that fear is the point of separation between the Old Testament law and the New Testament love. Fear and love will not intermingle--fear in the Old Testament--love in the New Testament. This is an unwarranted distinction.²

The Old Testament shows God's steady anger against sin in every form. Because of sin, the Israelite was admonished to fear the Lord. The fear of the Lord led the person to look to the past, present and future. The future held the judgment. The present was to be lived in light of the mistakes of the past. Fear was to motivate the individual into correct habits of behavior and conduct in the present.

The New Testament demonstrates the same attitude on the part of God. There is an intense anger against sin. Even though God is forbearing and merciful, He is firm in His judgment upon sin. In light of the coming judgment, the New Testament teaches, just as the Old Testament, that the fear of the Lord is to lead a person into right habits of religious behavior.

The teachings of Jesus urge men to faith. Jesus makes love a ruling motive of religious behavior. But, He does not altogether disregard the appeal to fear as a motive for right

²Alan Richardson, A Theological Word Book of the Bible (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1950), p. 289.

conduct. Fear is to bring the complacent, indifferent man to his responsibility before God, so that he can come under the influence of God's love. From God's love springs salvation, life dedication and service. Therefore, love and fear are to grow together in the life of the believer.³

The normal relation of the children of God to the heavenly Father should be one of glad confidence and loving obedience. Since sin has entered the world and marred the picture, there is no normal relationship. Consequently, fear is wholesome and necessary. Sin drives us from God, whereas the fear of the Lord is designed to bring us back to Him.

In summary, then, even though the Old Testament might place the emphasis upon fear of the Lord and the New Testament might stress the love of the Lord, the New Testament as a whole proclaims the doctrine of the fear of the Lord. Christ used the motive of fear to admonish his followers toward a cultivation of a proper religious behavior in life. The Apostles Peter and Paul used the fear of the Lord as incentives to right conduct. There was love in the fear of the Old Testament saints, and there is to be fear in the love of the New Testament saint. Love and fear are to complement each other. The task before us is to seek out the place of

³E. H. Titchmarsh, "Fear," James Hastings, editor, A Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1907), I, 584.

the fear of the Lord in our lives.⁴

First, a brief Greek word study of *φόβος* will give us an insight into our study. Then, an exegesis of New Testament passages on the fear of the Lord will follow. No attempt will be made to exegete each New Testament passage of scripture on the subject. Only the passages which are set forth clearly and explicitly, and only the more important are to be used. Last, we shall see what influence the fear of the Lord had in the early church.

II. PHOBOS: A GREEK WORD-STUDY

The Greek noun *φόβος* has the root meaning of fear. It has a varied definition. (1) A panic fear: causing fear, regarded with fear, that which causes flight, dread, terror, that which arouses fear, feeling fear, be seized with fear, be affrighted, caused by fear, troubled, be alarmed at a thing, fear lest a thing will be, fear to do, and be afraid of doing. (2) A reverential fear: awe and reverence toward a divine being, respect toward God and Christ as a controlling motive of life, in matters of spiritual and moral, not a mere fear of His power and righteous retribution, but a wholesome dread of displeasing Him, a fear which banishes the

⁴Richard Chenevix Trench, Synonyms of the New Testament (London: Macmillan and Company, 1880), p. 123.

disposition and attitude.⁵

In classical Greek, φόβος has three main meanings: (1) In Homer, it nearly always means panic or flight, the running away, or fleeing panic-stricken from the battle. It is opposite ὑπομένω, which means to stand fast and to endure. The word has in it that failure of nerve which makes a man take to his heels and flee. (2) More generally in classical Greek, φόβος means fear in the widest sense of the term. It is the opposite of θάρσος, which means courage. (3) Lastly, φόβος means awe or reverence for some exalted ruler and especially for some divinity or some god. It is the feeling which a man experiences in the presence of someone who is infinitely his superior.⁶

Φόβος is what is sometimes known as "a middle word." The word itself is neutral. According to the way in which it is used and the context in which it occurs, it can have either a good or a bad meaning. It can describe something

⁵The following works were consulted: G. Abbott-Smith, A Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1950), p. 472; William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1952), p. 871; Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1953), p. 1946; J. B. Smith, Greek-English Concordance to the New Testament (Scottsdale: Herald Press, 1955), p. 367; W. E. Vine, An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words (Westwood: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1952), p. 84.

⁶William Barclay, A New Testament Wordbook (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957), p. 92.

which is praiseworthy and useful, or evil and contemptible. It can be characteristic either of the truly religious man, or the coward.⁷

Φόβος occurs some fifty times in the Synoptic Gospels and the Book of Acts. In each instance, it is used in the sense of spiritual fear. It describes the feeling in a man's heart when he is confronted with divine power in action. It describes the feeling of a man when he finds himself face to face with something outside, beyond and different from himself, something which he cannot understand.

Φόβος is used of the reaction of the people after the healing of the paralysed man (Luke 5:26). It is used after the raising of the widow's son at Nain (Luke 7:16), after the healing of the Gerasene demoniac (Luke 8:37) and of Zacharias when he saw the angel of the Lord beside the altar (Luke 1:12). It was used by the disciples when they saw Jesus walking on the water (Matthew 14:26) and when He stilled the storm (Mark 4:41). It was used of the shepherds when they heard the song of the angels (Luke 2:9). It was used of the guards at the tomb when the angel rolled the stone away (Matthew 28:4), and of the women as they went home after seeing the empty tomb (Matthew 28:8).

In Acts, φόβος was used of the reaction of the people

⁷Ibid.

after the death of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:5, 11). It was used of the feeling in men's minds when they saw the sign and wonders and felt the power in the early Church (Acts 2:43). The church walked in the φόβω of the Lord (Acts 9:31).⁸

Φόβος is one of the great words in the New Testament. There can be no religion at all without the awe of the creature in the presence of the Creator. The feeling of reverence and the awareness of God is the dynamic of the Christian life, and the mainspring of the Christian effort. Fear gives motivation to a wholesome conduct and behavior to God as a son of God.⁹

III. THE FEAR OF THE LORD ACCORDING TO CHRIST

A. Christ and the Father. Christ called God His Heavenly Father.¹⁰ For Christ, God the Father was the Creator of the universe, even though Christ participated in the event.¹¹ The Fatherhood of God was the foundation of the Gospel of Christ. God was the sustainer of this world. He cared for all creation. Man had been given everything that

⁸Ibid., p. 93.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Matthew 18:35; 26:39 ff. and others.

¹¹Genesis 1:1; John 1:1-5.

he could want and everything he could need.¹²

God was an ever present God. God, in the Old Testament, had retreated into the far off distance. Consequently, He was not too accessible. Through the life of Jesus, God again became a God at hand. God no longer looked down upon man but walked along-side of him.¹³ The God of Jesus was a God of love.¹⁴ This love of God expressed itself in mercy and forgiveness to man. Jesus' call to repentance opened the way to personal repentance and the reception of God's love through forgiveness of sin. God's love results in the New Birth in every believer.¹⁵

God was One who made demands. He demanded decision and response. A decision of trust in God and dependence upon Him and the response in service are both alike demanded of man. No longer did God center His demands of man's moral behavior in the Law, but in the New Covenant instituted through Christ. Man was now to learn his Christian behavior in direct encounters with his neighbors.¹⁶

¹²Matthew 18:14; 10:30; 7:11; Luke 12:7.

¹³Rudolf Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament, trans. Kendrick Grobel (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), I, 23.

¹⁴I John 4:7 ff.

¹⁵Stewart, op. cit., p. 78.

¹⁶Bultmann, op. cit., p. 24.

For Christ, God was the Creator, the Sustainer, the Lover, the One who demands, but, in addition, He was the Judge. Jesus emphasized that God deals with people as individuals. Each individual must give a personal account of his religious behavior in this world. Over and again, Jesus admonished his listeners to live in view of the coming Judgment Day.

Christ taught that the Love of God motivates a high standard of ethical behavior on the part of man. He knew that love in itself would not always motivate man into a right set of actions. Consequently, he left man with another motivating factor that would assist him to strive for a high level of religious behavior. This additional motive for religious behavior--"the fear of the Lord"--was not given to take the place of love, but only to complement it. This additional motive for religious behavior was associated with God as a Judge.

B. Matthew 10:28--Luke 12:5: an admonition to cultivate the fear of the Lord. The Gospel of Matthew is a work that is largely constructed in five discourses. The second discourse is found in 9:35 to 11:1. This is a discipleship discourse in which Jesus outlines the work and behavior of his disciples.¹⁷

¹⁷Sherman E. Johnson, The Introduction and Exegesis

Christ began the discourse with actions demonstrating his manifold activities, e.g., teaching, preaching and healing. The multitudes of lost people are looked upon by Jesus as a great harvest waiting for the reaper. Without reapers, the harvest may be lost. Christ presents the challenge for laborers to work in the great harvest. He related the message they were to preach. He describes how they were to behave while traveling and witnessing. This was not to be a business trip, nor a pleasure trip. This was a mission to give to others what they had received from God, i.e., Christ, the Savior of the world.

The disciples were to expect persecution and opposition. They were to meet their sufferings and difficulties with humility and courage. They would be sheep among wolves. Just as the Jewish authorities were turning upon their Master, they would likely turn upon the disciples as well. Under these circumstances, the fear of the disciples would be a physical fear of man. It might be a dread of martyrdom or a horror of ridicule by friends and families. Christ discouraged this needless fear of man.

Thus it was that the Master spoke:

of the Gospel According to St. Matthew. George Arthur Buttrick, editor, The Interpreter's Bible (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1951), VII, 246.

And you should not fear [μὴ φοβηθῆτε] because of those who kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but you should fear [φοβήθητε] rather Him who is able both soul and body to destroy in Gehenna (Matthew 10:28).

Luke traces this account in a somewhat different atmosphere. From Luke 9:51 to 19:27, Christ was on his journey to Jerusalem. Many things happened while on this journey. The mission of the Seventy was described and they were sent out. Jesus answered questions and gave the true significance of prayer. He denounced the Pharisees and the lawyers. Then, in 12:1 through 13:9, Christ spoke of the responsibilities and privileges of discipleship.¹⁸

Christ gave the disciples both warning and encouragement, along with some advice.¹⁹ He did not deny that they would meet opposition. He did not offer a smooth course. No guarantee was given that there would be no hostile action. Christ knew that there would be opposition and that this would be an incentive to a physical fear, which might result in a denial of the faith. Consequently, He portrayed a needless fear which should be discouraged, and a necessary fear which should be encouraged.

¹⁸S. MacLean Gilmour, The Introduction and Exegesis of the Gospel According to St. Luke. George Arthur Buttrick, editor, The Interpreter's Bible (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1952), VIII, 24.

¹⁹Luke 12:1 states that Jesus "began to say unto his disciples first of all . . ."

The Master said: "I will show you whom you should fear [$\phi\omicron\beta\eta\theta\eta\tau\epsilon$]: fear Him who after having killed, authority has to cast into the Gehenna; yea, I say to you, Him fear!" (Luke 12:5).

In both accounts--Matthew and Luke--Christ reminded his followers that man's power over man was strictly limited to the physical life. Man could kill the body but that was all. Because man's power ends in the physical, Christ admonished them not to have this physical fear--the fear of man. This physical fear was a needless child-like fear. Physical fear was not uplifting, nor was it wholesome. Fear of man could only degrade.

However, there was a fear that was uplifting and wholesome, Jesus said, in turning from the negative to the positive. This fear was not weak nor base, but it strengthens and ennobles. This fear was akin to love. This fear was "the spiritual fear of the Lord." The fear of the Lord was the real and genuine type of fear to cultivate. This was the only fear that was to dominate a man's life.

The object of the fear of the Lord rests in the almighty power and authority of the Lord. Man could destroy the body but not the soul. Man could murder the body but he cannot touch the soul. However, God's power was such that He could blot out both the body and the soul. To lose the body is to lose very little. To lose the soul is to lose all.

Therefore, it was only reasonable to fear God rather than fear man.²⁰

Some commentaries contend that Satan is the object of this fear, instead of the Lord. Satan has no power to fling the soul and body into Gehenna. From Genesis to Revelation, we are never told to fear Satan. We are always admonished to fear the Lord.²¹

Christ did not say that God would destroy body and soul. He says only that God could do it. We are to fear Him who is able to do it. To destroy need not mean complete annihilation. It could mean only ruin and destruction of all that makes existence desirable. The thought conveys no positive idea whether the ruined object ceases to exist or continues on into a worthless existence.

The disciples were to be true to their mission. The Lord had prepared them for their work. Their message was to be proclaimed openly and fearlessly in the sight of man, but fearfully in the sight of God. They had been admonished that anything which can injure a man's spiritual life is far more terrible than that which might harm his physical being. There

²⁰R. C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of St. Matthew's Gospel (Columbus: The Wartburg Press, 1943), p. 410.

²¹Willoughby C. Allen, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Matthew. S. R. Driver, A. Plummer, and C. A. Briggs, editors, The International Critical Commentary (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1907), p. 109.

was no need to be anxious or frightened about physical danger and that was all persecution at its worst could threaten. Fear was to be reserved for spiritual perils that would come if they were disobedient and untrue to their God.

If there was any belief that this God to fear was a tyrant, Jesus immediately proceeded to disprove it through two simple illustrations about the Father. He said that God was even concerned with the lowly sparrow. Also, God values the hairs on a person's head.²² Consequently, God is caring and loving. This picture of the tenderness and graciousness of God comes in contrast to the God of wrath in judgment. Our fear is not directed toward a cruel master or a tyrant, but toward a loving Heavenly Father who is vitally concerned with the religious behavior of his children.

This inscription appears upon the tombstone of John Knox: "Here lies one who feared God so much that he never feared the face of man."²³ Christ admonished his followers not to have a physical fear of man, but to cultivate a spiritual fear of the Lord which motivates a man to live as God instructs him to live.

²²Matthew 10:29-30; Luke 12:6-7.

²³William Barclay, The Gospel of Luke (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1956), p. 146.

IV. THE FEAR OF THE LORD ACCORDING TO PETER

The Apostle Peter was one of the outstanding, if not the outstanding member of the Apostolic Band. His name is always mentioned along with James and John as the three disciples who made up the inner-circle of disciples.²⁴ In addition, Peter's name heads all the lists of the disciples in the Synoptic Gospels and the Book of Acts.²⁵ Peter had a most dynamic and striking personality. He seemed to be the spokesman for the disciples.²⁶

Peter left his influence upon the early Biblical literature. When he was taken from the midst of the church, his close followers did not want to lose his message. Therefore, Peter's eye-witness experiences with the Master were recorded. This became the first Gospel--Mark. Mark, in turn, became the model and chief source for Matthew and Luke. The Gospel was to live through the centuries witnessing to the life and message of the Lord Jesus Christ. To Peter goes the credit for this effective type of religious literature.²⁷

²⁴Matthew 17:1; Mark 14:33.

²⁵Matthew 4:18; Mark 3:16; Luke 6:14; Acts 1:13.

²⁶Luke 9:20 ff.; Matthew 17:4; Mark 14:29; Acts 2:14.

²⁷Edgar J. Goodspeed, The Twelve (Philadelphia: The John C. Winston Company, 1957), p. 35.

Peter not only influenced the Synoptic portions of our New Testament, but he influenced the remainder of the New Testament as well. Peter probably bore great influence upon the pastoral writings of the New Testament. If we had as many letters from Peter as we have from Paul, a different picture of Peter might result. The great ideas and systems of thought could have had their beginning with Peter.²⁸

We now turn to Peter's New Testament writings in our pursuit for additional documentation on "the fear of the Lord."

A. I Peter 1:17: live in the fear of the Lord in light of the judgment and the cross. Peter writes to give encouragement to a group of scattered Christians living under persecution. First, he reminds them of their blessings (1:3-2:10). Then, he describes their duties as Christians in the world (2:11-4:11). Lastly, he deals with their trials in the world (4:12-5:11).²⁹

Peter called these exiled and dispersed Christians to give thanksgiving unto God, who planned the New Birth; to

²⁸Oscar Cullmann, Peter: Disciple, Apostle, Martyr, trans. Floyd V. Filson (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1953), p. 68.

²⁹Archibald M. Hunter, The Introduction and Exegesis to the First Epistle of Peter. George Arthur Buttrick, editor, The Interpreter's Bible (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1957), XII, 81.

Christ, who purchased salvation with his precious blood; and, to the Holy Spirit, who is applying salvation in the world today. They were then to set their minds in the living hope of God's grace. They were to be holy, just as their God was holy.

In light of what God had done for them, these Christians were given a wholesome command. "And, if you call upon or appeal to your Father, who judges according to the work of each person, pass the time of your sojourn here on earth in fear--*φόβω*" (I Peter 1:17). The fear of the Lord was to be upon the heart of every Christian because judgment was to come. When a man realizes that he will answer for every religious action and behavior, then, he needs to fear lest he will not live adequately to face the judgment.

Fatherhood is the very heart of God (1:17a). God, as Father, is the Maker and Sustainer of every man. He cares for all. The danger comes when man becomes so occupied with God as Father, that he forgets God is a Judge. God, as a Judge, will deal impartially with all men. He will have no regard for external differences. He will judge without regard of persons (1:17b). The stress is not upon the thought of God's Fatherhood, but upon his impartial judgment.³⁰

³⁰Edward Gordon Selwyn, The First Epistle of St. Peter (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1955), p. 142.

God will judge each man's work (1:17b). Each man will answer for himself. God will not judge our "works" for this spreads out our actions. He will deal with our "work" which summarizes all our activities. We must not think that God selects only one work or just a few. He will judge the sum total and substance of each man's work.

Therefore, if we summon to our help God, who is our Father and the Judge of our every work, we must conduct our behavior with fear that we will not fulfill all that God has in mind for us (1:17c). We must set our course of life to Godly fear that we will not miss God's intention in our lives. We must spend our time in an atmosphere of spiritual fear, because we are concerned lest we give the minimum, instead of the maximum in our Christian service. To give less than what is expected, grieves the Father. We will fear lest we grieve the Father.

This is not a slavish, unwholesome physical fear. To the contrary, it is an uplifting, obedient spiritual fear. It is a fear that produces vigilant caution, lest we offend God and backslide in our Christian service. The sense of personal moral weakness keeps God's people in the holy fear of the Lord and it is this fear that makes them alert, ever watchful of their religious behavior.

This fear is not the sign of the coward. This fear elevates the mind. This spiritual fear makes us attentive

to our holy calling as Christians. It behooves us to be at our best at all times. So that we do not have to fear then --the judgment--it is well for us to fear now. Our actions will make us ready for the judgment.

kaí in verse 17 connects directly with the previous section (1:13-16). The command to fear follows the passage to be holy. There can be no true holiness without fear, for fear and holiness both proceed out of God's grace. Fear and holiness are discussed more fully in the II Corinthian passage. There can be no true faith, hope and joy without spiritual fear, for God's grace also produces these Christian virtues.

Peter proceeds to point out an additional motive for fear. ". . . pass the time of your sojourning in fear: knowing that you were redeemed . . . with the precious blood . . . of Christ: who was foreknown before the foundation of the world . . ." (I Peter 1:17-20). This motive for spiritual fear is Christ's redemption of man. Because Christ gave himself, the Christian will have fear lest he offend Christ by shallow living. He will fear lest he become unobservant in his religious behavior in light of the behavior of Christ upon the Cross.

When and if a friend gives his silver and gold to redeem us from shame and punishment, we will regard him with reverent gratitude and have fear that we might displease him.

However, Christ has redeemed us with his precious blood, which is much more valuable than silver and gold. Redemption did not come with cheap materials. Therefore, we are to regard Christ with gratitude for what he has done for us through his precious life-blood and with reverent fear, lest we displease Him with unworthy religious behavior.

Christ's redemption was not a last minute decision on God's part. The redemption was not improvised at the beginning of man's span of life. Christ's redemption was in the plan from the beginning. Christ was only revealed in these last times for the sake of man's salvation (1:20). Therefore, if God planned our lives and our salvation at the beginning of time, fear in our hearts will keep us living on the plain of our potential. Fear will keep our standards high. Fear will take us beyond our old manner of living.

In summary, then, fear is an emotion which is much misunderstood and misrepresented. It is sometimes denounced as something evil. Sometimes it is termed a lower motive than love. This depends upon the object to be feared. Judgment and redemption are adequate incentives to spiritual fear of the Lord in a Christian's heart. The demand for obedience and the promise of judgment come from the same God. Pardon and mercy are intermingled with their opposites of judgment and punishment. Spiritual fear of the Lord will burst forth from the man who knows true judgment and true redemption and

will result in a high type of religious behavior.

B. I Peter 2:17: through spiritual fear, be a good citizen. We pass from the first discourse--blessings as God's redeemed children--to the second discourse--duties as Christians in the world (2:11-4:11). Their conduct was to silence their heathen critics. They were to be subject to the civil authorities. Peter concludes the exhortation with four imperatives. "Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king" (2:17).

These four short commands can be taken in two pairs. (1) Honor all men but love the brotherhood. (2) Fear God but honor the king.³¹ These clauses could go back to the moment of decision in the disciple's mind and could be rendered: Let your motto be . . . honor . . . love . . . fear (φοβῆνσθε) . . . and honor. It is a motto for him who would be a good Christian citizen.³²

Peter portrays the obligation of respect and courtesy due to human personality. To honor all men means to recognize the worth of every person. It means to be done with contempt for one another. To honor a man is to see in him one for whom Christ lived and died. Peter then passes to the

³¹Hunter, op. cit., p. 116.

³²Selwyn, op. cit., p. 175.

more limited sphere of Christian brotherhood, where a higher quality than respect and courtesy is demanded, i.e., love. To love the brotherhood is to practice a genuine affection for all in Christ, regardless of their differences in background and experience. The nature of the Gospel implies love in the Christian fellowship and brotherhood.

Christians are to fear God, not in abject dread, but in holy reverence. This is an imperative, not an optional matter. A person's religious behavior in citizenship will honor and glorify Christ when motivated through the fear of the Lord. The man is also to honor the king. Peter uses words found in Proverbs 24:21: "My son, fear thou Jehovah and the king." Peter deliberately uses a different verb to make it clear that kings may be honored, but only God is to be feared.³³

This fourfold injunction gives a fitting summary of the section on Christian citizenship. Fear is to play a major role in citizenship. The fear of the Lord will lead to a true attitude toward God, and is an incentive to lead a holy life as a citizen.

This fear of the Lord is not to be a servile fear. Mere dread of God makes a man cringe before God as a slave. A sentimental love toward God makes man careless and irresponsible in his religious behavior as a citizen. Fear

³³Hunter, loc. cit.

gives that proper motive for right behaviour. The fear of the Lord leads to a constant watchfulness on behalf of our conduct.³⁴

Loving the brotherhood and fearing God are not in conflict with honoring the king and government. They complement one another. The love of God and the fear of the Lord will bring honor to His divinely ordained government.

In summary, then, the Christian is to be ready in every relationship of life to use every opportunity to glorify the Lord. As a Christian citizen, the believer is to live so that others will be influenced by the Gospel. The believer is to be cautious lest his behavior lead another astray. The fear of the Lord motivates the person to make sure that his life is lived on the highest level possible.

V. THE FEAR OF THE LORD ACCORDING TO PAUL

The role of the Apostle Paul in the establishment of Christianity in the Greco-Roman world was second to that of no other figure in the history of Christianity. He was convinced that God had called him and set him apart primarily as a preacher and a missionary.³⁵ However, he was a religious

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵William H. P. Hatch, The History of the Early Church, II. The Life of Paul. George Arthur Buttrick, editor, The Interpreter's Bible (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1951), VII, 187. 7

thinker and writer. Paul's letters form a considerable part of the New Testament. He is therefore of vital importance to all students of the Bible.³⁶

Paul's teachings to which we now turn affirm "the fear of the Lord."

A. Philippians 2:12-13: in fear and trembling, work out what God has worked in. Philippians expresses the joy and happiness within the heart of Paul. The Church at Philippi had remembered Paul with a gift of money. In the midst of Paul's acknowledgement for the gift, he finds opportunity to exhort the Philippian believers on behalf of their Christian living. The second chapter of the letter is concerned with Christian living. Paul appealed for them to think in terms of others before they thought of themselves. They were to be humble like their Master. Their salvation was to be completed and to be seen of others. Thus, Paul said:

Therefore, my beloved, even as always you obeyed, not only in my presence but in my absence as well, work out your own salvation with fear [φόβου] and trembling, for it is God who works in you . . . (Philippians 2:12-13).

This passage presents its difficulties in interpretation to the modern mind. To speak about saving yourself, and

³⁶Martin Dibelius and Werner Georg Kümmel, Paul, trans. Frank Clarke (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1953), p. 1.

then, being saved by someone else in the same breath sounds like double talk. To talk of what has been worked in, and then, this is to be worked out leads the modern reader in circles. This double talk is the only language in which all sides of the gospel can be expressed.³⁷

The matter that has been worked in is salvation. The matter to be worked out is salvation. Paul speaks of salvation in three tenses: we were saved, we are being saved, and we shall be saved. A Christian shares in something which has happened, which is happening, and which will happen. There is a sense in which salvation is finished and another sense in which salvation is in process. Salvation was finished by Christ when he died. Yet, salvation is in process by the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer.³⁸

Paul is here concerned with the process of growth. God gives salvation in the germ, but the growth is man's task. The believer is to work out his salvation. The salvation is to be completed. It is to be carried unto its fulfillment. God and the Christian are working together for the full accomplishment of salvation. They are partners. This

³⁷Robert R. Wicks, The Exposition of the Epistle to the Philippians. George Arthur Buttrick, editor, The Interpreter's Bible (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1955), XI, 54.

³⁸Archibald M. Hunter, Interpreting Paul's Gospel (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1954), p. 50.

implies that the Christian life is not a hermit life, but a state of conscious activity and struggle. Scripture always presents the Christian life as a life of watching, of struggle and of combat.³⁹

God has begun this work of salvation in us. Consequently, it is our task to work out unto its completion what God has worked in. We are to carry out this work of sanctification through our witness, our preaching and teaching, our living and our good works. This is personal, in that no one can do it for another. This command is not in opposition to the truth that all salvation is the gift and work of God. It has no reference to this. It is an exhortation to keep busy in our Christian task.

In what spirit are Christians to work out their salvation? Salvation is to be worked out in a spirit of fear and trembling. Is this a fear that enslaves the mind? Is it a fear that causes one to hide from God or try to run away from Him? No, this is not a physical fear, but a wholesome spiritual fear. This fear is a feeling that is to accompany obedience. It is a trembling anxiety not to fall short of the goal resulting from a sense of our human insufficiency. It is a consciousness that all depends upon the power of God.

³⁹F. B. Meyer, The Epistle to the Philippians. A. R. Buckland, editor, A Devotional Commentary (London: The Religious Tract Society, 1905), p. 103.

How careful the Christian ought to be! Fearful lest by work or act that he will spoil or thwart God's work in his life. The work of salvation is so very momentous, that it is no matter for indifference. However, the believer should not become overconfident in the completion of his salvation, lest he be tripped up and fail.

Can a Christian do less than fear and tremble, when he knows that his behavior has to pass under the all-seeing eye of God, and to be judged unerringly, not only as to its quality but also the quantity? We do not need to crouch in a physical fear, for we are in the hands of a merciful Father. But, all the more because he is merciful, we should have a trembling anxiety lest we do not measure up to what he expects of us. The completion of salvation is a work for the accomplishment of which a long time is needed. We may well fear and tremble when we think of the little time in this life that is at our disposal for this task.

The hope of salvation is not presented as precarious. It is certain that Christ can and will save. Paul's idea is that one must never lose sense of his weaknesses. This fear is a distrust of ourselves from a consciousness of our own weakness. This is a holy fear lest we mistake our will for His. This is a distrust of self with a desire to serve God.

The *Καὶ τρόμος* only strengthens the fear. The trembling is not that of the slave, but of the child of God.

He is tremblingly alive to all his responsibilities and to the fear of disputing God's Holy Spirit.

In summary, then, God has given salvation. This salvation was bestowed by grace. This salvation is to be carried out into its completion by the believer as a co-worker with God. This fulfillment of salvation is motivated through fear, which becomes a conscientious caution of our behavior and an incentive to right actions. This fear of the Lord is to prompt man to work out what the Lord has worked in.

B. II Corinthians 7:1: in the fear of the Lord, complete and perfect your holiness. The relations of Paul with the church at Corinth are more fully known than are his dealings with any other church he founded. This is known through the letters that he wrote to Corinth. We know that Paul wrote at least four letters to Corinth. First Corinthians 5:9 refers to "a lost letter." This evidently included a strong demand that the Christians separate from all immorality and uncleanness. The pastoral letter--I Corinthians--deals with problems of faith and life which had arisen in the vigorous but unstable church. "A stern letter" was sent sometime later, which sought to stop the rebellion within the church against the leadership of Paul. Then, "a thankful letter"--II Corinthians--was written to express Paul's joy at the turn of events and to lead the Corinthians into full

Christian dedication.

It is Paul's "thankful letter" to which we now inquire for Paul's additional teaching on "the fear of the Lord" as a motivating factor in religious behavior.

Paul makes a very personal appeal to his Corinthian friends in II Corinthians 6:11-7:1. He reminds them of his love and joy for them. He appeals to them to live separated lives in this world. This is not to be a physical separation, but an ethical, moral and spiritual separation. Paul appeals that if they will heed the admonition of the Lord--"Come out from among them and be separate"--then, the Lord promises to be a father to them, and they, in return, will become His sons and daughters.⁴⁰

The first verse of the seventh chapter belongs with the preceding section. This is one of the conspicuous instances of the occasional unskilfulness in our present divisions into chapters and verses. The οὖν clearly connects this verse to what precedes.

"Therefore, beloved, having these promises from God, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, and make our holiness perfect and complete in the fear [φόβω] of the Lord" (II Corinthians 7:1). This verse includes four emphases of progression in thought. The first

⁴⁰II Corinthians 6:17-18.

emphasis indicates God's attitude and promises to men. The second gives one side of the Christian duty and responsibility--the putting off. The third emphasis represents the other side--the putting on. The fourth gives the motivation for such action.

God has promised that He will be a Father, a Protector and a Friend. God will receive all as a loving, all-caring Parent. Consequently, if we have a promise that God will dwell in us, then, we should remove from us whatever is offensive in his sight. If we are to have God to dwell in us, we must purify the dwelling in which He is going to live. This cleansing must come both in the flesh and in the spirit.⁴¹

Flesh and spirit make up human nature. When either part is soiled, the whole is soiled. Filthiness of flesh connotes the defiling and corrupting influence of fleshly desires and carnal appetites. Filthiness of the spirit is desire for revenge, ambition, pride, avarice and wrong thoughts in mental associations. God's promises are conditioned upon the cleansing of these unclean aspects of life. After the cleansing, the place which uncleanness occupied must be filled with such things as will make it impossible for

⁴¹Alfred Plummer, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians. S. R. Driver, A. Plummer, and C. A. Briggs, editors, The International Critical Commentary (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915), p. 211.

uncleanness to return. This is brought about when holiness of life is perfected and completed.

Holiness is consecration to God, separation unto God and a giving of one's entire devotion to God. Holiness is derived from the Hebrew שׁוֹדֵד , of which the root significance is "to separate, to be holy, or a saint." The term most frequently used in the New Testament to signify holy is ἅγιος . Christians as individuals who are consecrated to God, are professing Christ as Saviour and are sanctified by the Spirit, are described as "holy."⁴²

There is an initial stage in holiness in which regeneration takes place. The continual stage of holiness is the growth, the perfecting and the completing of the initial stage. The continual stage of holiness must ever be the goal of the Christian. If a Christian is to have God as Father, then, an intense effort must be put forth to acquire a likeness of Him.

Holiness is to be the aim and goal of every Christian. Holiness has been commenced in the heart. The exhortation of the apostle is that they will make every effort that it might be complete in all its parts. The fact that no one has been perfect does not relax the claim. The fact that no one will be perfectly holy in this life does not lessen the

⁴²Richardson, op. cit., p. 215.

obligation. No man can be a true Christian who does not sincerely desire and perfect holiness and who does not constantly aim at it.

What is to be the motivation for this development of holiness? Does love motivate our effort for a right conduct and behavior in life? It does, but Paul does not use love here. Holiness is to be completed in fear. This is not a fear of man, but a fear of the Lord. The $\acute{\epsilon}\nu$ has the right to mark either the sphere in which the perfecting of holiness takes place or the means by which it is accomplished.⁴³

The fear of the Lord is a reverence for his holy character. It is a respect for his holy will and a proper dread lest we should by disobedience incur his displeasure. It is a fear lest our efforts in perfecting our holiness bog down. It is a fear that motivates a constant effort in Christian growth. This fear of the Lord motivates a maximum exertion in growing up to full Christian holiness.

In the pursuit of spiritual purity--holiness--there is the time of getting rid of the wrong and the time of attaining of the right. There is the admonition to cleanse and the admonition of inward growth. The process is to be activated through the proper, wholesome fear of the Lord. This is not a terrorizing fear, but one that incites to performance.

⁴³Plummer, op. cit., p. 211.

It connotes the feelings in which the work of perfecting holiness is to go forward. It is inspired by the absolute and inevitable divine judgment against sin. Man's progress in the knowledge of God may have altered his view of the nature of this judgment but it has not changed the judgment.

In summary, then, the strong inducement to a dying to sin and a living unto holiness is spiritual fear. The incentive to holy living is fear that our efforts will falter as we pass through the pleasures and temptations in this world. The fear of the Lord is the safeguard of holiness. It prompts the Christian into a complete separation from this world to a complete dedication to God and a religious behavior that glorifies and honors the Saviour.

C. Ephesians 5:21--Colossians 3:22: in spiritual fear, live in submission. The Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians views the whole content of the revelation of God, and how this revelation was consummated in the redemption of Christ and the ensuing responsibilities of the Christ. W. O. Carver speaks of this Epistle as "the Supreme Christian Document."⁴⁴ The Epistle to the Colossians is somewhat similar to Ephesians, in that Paul is presenting God as the one who has come to man in Christ, so that man may respond by coming

⁴⁴William Owen Carver, The Glory of God in the Christian Calling (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1949), p. 3.

to God in faith through Christ. The good news of life in Christ will compel a Christian to put Christ above all and gives incentive for true Christian living.

In two passages--one each in Ephesians and Colossians --Paul shows how the fear of the Lord is used as a motive for a wholesome religious behavior. In Ephesians 5:21-6:9, Paul is concerned with the mutual submission in the Christian household--the husband-wife relationship. In Colossians 3:18-4:1, a table of household duties stresses submission in the slave-master relationship.

Paul has requested the Ephesian Church to unite through prayer. He has exhorted a banishment of pagan ways. Paul then admonishes:

Look therefore carefully how you walk, not as unwise, but as wise; . . . redeeming the time . . . speaking to one another in psalms and hymns . . . giving thanks always . . . submitting yourselves to one another in the fear [$\phi\acute{o}\beta\omega$] of the Lord (Ephesians 5:15-21).

The wives are to subject themselves to their husbands. Likewise, the husbands are to be submissive to the wives. The high standard of Christ and the church is the example for submission.

Submission to one another is closely associated with the walk of the Christian. Submission is a vital part of the wise and circumspect religious behavior of the believer. Submission will lead to actions that glorify and honor the cause of Christ. The sphere in which this duty is to be

maintained is the fear of the Lord--an awe and reverence for the Lord. Our submission to one another is grounded in our reverence for Him, and in our fear of offending Him by our attitudes of indifference and arrogance. We do not take the Lord for granted when we have fear for Him. One aspect of the results of the fear of the Lord is demonstrated in man's spirit of submission.

In Colossians, Paul continues to speak of mutual submission. He has requested wives and husbands to respect each other. Children and parents are to have a wholesome relationship with one another. Paul then mentions the relationship of the servant to his master. "Bondmen, obey in all things the masters according to flesh, not with eye-service as men-pleasers, but in simplicity of heart, fearing [φοβούμενοι] God" (Colossians 3:22). Christian slaves and masters are brothers. The slave was not to use this relationship as a presumption not to work or as an excuse for serving his master less. The slave was not to be a "clock-watcher." On the contrary, he would serve his master all the more faithfully because of this new relationship. The Christian slave has the highest of all motives for faithful and conscientious performance of duty. He is a servant of Christ and will work first and foremost so as to please Him.

This motivation for submission by the slave is in the fear of the Lord. This was not a fear of an earthly master,

but a fear of the Heavenly Master. This motive for Christian behavior would encourage an eager and zestful labor. The fear of the Lord would produce a religious behavior in the slave so as to witness for the Master. Paul states in other passages: "Servants, be obedient unto them that according to the flesh are your masters, with fear and trembling" (Ephesians 6:5). "Servants, be in subjection to your masters with all fear" (I Peter 2:18).

In summary, then, submission to one another in the fear of the Lord brings reverential regard to Christ and inspires one to live with the same spirit as Christ. Submission is to be carried by the Christian into every relationship of life. Submission in the fear of the Lord will motivate a person to pitch his life on a high level of religious behavior. Thus, Christianity lifts the commonest duties of social life into the highest sphere by connecting them with the power of the proper motive--the fear of the loving God.

VI. THE FEAR OF THE LORD IN THE EARLY CHURCH

A. The early kerygma. The first century Christians were a people with a story to tell. This story was about God and his actions on behalf of man. God's actions had centered in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The gospel was the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ, a man whom many of them had known intimately.

The first century Christians proclaimed their kerygma, i.e., the message of salvation. The kerygma announced that the Old Testament promises had been fulfilled and the New Age had come through the appearance of the Son of God.⁴⁵ Included in the proclamation was an appeal to repentance and belief and baptism.⁴⁶

The kerygma was preached with such conviction that growth within the early church was phenomenal. Beginning with One, the church grew to twelve, to seventy, to five hundred, to three thousand and it then swept across country after country. F. F. Bruce calls this unique event, "The Spreading Flame."⁴⁷

B. Fear and growth. What was the power of motivation behind this phenomenal growth of the early church? The Holy Spirit played its role in prompting the early Christians to proclaim the Gospel. The believers were together on the day of Pentecost when suddenly they felt a Great Power overshadow them. Through this Power, they proclaimed the kerygma in

⁴⁵See C. H. Dodd, The Apostolic Preaching and Its Developments (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1937), pp. 7 ff., for a more complete discussion.

⁴⁶Archibald M. Hunter, Introducing New Testament Theology (Naperville: Student Christian Movement Book Club, 1957), p. 65.

⁴⁷F. F. Bruce, The Spreading Flame (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1953).

Jerusalem. This same Power took them throughout the Roman Empire proclaiming the message of salvation.

The fear of the Lord played its role in this growth of the early church. The fear of the Lord formed a great part of the state of mind of the first century disciples. Fear was a great motive to action, not a dejecting influence. It was a stimulating principle prompting action, pushing the disciples to a full exertion to tell others about the Saviour. The fear of the Lord strengthened and fortified the disciples in the task of "The Spreading Flame."

In fear the Apostles preached and in fear their preaching was heard. In fear men listened to the disciples and were converted. The believer trembled when he visualized the darkness into which lost people were sinking. The sins of the world portrayed vividly man's lost nature. Consequently, the Christian preached the Gospel in anxious haste to rescue any from their sins. Fearful lest he would not do his best, the first century disciple proclaimed his kerygma with an enthusiastic conviction.

Luke mentions that the fear of the Lord was associated directly with the growth of the early church. "The assemblies throughout the whole of Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace; being built up and walking in the fear [$\phi\acute{o}\beta\omega$] of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit they were multiplied" (Acts 9:31). Persecution had become the lot of the

Christians. There came a brief period of quietness. The attention of the Jews was diverted from the Christians to Emperor Gaius, as he attempted to have his statue erected in the Temple at Jerusalem. Saul's removal to Tarsus was also a major factor in this period of peace and quiet.⁴⁸

The church made good use of this interval. Instead of growing secure, it grew both within and without. Internally, it was being edified--built up spiritually. This is a metaphor of a building. The stone had been hewn and prepared by the persecution. Now in time of peace, the stones were firmly built into their place. The wavering and uncertain adherents to the Gospel had been changed into definite and decided Christians.⁴⁹

Externally, there was a multiplication of numbers. This growth in numbers came through two mediums. (1) The fear of the Lord drove the disciples to keep the Great Commission, and (2) the help of the Paraclete enabled them to do the task.

The early church was continuously multiplied in the fear of the Lord. This spiritual fear was a stimulus to

⁴⁸Frank Stagg, The Book of Acts (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1955), p. 114.

⁴⁹Richard Belward Rackham, The Acts of the Apostles. Walter Lock and D. C. Simpson, editors, Westminster Commentaries (London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1939), p. 143.

their faithfulness. The disciples were answerable for every breath they drew, every pulse that beat in their hearts. Therefore, they proclaimed the kerygma with a fervor that has been unmatched to this day.

Paul turned in at Antioch of Pisidia and in the synagogue on the Sabbath appealed to "the men of Israel and they that fear the Lord" (Acts 13:16). Paul continued the appeal to "the stock of Abraham, and those among you that fear God" (Acts 13:26). Paul described the unrighteous as people where "there is no fear of the Lord before their eyes" (Romans 3:18). "A great fear came upon the whole church" when Ananias and Sapphira succumbed to the temptation to donate their possessions for personal glory and distinction and God took both of their lives (Acts 5:11). Paul appealed to the Romans "not to become high-minded or proud, but to stand in fear" (Romans 11:20).

The wholesome fear of the Lord so dominated the thought-pattern of the early church that a name was designated for a certain group of believers.

C. God-fearers and the expansion of the church. The Book of Acts distinguishes four groups of people that were reached by the Gospel: (1) Hebrews (Jews), (2) Samaritans, (3) God-fearing Gentiles (Gentiles influenced by Judaism), and (4) pagans. The third group--the God-fearers--was made up of a large number of Gentiles who were attracted to

Judaism. They had lost faith in what their world offered. They were, thereby, drawn to Judaism because of its monotheism and its high moral and ethical teachings. Some became proselytes into Judaism but most stopped short of actual entrance into Judaism.⁵⁰

"Fearers of God" (σέβουμαι τὸν Θεόν) stand in awe, venerate, reverence, worship and adore God. God-fearers were worshipping, devout and pious adherents to Judaism.⁵¹ Paul found Lydia, a woman who "worshipped God" (σεβόμενη), in the place of prayer (Acts 16:14). In Corinth, when Paul had shaken himself free from the opposition, he "went into the house of a certain man named Titus Justus, one that worshipped God" (Acts 18:7). In Thessalonica, Paul finds "a great multitude of devout Greeks" (Acts 17:4). Paul reasoned with the Jews and "those who worshipped God" in the synagogue in Athens (Acts 17:17).⁵² It is not stated as such, but implied, that the Ethiopian Eunuch was a God-fearing Greek (Acts 8:26-40).⁵³ The Roman Centurion, Cornelius, was a God-fearer

⁵⁰Stagg, op. cit., p. 107.

⁵¹The Analytical Greek Lexicon (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, [n.d.]), p. 364.

⁵²Joseph Klausner, From Jesus to Paul, trans. William F. Stinespring (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1943), pp. 31 ff.

⁵³Stagg, loc. cit.

(Acts 10:22). The Greeks in Acts 11:19-26 were God-fearers.⁵⁴ Paul's audience in Acts 13:16-43 was composed of Jews (native-born), proselytes (Gentile converts to Judaism) and God-fearers (Gentile students to Judaism).⁵⁵

What is the significance of this group of God-fearers?

The God-fearers spear-headed much of the early expansion of Christianity. Through this group, Christianity turned from a provincial religion to a universal religion. Being scattered throughout the Roman Empire, and elsewhere, their influence was felt as "the lay-person religion." Their religion was not just practiced on the Sabbath in the Synagogue, but every day in the market place, on the street corner, in the army, in the home, on the sea and in every place where their occupation would take them. Only the Lord has the full knowledge of the great influence that the God-fearers have had upon Christianity.⁵⁶

In summary, then, the early church had a message of salvation to proclaim--the kerygma. With zeal and enthusiasm, the message was preached. Growth was phenomenal. The Holy Spirit empowered this Movement, while the fear of the Lord--the factor of motivation and stimulus in religious behavior--

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 125.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 144.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 107.

activated the early Christians into enthusiastic proclaimers. The fear of the Lord was such a part of their lives, that they described a group of their adherents as God-fearers. The God-fearers in turn were responsible for much of the expansion of Christianity.

VII. CONCLUSION

There are opinions that the Old Testament preaches only fear, while the New Testament preaches nothing but love. Through a diligent study of the New Testament, one finds that love and fear intermingle together. Love prompts a Christian to do what pleases God. Fear prompts him to refrain from that which displeases God.

Φόβος (phobos) connotes both a panic or physical fear and a reverential or spiritual fear. Fear, according to the way it is used in the context in which it occurs, can have either a good or a bad meaning. It is characteristic of the coward or of the truly religious man.

The Lord Jesus admonished his followers not to fear man, for man can only harm the physical body. This fear of man is a needless, unwholesome and child-like fear. He exhorted his followers to cultivate a fear that is wholesome and stimulating (Matthew 10:25 and Luke 12:5). This spiritual fear of the Lord is to dominate man's life. Fear of the Lord gives man motivation and incentive to live a high type of

religious behavior. The Master exhorted not to fear, then, to fear. How a Christian fears will determine how he lives.

The Apostle Peter related to his followers that if they called upon God as their Father, then, they should live in fear, lest their lives not measure up to that expected of them by the Father (I Peter 1:17). They were to be fearful of their religious behavior, for they would give an account of every action to their Father on the Judgment Day. A spirit of awe, reverence and fear permeating every aspect of their lives would give incentive to live as a true Christian and use every opportunity to witness for Him. Spiritual fear is to assist in living a high and holy life as a citizen of the country (I Peter 2:17). There will be no careless and indifferent living on the part of the Christian, if he has the true fear of the Lord in his heart.

The Apostle Paul said that a Christian's salvation was to be worked out to its completion through the motivation of fear (Philippians 2:12). Fear will keep indifference from entering Christian growth, while it will stimulate the process of working out to its completion what God has worked in. The fear of the Lord is designed to bring our holiness and sanctification into a full dedication and consecration of our lives to God (II Corinthians 7:1). We are to have fear lest we fail to be this fully dedicated and consecrated one that the Bible commands. Paul further stated that spiritual fear

of the Lord will lead our religious behavior into a spirit of submission and subjection of each other (Ephesians 5:21 and Colossians 3:22). Submission will bring humility to the believer and honor to God.

The early church delivered its proclamation with the power of the Holy Spirit, while the fear of the Lord provided the motivation. The early Christians preached and lived before their neighbors in fear, lest they fail in any way to be the greatest witness possible. The early church grew and multiplied by walking in the fear of the Lord (Acts 9:31). A group of early Christians, called the God-fearers (Acts 10:22; 16:14; 13:16), spear-headed the phenomenal expansion of the early church.

There is a possibility that fear might be a lower motive than love, but "the fear of the Lord" is taught, was preached and was lived in the New Testament as a motivating factor in the religious behavior of the Christian.

CHAPTER III

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY "FEAR OF THE LORD"

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God commanded both the Old Testament and New Testament person to live in "the fear of the Lord," in order that life might be lived to its full potential. Fear was one method through which God worked to give his human creation incentive to right living. We now turn to the practical application of "the motivating factor in religious behavior." God's Word is not mere theory. It is designed to be applied to the life of this author, the reader and all mankind. His Word must always be studied with the view of a personal and practical application of its teachings.

The fear of the Lord is sorely needed in the twentieth century to motivate religious behavior, because Christianity has become a powerless influence in the lives of the majority of people.

I. MODERN MAN AND HIS RELIGION

Christianity enjoys an unprecedented rate of growth. New church buildings, more members attending, greater interest and enthusiasm is the report headlined across our nation and around the world. The United States of America is heralded as "the Christian nation." Is this great increase of the external manifestations of religion truly affecting man's

religious behavior?

Man's religious behavior is changing, but he seems to be far from his potential. The Ladies' Home Journal recently published a poll designed to gauge the religious temper of the American people. The following analysis was made:

(1) Ninety-five per cent of the American people believe in some kind of a God, and (2) 91 per cent are trying to lead a good life. But, (3) only 26 per cent thought that God had any personal relation to their daily behavior, and (4) 82 per cent admitted that their religion seldom interfered with what they wanted to do.¹ Only God knows the absolute truth, but this indicates man's religious behavior.

Christianity has seemingly developed into an easy-going, good-natured type of religion, which favors an easy, complacent conscience. Church membership standards are being lowered to the degree that it is "the vogue" to be a church member. In emphasizing quantity in our churches, we have pushed quality to the side-line. This means that many church members are unenlisted. For Southern Baptists, as high as 50 per cent of its membership is lost to the cause of Christ.²

¹Robert R. Wicks, The Exposition of the Epistle to the Philippians. George Arthur Buttrick, editor, The Interpreter's Bible (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1955), XI, 60.

²C. E. Matthews, A Church Revival (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1955), p. 103.

As late as March, 1958, the large and influential First Baptist Church, Atlanta, Georgia, has admitted that it has failed to enlist its members and is voting to strengthen this area of its church life.³ Emil Brunner, in his book, The Scandal of Christianity, believes the church has failed because it presents the Gospel in such a way as to be agreeable and inoffensive to everyone. He contends that the church has failed by dodging the offence which the Gospel offers.⁴

Christianity is failing to live up to its highest possibilities. No one analysis can see the total cause and offer the total cure. This thesis presents one cause and one remedy for our twentieth century Christianity.

II. SECURITY AND THE WISDOM OF INSECURITY

The partial cause of our religious dilemma is due to the fact that man is seeking security and peace. Our nation is spending billions of dollars annually to keep us secure from the enemy. The sale of insurance--security--is at an all-time high. Our savings accounts are growing larger and

³A person will first become a "candidate" for church membership. After a thorough period of training, he will be presented to the church for membership.

⁴Emil Brunner, The Scandal of Christianity (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1951), p. 115.

larger for "that rainy day" in the future. We are striving for that state of complete security and self-sufficiency.

In seeking security in our self-sufficiency, God has become "a kind old gentleman upstairs." We slap Him on the back, as if He had lost all power of making judgments. In their conduct, crowds of people live as if God were absent or extinct from this world. They are building their own security. There is no need for God. Multitudes go on week after week doing their work, laying their plans, making their money, enjoying their recreation without once making any serious thought about their Maker and their Judge. Artists interpret the glory of God's world, with no vision of the Creator. Hymns are placed in the juke box machine and sung by someone who knows little of the God about whom he is singing. We are told to reduce tensions and to avoid all conflicts and relax. This has become the aspirin age or age of tranquilizers. We are admonished to take our worries to the church and leave them there! We are secure and complacent.

Our life is to be secure in the fact that our salvation is with us eternally. We are to have minds that are at peace with God. But, this security and peace of mind is not to lead to a complete independence from God, which it has done. We need to be made aware of our insecurity--death and judgment are to come. Dr. Bertocci believes that to flee from insecurity is to miss the whole point of religion.

Religion was never intended to be a sedative.⁵

Christ did not flee from insecurity. The peace and security that He offered--"not as the world gives"--was a peace in which he "set his face toward Jerusalem" and was lifted up on the Cross. He said that if anyone was to be a disciple, he, in turn, would have to follow the same procedure --to the Cross. The Cross does not bring security. When we accept the salvation of the Cross, we are then obligated into an open warfare against Satan. Open warfare is not security.

The fear of the Lord gives a man a sense of insecurity. Insecurity leads a man to place his complete trust in the Lord. Fear motivates the believer to live his faith, not just tolerate it. Fear activates a man's religion. It does not make it passive and dormant. Fear makes a man flee from himself and take refuge in the Lord. Fear reminds man to guard against indifference and to be ever alert. Fear keeps a man spiritually awake and to a ready obedience to His Will.

There is wisdom in insecurity. The main road to a mature faith is not one of security, but insecurity, wherein a man places his life in Christ. God has allowed men to address him as Father, but that does not give man the right to slap him on the back or treat him as an indulgent old

⁵Peter A. Bertocci, Religion as Creative Insecurity (New York: Association Press, 1958), p. ix.

gentleman. A man who fears Him would never do this. What we need is more insecurity in the Lord, and less security in ourselves. The average Christian is secure because he is not in open conflict with Satan. This accounts for our good-natured, easy-going type of religion.

The fear that is opposed to security is the fear of the Lord. This fear does not make a man cringe or move about in a paralyzing dread. This fear takes its place beside faith and love. The fear of the Lord points out the possible dangers in our Christian behavior. No Christian is so advanced that he does not need this reminder. Fear of the Lord prompts a Christian to walk before his God in lowly and reverential obedience. The fear of the Lord is creative insecurity.

III. THE BATTLE OF EVERY GENERATION

Today, the fear of man has usurped the fear of the Lord. Our thinking is geared to what our neighbor--across the street or across the ocean--can do to us. Therefore, we plan our defenses in terms of our fear of man, instead of building a fear of the Lord.

The battle for God in every generation centers in this distinction between the fear of the Lord and the fear of man. The kind of fear that dominates our life will determine our

religious behavior.⁶ The testimony and witness of Christianity is weak and powerless because the fear of man has won the battle momentarily over the fear of the Lord. The hope for the future lies in the ability of Christians to seek out and live in light of the motivating factor in religious behavior--the fear of the Lord. When this is done, the Gospel will be proclaimed with the same conviction and earnestness as it was in the early church.

⁶Wicks, op. cit., p. 62.

CONCLUSION

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It was stated in the preface that the fruition--purpose--of this paper was to make an intense research into the doctrine of "the fear of the Lord." This has been accomplished. The growth toward this fruition has led us through the Bible. In the Old Testament, God admonished that the fear of the Lord was the whole duty of man, i.e., fear was to motivate his behavior into upright actions. The New Testament strengthened and further revealed the fear of the Lord, i.e., the Lord and the Apostles Peter and Paul stated how it was to be applied in living. The early church experienced phenomenal growth partially as the result of the fear of the Lord.

God wills that His fear should become part and parcel of the life of man. Fear is not to be nurtured alone by itself, but with love, for fear and love are the opposites of the same motive. Love prompts man to do what pleases God. Fear prompts man to refrain from that which displeases God. Both are to grow and function together. Here is a description of the various stages through which the soul of the believer might pass: (1) neither love nor fear, (2) fear without love, (3) both fear and love, and (4) love without fear.¹

¹Alexander Ross, The Epistles of James and John. Ned B. Stonehouse, editor, The New International Commentary on

John affirms that fear and love go together when he said, "There is no fear in love: the perfect love casts out fear" (I John 4:18). Fear leads to perfect love, but no believer's love has ever been so perfect as entirely to banish fear. So, until man can develop a perfect love, fear must belong in his life. As the love of God increases, the fear of the Lord will decrease. Because man will have sin with him always, there will never be a time when total fear is expelled. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. The love of the Lord is wisdom full grown.

There are many examples of great men who have lived in the fear of the Lord. The author of the Book of Hebrews implies that the Lord Jesus "was heard in that he feared" (Hebrews 5:7). Abraham's fear of the Lord made him obedient to his God and sent him to Mount Moriah to sacrifice Isaac (Genesis 22:12). Noah was moved with the fear of the Lord and his actions resulted in the Ark (Hebrews 11:7). David was devoted to the fear of the Lord (Psalm 119:38) and in fear he worshipped (Psalm 5:7). Nehemiah worked on the walls of Jerusalem in the fear of the Lord (Nehemiah 5:15-16). Cornelius was one who feared the Lord and through his experience the Holy Spirit was given to the Gentiles (Acts 10:2).

the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1954), p. 206.

Joseph feared the Lord while in Egypt (Genesis 42:18). Other men down through the centuries have feared the Lord. George Washington feared the Lord from his youth. Abraham Lincoln was very conscious of his responsibility before God. John Newton, in his hymn, "Amazing Grace," says, "'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear . . ."

Through the centuries, wholesome fear of the Lord has been a powerful disciplinarian. It has been an influential promoter of proper human action. It has kept man on "the straight and narrow" road of religious behavior before his God. The fear of the Lord continues to hold a vital place in man's relations to God and God's relations to man. It has not lessened its value.

We have side-lined a wholesome fear of the Lord. Very little is known or said about fear, while a great deal is said about love. Fear and love must be once again given a proper proportion of emphases. If the church is to experience another "phenomena of the Holy Spirit" as it did in the first century, we will have to emphasize the proper relationship of the fear of the Lord as the motivating factor for man's religious behavior.

Above the sanctuary entrance into the Crescent Hill Baptist Church, Louisville, Kentucky, is this inscription: "Fear God and Worship Him That Made Heaven and Earth." This is our task . . . fear the Lord, so that our religious behavior will be motivated to honor and glorify the Master.

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