

THE FEAR OF
THE LORD IS
THE BEGINNING
OF WISDOM,
AND KNOWLEDGE
OF THE HOLY ONE
IS UNDERSTANDING
—PROVERBS 9:10

PURSUING THE FEAR OF THE LORD, PSALM 34:11-14

Pursuing Fear Of The Lord

- What Questions Do Children Ask From Birth to Four? according to the “Zero to Three” website

<u>Age Range</u>	<u>Questions Asked</u>
26-32 months	Asks where questions
36-40 months	Asks who questions
37-42 months	Asks “Is...?” and “Do...?” questions
42-49 months	Asks when, why, and how questions

- Based upon the questions asked above, what would be your spiritual age?
 - Do you ask yourself any spiritual questions at all?
 - Maybe you are just starting at the where or who questions?
 - Where can I find or who has the answers or where can I go for my life questions?

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- Based upon the questions asked above, what would be your spiritual age?
 - Or maybe it is the is or do questions?
 - Is the Bible true, Does it really have all the answers for my life questions?

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- Based upon the questions asked above, what would be your spiritual age?
 - The greater spiritual questions are the when, why, and how
 - When will Randy be done?
 - Why is the Bible true, How do I understand Scripture, How do I live a life that pleases God?

Pursuing Fear Of The Lord

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- I do not believe we can mature into the person God desire of us until we begin to ask the how questions
 - How can I “Love the Lord with all of my heart, mind, soul, strength” as instructed by Jesus?
 - How can I control myself so I can, “Speak softly in love”?
 - How can I stop falling into the sin that so easily entraps me?

Pursuing Fear Of The Lord

- Last week we looked at the Biblical phrase “The fear of the Lord”
 - **Proverbs 9:10 NIV**, “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.”
 - I attempted to answer the “what” question
 - The word “fear” in Scripture can mean several things
 - Terror one feels in a frightening situation (*Deut. 2:25*)
 - Respect in a way a servant fears his master and serves only him faithfully (*Joshua 24:14*)
 - Extreme reverence and awe a person feels in the presence of greatness and great authority and power (*Isaiah 6:5*)

Pursuing Fear Of The Lord

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 - How can I learn and develop the “Fear of the Lord” into my life, or do I even want to?

Scripture

- **Psalm 34:11-14 NIV**, 11 Come, my children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord. 12 Whoever of you loves life and desires to see many good days, 13 keep your tongue from evil and your lips from telling lies. 14 Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it.

Pursuing Fear Of The Lord

- Context is so important in understanding this Psalm
 - “Of David. When he pretended to be insane before Abimelek, who drove him away, and he left.”
- David had an eventful, successful life until now
 - Anointed King of Israel
 - Killed a giant named Goliath
 - Married the present King’s daughter
 - Best friends with the present King’s son, Jonathan
 - Playing harp to calm the King
 - Running and hiding for his life from this jealous king and his entire army

Pursuing Fear Of The Lord

- **1st Samuel 21:1-2 NIV**, David went to Nob, to Ahimelek the priest. Ahimelek trembled when he met him, and asked, “Why are you alone? Why is no one with you?”
 - 2 David answered Ahimelek the priest, “The king sent me on a mission and said to me, ‘No one is to know anything about the mission I am sending you on.’ As for my men, I have told them to meet me at a certain place.”

Pursuing Fear Of The Lord

- **1st Samuel 21:10-13 NIV**, 10 That day David fled from Saul and went to Achish king of Gath. 11 But the servants of Achish said to him, “Isn’t this David, the king of the land? Isn’t he the one they sing about in their dances: “Saul has slain his thousands, and David his tens of thousands’?”
 - 12 David took these words to heart and was very much afraid of Achish king of Gath. 13 So he pretended to be insane in their presence; and while he was in their hands he acted like a madman, making marks on the doors of the gate and letting saliva run down his beard.

Pursuing Fear Of The Lord

- **1st Samuel 22:1-2 NIV**, David left Gath and escaped to the cave of Adullam. When his brothers and his father's household heard about it, they went down to him there. 2 All those who were in distress (*suffering hardship*) or in debt (*lost everything to a creditor*) or discontented (*crushed of spirit*) gathered around him, and he became their commander. About four hundred men were with him.
 - **MSG**, So David got away and escaped to the Cave of Adullam. When his brothers and others associated with his family heard where he was, they came down and joined him. Not only that, but all who were down on their luck came around—losers and vagrants and misfits of all sorts. David became their leader. There were about four hundred in all.

Pursuing Fear Of The Lord

- After reflecting on how God had rescued him, and the kind of men he was leading, David wrote this Psalm 34
 - The first ten verses are David's testimony
 - Verses 11-22 is mostly the teaching part of this Psalm
 - It was written as an acrostic using all but one of the Hebrew alphabet making it easier for the men to memorize

The Fear of the Lord is a learned process

- **Psalm 34:11 NIV**, 11 Come, my children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord (*or to fear the Lord*)
 - You've got to keep at the forefront of your mind who David is addressing
 - **NIV**, "all who were in distress (*suffering hardship*) or in debt (*lost everything to a creditor*) or discontented (*crushed of spirit*)"
 - **MSG**, "all who were down on their luck came around—losers and vagrants and misfits of all sorts."

The Fear of the Lord is a learned process

- **Psalm 34:11 NIV**, 11 Come, my children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord (*or to fear the Lord*)
- They didn't know **Vs. 15-16 NIV**, The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are attentive to their cry; 16 but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil
 - **Vs. 18 NIV**, The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.
 - **Vs. 19 AMP**, Many hardships and perplexing circumstances confront the righteous, But the Lord rescues him from them all.
 - **Vs. 22 NIV**, The Lord will rescue his servants; no one who takes refuge in him will be condemned.

The Fear of the Lord is a learned process

- **Psalm 34:11 NIV**, 11 Come, my children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord (*or to fear the Lord*)
- You hear this in the words of Jesus in **Matthew 11:28-30 NIV**, 28 “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from (of) me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”
 - If you want to live or have a life of God’s blessing you must learn who Jesus is, what He has done, and what He offers to each of us
 - **Matthew 4:19 AMP**, And He said to them, “(Come) Follow Me [as My disciples, accepting Me as your Master and Teacher and walking the same path of life that I walk], and I will make you fishers of men (*What God desires for you*)”.

To learn the Fear of the Lord we must keep, turn from, do, seek, and pursue

- **Vs. 13 NIV**, (*learning to*) keep your tongue from evil and your lips from telling lies.
 - Other translations will use the word “deceit”
 - Deceit - the action or practice of deceiving someone by concealing or misrepresenting the truth
 - Trying to get you to think a certain way so you will move in their direction or do what they desire
 - This includes deceiving ourselves

To learn the Fear of the Lord we must keep, turn from, do, seek, and pursue

- To the Jewish mind what came out of your lips determined the direction of your life
 - **James 3:6 NIV**, The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole body, sets the whole course of one's life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell.
 - **Matthew 15:10-11 NIV**, 10 Jesus called the crowd to him and said, "Listen and understand. 11 What goes into someone's mouth does not defile them, but what comes out of their mouth, that is what defiles them."
 - We must remain cautious of deceit not just outside in but inside out

To learn the Fear of the Lord we must keep, turn from, do, seek, and pursue

- **Genesis 3:1-6 NIV**, 1 Now the serpent was more crafty (*deceitful*) than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden’?”
 - 4 “You will not certainly die,” the serpent said to the woman. 5 “For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” - **Outside deceit looking for a home**
 - 6 When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. **Inside deceit leading to sin**

To learn the Fear of the Lord we must keep, turn from, do, seek, and pursue

- The only answer to deceit is God's Word under control of His Holy Spirit living in us
 - He instructs us on how to think, what is truth, and how to process the deceitful temptations coming against His children
- This is what David started doing with these men in the rest of this Psalm, teaching them God's way of thinking and responding
 - **Psalm 34:14 NIV**, Turn from evil (*deceitful lies*) and do (*practice*) good
 - You always turn to something when you turn from something
 - If not, you will turn back to what you are turning from quickly
 - You turn from deceit with a changed mind, but that change remains only when you do the good things of God

To learn the Fear of the Lord we must keep, turn from, do, seek, and pursue

- Our old nature is bent away from God and His direction for our lives which is why He needed to give us a new heart or nature at salvation
- Do the “God good things”
 - How has He called us to think or see life – then practice it
 - How has He called us to act – then practice it
 - How has He called us to walk – then practice it
- What deceit are you most vulnerable of – be cautious of it?
- **1st Corinthians 6:20 NIV**, “you were bought at a (*great*) price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.”

To learn the Fear of the Lord we must keep, turn from, do, seek, and pursue

- **Psalm 34:14 NIV**, seek peace and pursue it
 - We must remember who David is addressing
 - **NIV**, “all who were in distress (*suffering hardship*) or in debt (*lost everything to a creditor*) or discontented (*crushed of spirit*)”
 - **MSG**, “all who were down on their luck came around—losers and vagrants and misfits of all sorts.”
 - Do you think they might have had some issues with peace?
 - Peace with God, others, themselves, past

To learn the Fear of the Lord we must keep, turn from, do, seek, and pursue

- **Psalm 34:14 NIV**, seek peace and pursue it
 - Pursue - continue or proceed along a path or route or direction
 - To not get sidetracked
 - To not get discouraged
 - To not ever think you have completely made it
- Seek first peace with God that is only available through the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross
 - After this we can pursue peace within
 - After walking that path, we can pursue peace with consistency
- What is the number one pursuit of our life?

Pursuing Fear Of The Lord

- Does it really make a difference Randy?
 - These 400 losers and vagrants and misfits became known as David's Men
 - Not just men of battle, but men honor, trust, obedience, courage
 - 37 of these men became known as David's Mighty Men

Pursuing Fear Of The Lord

- Good News, God is pursuing us
 - **Genesis 3:9 NIV**, But the Lord God called to the man, “Where are you?”
 - It was the first missionary effort, as the Creator sought out His lost creatures
 - God has always had/has a heart of reconciliation

Pursuing Fear Of The Lord

- Good News, God is pursuing us
 - **Luke 15:3-4 NIV**, 3 Then Jesus told them this parable: 4 “Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn’t he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it?
 - Are you one today safe or are you lost and wandering in life?
- So, the question again is, “What is the number one pursuit of your life?”
 - Your answer to that question will determine the direction of your life and will greatly influence the lives of those around you
 - Have you really grasped the fact that God really loves you?

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