

Searching the Scriptures / 73 / The Fear Of The Lord Is A Gift / Part 3

Today we want to look at the believer’s respectful “fear of the Lord” as a gift, and our three points include the following:

- 1. We Don’t Deserve the Fear of the Lord**
- 2. We Can’t Earn the Fear of the Lord—It has to be Given to Us**
- 3. We Work Out Our Salvation with “Fear and Trembling”**

1. We Don’t Deserve the Fear of the Lord

Just as fear can be healthy or even beneficial for us at times, the fear of the Lord is indeed a precious commodity. Job 28:28 states, *“And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.”* True wisdom and understanding are both gifts from God, and we deserve neither. In reality, nobody deserves the fear of the Lord, much less His salvation, given our innate sinfulness. Dan 9:8–9 is a commentary on God’s mercy and man’s wickedness: *“O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee. To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him.”*

Even after we are saved, our greatest struggle is against the ravages of sin in our physical bodies that war unceasingly against our souls. A redeemed child of God can certainly empathize with Peter’s heartfelt confession in Luke 5:8, *“When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus’ knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.”* Jacob, under Divine inspiration in Gen 32:10 also affirmed, *“I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant...”* So how does one obtain the fear of the Lord?

2. We Can’t Earn the Fear of the Lord—It has to be Given to Us

In John 3:27 God illustrates an exceedingly important biblical principle: *“A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.”* And if we are really honest with ourselves, we will readily admit that everything you and I possess has been given to us by God Himself as a gift—a gift we do not deserve at all! Jam 1:17 verifies this crucial fact, *“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.”* It comes from above—from God—and descends downward—to us. 2 Tim 1:9 records, *“Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.”*

This is why Jon 2:9 explains that *“... salvation is of the LORD.”* It originates from God and is sent to us by God for the express purpose of reconciling us back to God. Eph 2:8 clearly reveals, *“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God...”* In 1 Cor 4:7 the question is raised, *“... what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?”* Tit 3:4–5 is very succinct: *“But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.”*

3. We Work Out Our Salvation with “Fear and Trembling”

Even after we have become saved, we are admonished to live out our lives in the fear of the Lord as Php 2:12–13 points out: *“Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”* This is also seen in a beautiful Old Testament verse, Isa 26:12, *“LORD, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us.”* Heb 12:28 alludes to how this new life in Christ is to be expressed: *“Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear...”*

Notice how those two verses emphasize that the indwelling work of God the Holy Spirit (by the gift of God’s grace), is a dominant factor both as God draws us to Himself and after we have become saved. 1 Pet 1:17 adds, *“And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man’s work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear...”* 2 Cor 7:1 also addresses this vital principle, *“Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”* We are commanded to glorify God with our lives and all that we have—our time, our talents, our money, our speech, and our actions. Yet when all is said and done we can only humbly say in the words of Luke 17:10, *“We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.”*

May God give us the respectful *“fear of the Lord”*—if we do not already possess it—according to His infinite pity and compassion.