

MARCH 18, 2003

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FEAR GOD!

“Gather the people to Me, and I will let them hear My words, that they may Learn to fear Me all the days they live on the earth, and that they may teach their children.”
(Deuteronomy 4:10)

“You shall fear the Lord your God and serve Him, and shall take oaths in His name. You shall not go after other gods, the gods of the peoples who are all around you for the Lord your God is a jealous God among you, lest the anger of the Lord your God be aroused against you and destroy you from the face of the earth.”
(Deuteronomy 6:13-15)

“Make vows to the Lord your God, and pay them; Let all who are around Him bring presents to Him who ought to be feared.”
(Psalm 76:11)

“Let all the earth fear the Lord; Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him.”
(Psalm 33:8)

“God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be held in reverence by all those around Him.”
(Psalm 89:7)

**“The Lord of hosts, Him you shall hallow
Let Him be your fear and let Him be your dread.”**
(Isaiah 8:13)

**“Do you not fear Me? says the Lord: Will you not tremble at My presence,”
(Jeremiah 5:22)**

**And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul.
But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.”**
(Matthew 10:28)

The scripture above is but a small selection of the vast volume of clear warnings contained in God's holy word, commanding that we fear God and hold Him in reverence. It is our present lack of reverential fear for God that now poses the greatest danger to all of us. Not just to our individual nations, but to the church as well. Especially the church!

“For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God;”
(1 Peter 4:17)

Today, everyone seems to be concerned about the threat of terrorism. There are daily reports in the electronic and print media of possible attacks upon innocent people, using chemical, biological or nuclear weapons. Security forces are on high alert around the world, and war plans are being carried out among the nations. No doubt - September 11, 2001 proved to America and the rest of the western world what Israel already knew. Terrorism is a very real and present threat to the peace and safety of the people. But

that threat is minor and of little consequence in comparison to the displeasure and anger of a Holy God. The real and certain threat to our peace and safety is the judgment of God on a people who do not believe Him, openly mocking His word even from the pulpit. When the people of God, those who claim His name, lose all fear of Him, you can count on one thing for certain: JUDGMENT!

I believe our greatest sin today is not our idolatry, nor our lust of the eye and flesh, nor our adultery, nor our fornication, nor our lying lips, nor our greed, nor our aborting of innocent life. Our greatest sin today is not our practice of Christianity according to the dictates of man, rather than God. NO! All of this sin and more is the result, the outgrowth or fruit of our failure to believe a Holy God, and to fear Him and tremble before His word. The vast majority of those of us who call ourselves Christians do not believe His word, and in our disbelief we have lost all fear of Him. This lack of fear delights Lucifer and his agents because they know what GOD'S reaction is toward a people who fail to fear Him.

**“An oracle within my heart concerning the transgression
of the wicked; There is no fear of God before his eyes.”**

(Psalm 36:1)

May God have mercy on us! Where there is no fear of God, the people are called “wicked” - not by man are they called wicked - but by GOD Himself!

Paul tells us in Philippians 2:12 to “work out your own salvation with fear and trembling”. The writer of Hebrews tells us in chapter 10, verse 31 that - “it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living GOD.” Then again in Hebrews, the twelfth chapter, verses 28 and 29, we are told to “serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire.” We cannot serve GOD acceptably when we fail to reverence Him and when we fail to fear Him! Listen to me, saints of God. All of our service to Him, all of our singing, all of our dancing, all of our teachings, all of our preaching, all of our words, all of our church attendance, and all of our religion is unacceptable before Him if our hearts have no real fear and holy dread of Him. When the people of God lose their fear of God, they become religious people in form, but without His power. They become prideful, thinking more highly of themselves than they should. (Romans 12:3) When the people of God lose their own reverential fear of Him they are no longer a peculiar people among the nations, but rather they become like the rest of the world in their dress, their lust of the flesh and their pursuit of pleasure. When the people of God lose their fear of God, they are soon filled with the spirit of pride, considering themselves to be O.K. in the eyes of God. They will even plead the Blood of JESUS to cover their open rebellion that flows from a heart void of any fear of God whatsoever. In their spiritual ignorance they are placing themselves above JESUS and the example that He set for us who are called by His name. In Hebrews, chapter five, verse seven, we are told that God heard the prayers of JESUS - because of His godly fear.”. JESUS, in the flesh of man had a godly fear of God. We need not understand our Lord's fear of the FATHER. We need only to accept and believe His word. We then need to repent for our failure to fear Him!

JESUS had a godly fear of His Father and He commanded us to fear God as well. Our Lord also told us that if we love Him we will obey Him, and if we do not love Him, we will not obey Him. (see John 14:21,23 & 24) Then the Holy Spirit, through the Apostle John said in 1 John 3 & 4:

**“Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says
“I know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.”**

Our problem today is that many of us do not know the JESUS of the Holy Bible. We do not believe Him and therefore we do not obey Him. We know a Jesus that man has created in his own mind. Many of us have a different Jesus than other Christians. One Jesus allows us to practice homosexuality. Another Jesus

allows us to gossip and lie so long as we don't really hurt anyone. Then there is the Jesus that allows us to pursue fame and fortune. Many of us follow the Jesus who loves everybody and everything - the same Jesus who would never kill or judge anyone, and is delighted with our present behavior. In one place there is a Jesus who allows the money changers back into the house of prayer. And in another place there is a Jesus who allows for the mix of religions, as long as everyone loves each other. Go down the street a few blocks and you will find a Jesus who tells you to ignore what is recorded in the Bible and to go ahead and run your church according to your own beliefs and whatever pleases the people.

Think about it. We have come from the Upper Room, where we were all in one accord, to a time and place where there is virtually no accord. We have come from a time where there was only one Head of the Church, JESUS CHRIST, to a time and place where man has usurped the authority of JESUS CHRIST by taking over His authority. We have come from a time and place where the people of God truly feared Him. And those who failed to so do were killed on the spot by the holy power of God. (see Acts 5:1-11), to a time and place where there is virtually no fear of God. The God who personally killed the two sons of Aaron for failing to fear and obey Him is to most of us today a foreign god. (see Leviticus 10: 1-3) The Jesus presented to the people today is a Jesus of love. We are taught that He is our best friend, our buddy, our pal. The Jesus presented today is not to be feared, and we are told by many in places of leadership that we are not to take His word literally. Since we now have a broad way into the Kingdom of God, what is to fear?

Those who preach and teach another Jesus, other than the JESUS of the Holy Bible, are no more than the agents of Lucifer, as far as I am concerned. Before they know it, they will appear before Him that they knew not, and they will receive their just reward.

**“And of whom have you been afraid, or feared,
That you have lied and not remembered Me, nor taken it to your heart?
Is it not because I have held My peace from of old that you do not fear Me?”
(Isaiah 57:11)**

**“These things you have done, and I kept silent;
You thought that I was altogether like you;
But I will rebuke you, and set them in order before your eyes.”
(Psalm 50:21)**

May our God have mercy on those who are in positions of leadership and who fail to warn the people and prepare them for that day certain, when the very word of JESUS CHRIST will judge them. Our judge will not be some man, some preacher or teacher, some Bible study leader. Nor will our Judge be the Pope, a prophet or a priest. NO! The word of JESUS CHRIST will judge each one of us. The entirety of His word will be our final judge!

**“He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which
judges him - the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.”
(JESUS speaking in John 12:48)**

The words that our Lord spoke which are recorded in John 12:48 should be sufficient to cause all of us to bow down before Him and cry out - “My God, my God, please have mercy on me!” These words should be sufficient to cause each of us to return anew to the red letters of our Bibles. These words in themselves should be sufficient to cause us to turn away from every voice that fails to call us to repentance and a walk of obedience to His word. These words alone should be sufficient to cause us to repent for our lack of a holy fear of God, and to redirect our mind, body, and spirit to JESUS, alone. We, the people of God, as a whole, have not heeded His word. We have refused to fear Him. I predict that we will continue to so

do. Such behavior assures us of Judgment.

“For when Your judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. Let grace be shown to the wicked, (*those who have no fear of God*) yet he will not learn righteousness.

**In the land of uprightness he will deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord.”
(Isaiah 26:9,10)**

We must ask ourselves in light of Isaiah 26: 9 & 10, who does God view as righteous? For the answer, all we need do is turn to Romans 4:3, and we learn that those who believe God’s word are counted as righteous. Listen:

“For what does the Scripture say? Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.”

We can not say that we believe God and love Him if we do not accept as fact, receive into our hearts, and keep His word by acting upon it. To say that we believe Him and love Him and at the same time fail to act upon His word makes us liars, and renders all of our religion unacceptable before Him.

Saints of God, I declare to you this day, without fear of contradiction, that among those who call themselves Christians, there is virtually no fear of God at all. I further declare that there is more fear and respect among Christians for those in leadership than for God. Can you imagine? Recently, I heard a dear sister in the Lord say that she had a fear of ever openly disagreeing with her pastor. In some Christian circles, we hold leadership up as if they were a modern day Moses. We accept their self-imposed authority and believe that authority to be that of God. We bow down to some in leadership, such as the Pope, and kiss their ring or their feet. But we reject the authority of the Living Word of a Holy God - JESUS CHRIST - alone!

God has commanded us over and over to love Him above all others. He has commanded us to reverence Him and fear Him. JESUS came to us and commanded that we should fear God. Paul warned us to fear God. John the Apostle warned us to fear God. The voice of prophecy has come to each and every generation of man - calling him to repentance and to the reverential fear of God, and still we refuse to turn from the dictates of our own religious hearts and to heed the call of a loving Father. We simply can not accept the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. We reject the “narrowness” of JESUS CHRIST for the “broad” way of destruction. We refuse the message of the crucified life as taught by JESUS (Matthew 10:34-39) in favor of the message of prosperity and pleasure. We reject the message of spiritual poverty, persecution, meekness, righteousness and purity of heart (Matthew 5:2-12) in favor of a message filled with warm spiritual fuzzies. We refuse to accept the Word of God for what it says of itself in favor of a watered down version that makes us feel good about ourselves.

The word of God declares that there is one God, one Savior, one Word, and that He will never change Himself (Malachi 3:6) nor His word (Psalm 89:34). But we have rejected the one true God of the Holy Bible in favor of a god that is all things to all people, according to their likes and dislikes. Our God created us in His likeness and in His image. And we are now attempting to make God conform to our likeness and our image. All of this religious rebellion is the direct result of our having lost our vision of His holiness and so we have lost our fear of God. He alone can restore that holy, healthy, reverential fear of Himself - And He will! - through judgment - and then we will know that He is the one true God. You see my friends, our God never changes and His response to our behavior, good or bad, will be exactly the same response as it was in the past, to like behavior. For those of us who have taken the time to study our

FATHERS' response to the behavior of His people, we know that judgment is now certain. It is in knowing that judgment is certain, and that His judgment will begin with us, that we begin to understand what Godly fear is all about.

As Godly fear is restored to our hearts, spiritual pride is replaced with spiritual poverty. As Godly fear is restored to our hearts and we recognize our spiritual poverty, we begin to walk in meekness knowing that we are all candidates for a full measure of His mercy. As the fear of God is restored to our hearts we lose all "self" confidence and are then filled with an awareness of our total dependence on Him. As the fear of God fills our hearts, we turn away from our idols, including our religious idols, and then we turn wholly unto Him. As the fear of God is restored to our hearts, our FATHER gives the gift of repentance freely to us. Then, in meekness and true humility, with all self-confidence removed, we fall down in fear and trembling, crying out - "My FATHER, oh my FATHER, have mercy on me. Please have mercy on me." When the people of God are found in this "undone" condition, then FATHER pours out His love on us and covers us in the shadow of His holiness. Then, and only then, we take on His likeness and His image, while at the same time recognizing that He is God and we are mere mortals whose every breath is dependent upon His grace and mercy alone. In and of ourselves we are nothing, absolutely doomed and helpless. Walking in the revelation of who God really is and how sinful we really are keeps us in a place where the reverential fear of God allows His life to flow through us.

**"The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to turn one away from the snares of death."
(Proverbs 14:27)**

Please, dear brothers and sisters, please, please do not continue in your spiritual complacency. Please do not continue to ride your spiritual merry-go-round, day after day and week after week. Judgment is coming and it cannot be stopped. A firestorm of the holiness of God will soon make landfall and fear will strike the hearts of men like a bolt of lightning striking a tree. FATHER is now looking for those who will turn away from their religious idols and turn back to Him alone in fear and trembling. These are the "called out ones" that He will use to minister His life through, to those who have no hope.

Our failure to preach, to teach and to walk in the fear of God has led untold millions into the fires of hell. Today, our churches are filled with people who have been led to believe that all they need do is sneak to the altar while no one is looking, claim JESUS as their Savior, be baptized and join the church. They have been told that they have escaped hell and gained the assurance of heaven. However, the Bible, God's word, the Word that will judge us, tells a different story. So many, in the end, will be condemned because they failed to heed the warning of a holy God and instead listened to a man who had no more fear of God than he had of his family pet. May God have mercy. The mere fact that so many of us can read a message of warning such as this one, and lay it down without even a hint of fear or trembling proves that the message is truth.

A. W. Tozer wrote a message entitled "The Tragedy of Wasted Religious Activity" in which he indicated that many of us were wasting our time in church and prayer meetings. Listen to some of his comments.

"The familiar phrase, the religious tone, the emotionally loaded words have their superficial and temporary effect, but the worshipper is no nearer to God, no better morally and no surer of heaven than he was before."

"I think most Christians are simply uninstructed."

*"The Christian can hope for no manifestation of God while he lives in a state of disobedience. He may go to church for fifty years to no profit. He may tithe, preach, sing, write or edit or run a Bible conference till he gets too old to navigate and have nothing but ashes at the last." "To obey is better than sacrifice."
(*"Born After Midnight"* A.W. Tozer)*

These warnings are now being heard in publications like “World” magazine. In the March 15th edition, Andree Seu wrote in an article entitled “Ultimate Reality” the following:

“The wrath of God is a furnace, stoked to the seventh degree; a pent-up storehouse of fire, with here and there one lashing tongue that breaks out and licks a spot clean. Fools mock the fear of God. Or they debate it in convivial conversation. I have seen men mill around open caskets and discuss the weekend’s ballgame, unmoved by their own mortality. What scales have You put on our eyes, Lord, that the ordinariness of sensory experience oft seems more real than questions of eternal destiny, with millions lulled to death by their complacency?”

I close by asking you the same questions that I asked myself about two years ago. Can you afford to continue on in your spiritual rut, day after day, week after week, year after year, until your time is spent and you plunge into eternity? Are your religious idols and your religious allegiances so valuable to you that you are willing to risk even Hell for them? Are you willing to follow a man rather than God? Are you eternally sure that a holy God will overlook a heart that fears not God and ignores His warning that you have heard? If your answer to these questions is “yes”, I can only say to you - may God have mercy on your soul. My answer was “no” to all of these questions. And I can tell you that when I turned to Him, alone, confessed my spiritual poverty and asked Him to change me according to His pleasure - He began to do just that. FATHER will meet us right where we are if we will stop being so religious, so self confident and spiritually prideful. I have found that our FATHER and our Savior JESUS CHRIST are sufficient. We can be assured that He will do in and through us that which we have no hope of doing ourselves - bringing us to a place where our hearts are filled with a holy fear of Him. Then, in humility, we will walk before Him with clean hands and a pure heart. (Psalm 24:4) This brings great pleasure to our FATHER.

“Then those who feared the Lord spoke to one another, and the Lord listened and heard them; So a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the Lord and who meditate on His name.”
(Malachi 3:16)

I cannot help but wonder - In what book will the names of those appear who failed to fear the Lord God? Be afraid, church; be afraid as you prepare to meet your God. (Read chapter four of Amos)

May God bless you with a fresh revelation of Himself.

Tom

