

HAVING A GOD'S EYE VIEW OF GOD

How would you describe God? And also how would you describe your relationship with God?

I believe these two things go hand in hand, the way you view God will determine your relationship with Him.

Author and pastor John Murray once said, "The Fear of God is the soul of Godliness." So in other words to be a godly person you need to understand and grow in your view of Him and the way you fear Him.

Fear can be a good thing or a bad thing.

There are at least two obviously distinct senses in which the word 'fear' is used in the Bible.

The first is a sense of terror or dread, a feeling of distress or alarm (my Oxford dictionary translation), and normally results in a negative anxious feeling. This we see in Gen 3:10 after Adam had sinned and in Exodus 2:14 after Moses had committed murder. This type of fear is something we try to avoid.

The second is reverential awe which normally results in a confidence and love and is actually commanded of us.

Deut 10:12-13 "And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God require of you, but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments and statutes of the Lord, which I am commanding you today for your good?"

In this sense fear is a positive quality and something we ought to pursue.

There are more than 150 references to the fear of God in the Bible; it is a theme that runs throughout the Old and the New Testament.

God commanded us to fear Him and living like this is beneficial to the whole body of believers (the church).

Acts 9:31 So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was being built up. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it multiplied.

The greatest biblical example we have of fearing the Lord we get is from the life of Jesus as prophesied in the Old Testament

Isaiah 11:1-3 There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.

And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. And his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord...

So in these two scriptures both the life of Jesus and the growth of the church are founded on fearing the Lord.

So why is it that this view of God has slowly slipped out of our way of thinking...? I think one of the main reasons is that it can become so easy in the busy-ness of our lives to misinterpret, or should I say not dwell enough on, who God is.

The first error is one we see in a parable in the Bible...

Matt 25:24-25 He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed, so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.'

When we have an incorrect view of God it is easy to mistake Him as a hard man watching over us from above; someone who is more interested in our performance than in our relationship with Him.

Another error is the attitude of those who think God is weak and tame and so he doesn't interest them at all. You might hear it in comments like, "I know I'm going to hell, but that's alright because all my friends are there and we're gonna 'par-TAY!"

Matt 24:50-51 the master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know and will cut him in pieces and put him with the hypocrites. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth?

Another error is often heard when people say, "I think I will go to heaven; I am a good person, I do the right things, I am not a murderer, I go to church," or even "I'm religious."

Matt 7:21-23 "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?'

And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'

Why is this??? They 'DID' all these wonderful things but it counted for nothing when it came down to it... Unfortunately, they were trying to get to heaven by their own efforts and their own religious behaviour.

So the first point I want to make is that it is only because of the Cross and what Jesus did that we are able to have relationship with God and it is **not** anything we could do.

So we shouldn't be afraid that we can not 'do enough' for God because, well, we can't. We should rather be afraid and in awe that without Jesus we can't even come to God. Our complete eternal security rests in Christ.

A right kind of fear comes out of knowing God.

Today, all over the world people are approaching God based upon the teachings of God's unconditional love and grace. While it is true that God loves unconditionally, and is a gracious God, they are led to believe that God basically exists to save them, bless them and stop any bad stuff happening so that life will never get tough. There is little warning of our responsibilities towards God and the fact that God is not their

personal "genie in a bottle" but that He is also a God that judges and disciplines. So when life gets tough a lot of people are left wondering where this God went... There are a lot of people who actually believe that they deserve God's blessing and if they don't get it, they get mad at God.

Romans 3:23-26 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

John Murray said, "It is the essence of our impiety (sinfulness) not to be afraid of God when there is in fact reason to be afraid... The scriptures throughout prescribe the necessity of this fear of God under all circumstances in which our sinful situation makes us liable to God's righteous judgement."

So my second point is this. Without the cross we are left with a God who could only look upon us in the judgement that, yes, we do deserve.

We shouldn't live our lives afraid that we might miss out on the blessings God has for us, but rather we should live our lives in fear and amazement that without Jesus we would be living our lives under the wrath of God.

And now in the third we look at the arrogance that has crept into a way of thinking that we can do what we want because Jesus died for me.

Adam's sin brought fear because he knew God and knew he did wrong. [Gen 3:10](#) And he said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself."

[Romans 3:18](#) tells us that in this wicked generation. "There is no fear of God before their eyes."

John Calvin puts it like this, "lack of the fear of God will lead to sinful conduct." Looking at today's society we see much of Pharaoh's

[Exod 5:2](#) But Pharaoh said, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice and let Israel go? I do not know the Lord, and moreover, I will not let Israel go."

We see an arrogance and rebellion that confirms what John Calvin said.

Why would today's society obey a God they know nothing about? Many people have almost turned the scriptures around to say "Who is God that I should be mindful of Him?" when in actual fact as we know it really says in [Ps 8:4](#) What is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him?

I think it can be easy sometimes for us to take the judgement of God not quite as seriously as we should, even to the point of placing such a high importance on ourselves. I have heard it said by Christians that we are so important to God that He allowed the death of His Son in order to get me. I want to stress that it actually isn't about ME... or even you...

The third point I want to make is that the death of Jesus was more about him. His obedience and His example to us of God's righteousness and His glory in making a way for Him to be just and yet for Him to still have relationship with us.

So we shouldn't live our lives in a way that we are unafraid, that we do what we want and when we want its all peachy cause Christ died for me. Instead we should live in fear and reverence that the Son of God was so obedient to His father that he died a death that we deserved.

There is such a much bigger picture that I think I often miss and I am sure we all do.

There are so many facets and levels of awesomeness... to God that we just can not fathom. It is impossible to have a correct fear of God if we do not know Him, know His character.

Knowing God will help us to stop sinning.

Proper fear of God will help us to live in a way that honours God properly.

Knowing God will humble us when we see how holy He is and how sinful we are.

Knowing God will amaze us when we see how sinful we are, but how gracious and merciful He is.

Proper fear of God will focus us as Tony said last week and we see that he is not to be messed with

So out of our knowledge of who He is and out of a correct fear our lives begin to reflect and respond to the majesty and holiness of God, His amazing grace and unfathomable love. Continually in awe of the consuming fire, His purity, His righteousness and in a place where we are always dependant on the grace and the mercy He continues to show to us.

As Mathew Henry puts it "We must adore His majesty, acknowledge His Authority, stand in awe of His power and dread His wrath.'

So lets ask these three questions.

1. Do I have a small view of God?
2. Am I in awe of God because of who He is foremost before what He has done?
3. Do I have the wrong kind of fear because I don't know Him properly?