

## **“HOLY REVERENCE”**

**Text:** Acts 4:36 - 5:16

**Subject:** “How the fear of the Lord will save your soul”

- #1. How many of you want to know God intimately?
- #2. How many of you want wisdom from above?
- #3. How many of you want to avoid sin that destroys?
- #4. How many of you want to live transparent before God?

### **Introduction**

- ◆ In Acts 4:36, a wealthy Levite named Barnabas comes from the land of Cyprus.
- ◆ Cyprus was an island rich in silver, copper, iron, flowers, fruits and forests.
- ◆ This man, Barnabas, sells some land (v. 37) and places all the proceeds in the apostles hands for distribution, (and)
- ◆ The church is praising God for the generous offering that Barnabas has given.

### **(Then It Happens In Acts 5:1)**

- ◆ “But a certain man names Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession”.

### **(In Other Words)**

- ◆ Ananias and Sapphira react to the attention that Barnabas receives.
- ◆ Ananias and Sapphira resent this “shift of attention”.
- ◆ Ananias and Sapphira want man’s approval more than God’s approval.
- ◆ Ananias and Sapphira can not handle this loss of recognition as the “big givers”.
- ◆ Ananias and Sapphira reveal the consequences when a believer loses the fear of God:
- ◆ How being void of the fear of God opens you up (makes you susceptible and vulnerable) to the devices and destruction of satan.

**Question:** Pastor, what is the fear of the Lord?

**Question:** Pastor, why is the fear of the Lord so important?

**Question:** Pastor, what difference will it make in my life today?

### **(Isaiah 33:5,6 NIV)**

“The Lord is exalted, for He dwells on high; He will fill Zion with justice and righteousness. He will be the sure foundation for your times, a rich store of salvation and wisdom and knowledge; **the fear of the Lord** is the key to this treasure”.

### **What A Discovery Here!**

- #1. That the fear of the Lord is the very foundation of life.
- #2. That the fear of the Lord is the key to understanding salvation.
- #3. That the fear of the Lord is the basis of everything else that flows from God. (**why?**)

- ◆ Because if we do not understand and possess the fear of God, we will manipulate His love for us.
- ◆ We will reduce God to a manageable God who works on our terms and is subservient to us.
- ◆ We will manipulate God to do our will, instead living to do His will and please Him.

### **(Proverbs 2:1-5)**

“My son, if you will receive My words and hide my commandments with thee...If you cry after knowledge and understanding...If you seek her as silver and hidden treasures. Then you will understand the fear of the Lord, and know God Himself”.

- #1. To love the word of God is to understand the fear of the Lord, and
- #2. To understand the fear of the Lord is to get to know God intimately, and
- #3. The more of the fear of the Lord we attain the more we will become intimate with God.

### (In Other Words)

- ◆ Those who care less about the fear of the Lord will never know God intimately. **(But)**
- ◆ Those who want the fear of the Lord are those who will increase in their intimacy with God.

**Question:** How many of you want to know God more and more?

### Foundation Scripture

- ◆ "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter; **fear God**, and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man" (Ecclesiastes 12:13)
- ◆ "Happy is the man that **feareth always**, but he that hardeneth his heart shall fall into mischief" (Proverbs 28:14)
- ◆ "Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not high-minded, **but fear**: For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest He also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God". (Romans 11:20-22)
- ◆ "Let all the earth **fear the Lord**; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him" (Ps.33:8)
- ◆ "God is **greatly to be feared** in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about Him". (Psalm 89:7)
- ◆ "Be ye holy; for I am holy, and if you 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**. (I Peter 1:16,17)
- ◆ "The **fear of the Lord** is to hate evil; pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate". (Proverbs 8:13)
- ◆ "By mercy and truth iniquity is purged; and by the **fear of the Lord** <sup>E</sup>man depart from evil". (Proverbs 16:6)
- ◆ The **fear of the Lord** is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction". (Proverbs 1:7)
- ◆ "The **fear of the Lord**, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding". (Job 28:28)
- ◆ "Sanctify the Lord of hosts Himself; and **let Him be your fear**". (Isaiah 8:13)
- ◆ "Honor all men, love the brotherhood, **fear God**, honor the king". (I Peter 2:17)
- ◆ "And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to **fear the Lord** thy God to walk in all His way, and to love Him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul". (Deuteronomy 10:12)
- ◆ "Now therefore **fear the Lord**, and serve Him in sincerity and in truth". (Joshua 24:14)
- ◆ "Wisdom and knowledge will be the foundation for your times, and the **fear of the Lord** is the key to this treasure". (Isaiah 33:6)
- ◆ "O **fear the Lord**, ye His saints, for there is no want to them that fear Him" (Psalm 34:9)
- ◆ "Work out your own salvation **with fear and trembling**". (Philippians 2:12)
- ◆ "And Moses said unto the people, Fear not, for God is come to prove you, and that **His fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not**". (Exodus 20:20)
- ◆ "The **fear of the Lord** is a fountain of life, to turn one away from the snares of death". (Pr.14:27)
- ◆ "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**" (II Corinthians 7:1)
- ◆ "Let not your heart envy sinners, but be zealous for the **fear of the Lord**" (Proverbs 23:17)
- ◆ "Since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us offer to God acceptable worship with reverence and **godly fear**: For our God is a consuming fire" (Hebrews 12:28,29)
- ◆ "What man is he that feareth the Lord? Him shall He teach in the way that He shall choose. His

soul shall dwell at ease; and his seed shall inherit the earth. The secret of the Lord is with **them that fear Him**" (Psalm 25:12-14)

- ◆ "Oh, how great is Your goodness which You have laid up for **those who fear You**, which You have prepared for those who trust in You, in the presence of the sons of men" (Ps. 31:19)
- ◆ "The angel of the Lord encamps around all those who **fear the Lord**" (Psalm 34:7)
- ◆ "The eye of the Lord is upon those who **fear Him**, upon them that hope in His mercy" (Ps.33:18)
- ◆ "Great is God's mercy toward those who **fear Him**. (Psalm 103:11)
- ◆ "God will fulfill the desire of those who **fear Him**, He also will hear their cry and save them" (Psalm 145:19)
- ◆ "The **fear of the Lord** is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. For by me your days will be multiplied, and years of life will be added to you" (Proverbs 9:10,11)
- ◆ "The **fear of the Lord** leads to life, and he who has it will abide in satisfaction; and shall not be visited with evil" (Proverbs 19:23)
- ◆ "Blessed is everyone that **feareth the Lord**; that walketh in His ways. For you will enjoy the fruit of your labors and happy you will be. Your wife and you children will be blessed; this is the Lord's reward for those who **fear Him**" (Psalm 128:1-4)
- ◆ "By humility and the **fear of the Lord** are riches, and honor and life". (Proverbs 22:4)
- ◆ "Serve the Lord **with fear**, and rejoice with trembling" (Psalm 2:11)
- ◆ "I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercy; and **in thy fear** will I worship toward thy temple" (Psalm 5:7)
- ◆ "The Lord taketh pleasure in them that **fear Him**, in those that hope in His mercy" (Psalm 147:11)
- ◆ "Oh, that Israel had such a heart in them that they would **fear Me** and always keep all my commandments, that it might be well with them and with their children" (Deuteronomy 5:29)
- ◆ "These are the statutes and judgments which the Lord our God has commanded to teach you, that you may observe them in the land which you are crossing over to possess, that you may **fear the Lord your God**" (Deuteronomy 6:1,2)

#### (The Process Of The Fear Of The Lord)

#### I. The Ignorance Of The Fear Of The Lord (Vs. 1-4)

"But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, an kept back part of the price" (vs. 1,2)

**Fact:** Acts 4:34-37 reveals to us why Ananias and Sapphira sold their property and kept back part of the price"

- #1. The disciples had sold land and houses and placed the money into one common treasury.
- #2. Barnabas is singled out as having sold all of his possessions and surrendering the money to the common treasury.
- #3. Evidently, Barnabas gained some praise and prestige by his sacrifice and unselfishness.
- #4. Now, Ananias has the idea that he can get the same results a little cheaper (so he sells the land under false pretense).

#### "And Kept Back Part Of The Price" (V. 2) Means:

- ◆ They professed to have given all the proceeds into the common fund!
- ◆ They willingly kept back some of the money!
- ◆ Their sin was not in keeping some of the money; their sin was wanting the praise of men for giving it all (while only giving a portion).
- ◆ It was a premeditated plan. ◆ It was pretending to be something they were not.
- ◆ It was a weakness that give Satan a foothold.

**Fact:** Ananias had a secret desire to be popular and esteemed (like Barnabas)

**Fact:** Ananias was then vulnerable to suppress the dealing of the Holy Spirit.

#### (Three Striking Questions In V. 4)

- #1. "Whiles It Remained, Was It Not Thine Own?" (or)

- “You were not commanded to sell it; everyone gave voluntarily without pressure”.
- #2. “And After It Was Sold, Was It Not In Thine Own Power?” (or)  
 “Even after you sold the land, you could have kept all the proceeds (that would have been okay with God)”.
- #3. “Why Hast Thou Conceived This Thing In Thine Heart?” (or)  
 “Why did you place this very sin (a lie) in your own heart, and pretend to be what you were not?”

(What A Wake Up Call In V. 4)  
 “Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God”

**Question:** How could anyone think of lying to God?

**Answer:** Only by neglecting the fear of the Lord.

**Question:** How does satan deceive a pretender?

**Answer:** By causing them to entertain 4 thoughts.

#1. “God is far away somewhere”

#3. “God is not bothered by what I conceal”

#2. “God doesn’t know what is in my heart”

#4. “If I don’t get caught, it all must be okay”

### (It Is A Snare And Deception That Damns Millions)

- ◆ A snare that keeps a sinner in their seat (instead of at the altar).
  - ◆ A snare that keeps a believer in their seat (instead of at the altar) while covering secret sins.
  - ◆ A snare that allows people to deceive, lie, steal, cheat, gossip, and live sensually unrestrained.
- Fact:** This is why satan wants to keep the fear of the Lord out of your heart (and out of the church) (why?) Because:
- ◆ Without the fear of the Lord, we are left unrestrained and become a law unto ourselves.

## II. The Judgment Of The Fear Of The Lord (Vs. 5-10)

“And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost”. (v. 5)

“Then she fell down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost”. (v. 10)

**Question:** What did God do in the early church?

**Answer:** He judged the hypocrisy to reveal how we should feel about all pretending. (Pg. 4 of 7)

**Question:** Why did God do what He did?

**Answer:** Because, “they have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord”. (v. 9)

**Question:** What does it mean to “tempt the Spirit of the Lord?”

**Answer:** It means to presume upon God.

- ◆ Lord protect us from the one thought that will populate hell with millions of people:

(What Is It?)

- ◆ “What will others think of me?”
- ◆ “What will others say to me?”
- ◆ “What will others do to me?”

### Why Did God Judge And Purge The Early Church?

#1. To protect us from the snare of pretending.

#2. To spare us from the sin of presumption.

#3. To show us the power of and the necessity of the fear of the Lord.

## III. The Reality Of The Fear Of The Lord (Vs. 5,11)

“...and great fear came on all them that heard these things” (v. 5)

“And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things” (v. 11)

**Question:** Pastor, what is the fear of the Lord?

**Question:** And pastor, what will it do in my life?

(God Has The Answer)

#1. Leviticus 10:1-3 (All Read)

- ◆ Nadab and Abihu offered profane fire before the presence of the Lord.

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- ◆ The word “profane” means: “Showing disrespect or contempt for sacred things”.
- ◆ It means to become familiar with (and treat what God calls holy as if it were common).
- ◆ Nadab and Abihu were careless and approached God as if He were common.
- ◆ God reveals to us here that irreverence cannot survive and make progress in the presence of a Holy God.
- ◆ It was service on the outside, (but disobedience on the inside).

**#2. I Samuel 6:19,20**

- ◆ The Ark of God was the Presence Chamber of God in the Old Testament.
- ◆ The Philistines couldn't handle God's holiness and sent the Ark away to Bethshemesh.
- ◆ The Ark was received with shouts of joy at a frivolous church gathering.
- ◆ When the people opened the Ark to look in 50,070 men were instantly smitten dead.
- ◆ Why? Because no one can really approach God in frivolity, familiarity and looseness.

**#3. Isaiah 6:1-3 (All read)**

- ◆ Isaiah gets a glimpse of the atmosphere in heaven.
- ◆ He sees the Lord and the angels response to the Lord.
- ◆ What's the one description that reduces Isaiah to the fear of the Lord?  
(V. 3) “Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of Hosts”

**(From These 3 Passages We Have The Answer)**

**Question:** What Is The Fear Of The Lord?

**Answer:** It is **the response** of my heart to the **Holiness of God.** (Repeat)

- ◆ In Leviticus 10 (It affects my **activity** for God)
- ◆ In I Samuel 6 (It affects my **approach** to God)
- ◆ In Isaiah 6 (It affects my **adoration** of God)

**(What Is The Fear Of The Lord?)**

- #1. It is the response of my heart to the Holiness of God!
- #2. It is that attitude within me that produces a trembling heart:

**(The Lord Says In Isaiah 66:2)**

“...To this one will I look, the one who is poor and contrite of spirit and trembles at my word”.

**Question:** What does it mean to tremble at God's word?

- Answer:**
- #1. It means to make God's word a higher priority than any other word.
  - #2. It means to make God's word more important than any other influence in your life (over T.V., friends, opinions, pressure, intimidation, manipulation, rejection, etc.,)
  - #3. The fear of the Lord is a soberness that never excuses personal sin.
  - #4. It is a consciousness of the all seeing eyes of God.
  - #5. It is a guardrail that protects me when I'm all alone.
  - #6. It is an awareness of God's presence wherever I go.
  - #7. It is a mind set that is resolved not to grieve the Holy Spirit of God.

“I am a companion of all them that fear thy name”. *(Ps. 119:63)*

- ◆ The fear of the Lord is my personnel agent that chooses my companions!!!

**Question:** Pastor, what happens where there is no fear of God? (**two things**)

- #1. Sinners feel good in the congregation not convicted of sin.
- #2. Christians feel good in the congregation and will approach God on their own terms (without addressing things inside of them that God wants to address).

**(Nadab And Abihu Did This In Leviticus 10:1-3)**

- ◆ Moses said to Aaron, “Those who come near to God must regard God as Holy, so that before all the people God will be glorified”.

**(Is It That Important?)**

**See The Safety Of The Fear Of The Lord:**

- ◆ Everyone who is saved (and that will go to heaven) is on a narrow road.
- ◆ The narrow road is flanked by 2 ditches.

The #1 ditch on the left is called legalism.      The #2 ditch on the right is called license.

**Fact:** The only way to stay out of the legalism ditch (which is basing God's favor towards you on your performance) is to know **the love of God!**

**Fact:** The only way to stay out of the license ditch (which excuses our sin because we claim we are under grace) is to know **the fear of God.**

- ◆ The only possible way to be a balanced and healthy Christian is to know:  
    #1. **Love Of The Lord**                      and                      #2. **The Fear Of The Lord!**

**IV. The Reward Of The Fear Of The Lord (Vs. 12-16)**

“Many signs and wonders were wrought among the people” (v. 12)

“Multitudes were added to the Lord” (v. 14)

“Them which were sick and vexed with unclean spirits were healed every one”. (v. 16)

**Fact:** Purging results in renewed power of the Spirit.

**Fact:** Purging results in a clear conscience.

**Question:** Why do miracles, signs and wonders follow conviction and the fear of God?

**Answer:** Because no one will pretend and no one will take the credit or the glory.

**(A Sobering Result)**

“And of the rest durst no man join himself to them; but the people magnified them” (v. 13)

**Fact:** Who wants to take a chance on such high voltage power?

**Fact:** Jesus was saying, “you better count the cost”.

**Fact:** There was great danger in the Jews joining the church out of enthusiasm or because it was popular.

**(And We Discover Here)**

- #1. That God is not looking for a crowd or a shallow social club.
- #2. That God is not looking for easy-believism regardless of how we live.
- #3. That God is not pragmatic, believing that the ends alone justify the means.
- #4. That God is not looking for how many, but what kind of people draw nigh to Him.

- ◆ That God is looking for those who are transparent and void of all pretense that He can flow through!

**Conclusion**

**(What happens when we allow God to purge us?)**

- (V. 12) Miracles, signs and wonders.
- (V. 13) Respect and esteem from the outside world.
- (V. 14) Church growth the Bible way.
- (V. 15) Shadows healing the sick.
- (V. 16) Unclean spirits healed in Jesus' Name.

**(Remember)**

- ◆ The glory of God was not at Bingo!
- ◆ The glory of God was not at a Rummage Sale!
- ◆ The glory of God was not at a Church Dance!

The power of God was residing where transparent believers were possessed with the **fear of God** (where God was held in awe).

AMEN!  
Bill Kirk, Pastor  
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