



NEW LIFE

BIBLE-PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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"For the Word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev 1:9)

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GROWING IN THE FEAR OF GOD

Introduction

How do we grow in the fear of God in a godless or unchristian atmosphere? There are many phobias or irrational fears that many people have, and many struggled with it daily. The author once read a list of about 90 of them and that includes claustrophobia (fear of confined places), phobophobia (fear of fear), acrophobia (fear of height), hydrophobia (fear of water), necrophobia (fear of the dead), brontophobia (fear of thunder), xenophobia (fear of strangers), ailurophobia (fear of flowers), and many others. Psychiatrists are seeing more cases of these phobias in Singapore today in our mental clinics for mental health of our citizens than 10 years ago. Fear God and you will have nothing to fear. Solomon says in Proverbs 9:10, also in Psalm 111:10, *"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever."*

Far from being negative and limiting, the fear of God is healthy and clean (Psalm 19:9). It is the very basis of a proper relationship with God. Joshua told the people in Joshua 24:14, *"Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD."* Solomon advised in Proverbs 8:13, *"The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate."* This fear is not in the ungodly. Romans 3:18 says, *"There is no fear of God before their eyes."*

Frequently in the Bible, the fear of the Lord is contrasted with the worship of idols. From Deuteronomy 6:13-14, *"Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God, and serve him, and shalt swear by his name. Ye shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the people which are round about you."* The people were to fear God as they served Him rather than other gods. The author of Hebrews says, in Hebrews 12:28-29, *"Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire."* The fear of God...

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affects our worship and stewardship of God. Samuel says in 1 Samuel 12:24, *"Only fear the LORD, and serve him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great things he hath done for you."*

The Lord takes pleasure in those who fear Him (Psalm 147:11). Solomon assured us that it will be well with those who fear God (Ecclesiastes 8:12) and not with those who do not. Cornelius feared God, with his whole family, and he was saved (Acts 10:1); and the Hebrew midwives who feared God rather than Pharaoh and refused to kill the newborn baby boys experienced God's blessings themselves (Exodus 1:15-21) for their obedience.

The Joy of Fearing God

Fear is a bad word especially so after September 11 of 2001. Terror and phobias is the order of day for many in the 21st century. But those who fear God will be filled with great comfort and joy and they will also flee from sin and grow in holiness and righteousness. 2 Corinthians 7:1 says, *"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.**"* There is a desire to please, obey and honour God, and growth in sanctification is the result of a God-fearing man. Exercise unto godliness (1 Timothy 4:7, 8) is a mark of someone who has a reverential awe and respect to God. Those who fear God are humble and they have no problem with submission to spiritual leadership. Ephesians 5:21 says, *"Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God."* A lot of problems are caused by pride and a lack of fear for God and respect for the holy and indestructible Word of God.

The Disposition of Those Who Fear God

Those who fear God will live their lives carefully and respectably keeping the commandments of God and be separate from the world (2 Corinthians 7:1). 1 Peter 1:17 says, *"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."* Solomon concludes his book of prudent advice to us in Ecclesiastes 12:13-14,

"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."

Those who fear God are conscious of their accountability to God and so they order their lives befitting of their calling and walk worthily before the Lord. We are soberly reminded that God is a sovereign Judge and will assess us one day before the Judgment Seat of Christ when eternal reward will be...

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given out to faithful and deserving stewards (2 Corinthians 5:10).

In 1 Kings 18:3, 4, 12, Obadiah feared the Lord greatly and therefore he took the risk and hid the prophets of God and provided food for hundred of them in two caves. His fear of God led them to serve God with courage and strength, and God rewarded him. The healthy fear for God will lead us to do the right things for him to the benefit of others as well. There are many benefits of fearing God which includes keeping us from harm and danger when we are in the way of the Lord. Do we and our children cultivate a healthy reverential awe for Him? This reflected in the manner we worship Him, read His Word, pray, behave, think and work or study and have our being.

Those who fear God will strive to be patient and they wait upon the Lord for His perfect timing. David feared God and did not take Saul's life into his hands (1 Samuel 24:4-6). We are to walk daily in the fear of God (Colossians 3:22) and recognising that God alone is sovereign over all things. The believer's fear of God is not a negative morbid phobia but a practical and reverential one before the Almighty God, that affects our behaviour and conduct before Him and others. Cultivate the fear of God and grow in this vital aspect of Christian living. Learn to be like Abraham, Job, Cornelius and the saints of God who had a fear of God and hence served Him faithfully and reverentially. The people, during the time of the judges, did what was right in their eyes because they had no fear for God. We must learn to grow in the fear and reverence of the Lord. Psalm 128:1 says, *"Blessed is every one that feareth the LORD; that walketh in his ways"* and Isaiah 50:10 says, *"Who is among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God."* The knowledge of God's Word and His character and the constant awareness of His presence and power will help us in the practice of the fear of God.

Conclusion

This is a world that is filled with terror and trepidation because we have not learnt to fear the only Living and true God. **Fear God and we will have nothing to fear. Our whole duty is to fear Him and keep his commandments** according to Solomon and that is our chief end in life as well. It is a joy and privilege to know the almighty God and to love and fear Him in the process. Let us be enthused to do just that as we await the Lord's soon return and the coming Judgement.

*Rev Jack Sin
Maranatha B-P Church, S'pore
(adapted from Maranatha Messenger 20 January 2008)*

WELCOME TO NEW LIFE B-P CHURCH LONDON
CHURCH THEME: WORK OUT YOUR OWN SALVATION WITH FEAR
AND TREMBLING. (Philippians 2:12)

Our worship services begin promptly at **11.00 am and 4.00 pm.**

Please stay back for Bible Study and fellowship lunch after the morning worship and for tea after the evening service. Do invite your friends to come to Church.

Worship Services			WELCOME
Morning	Today: 03/02/2008	Next Week: 10/02/2008	We extend a warm welcome to all worshippers this Lord's Day.
Chairman:	Jonathan Kim	Pr Mark Chen	
Preacher:	Pr Mark Chen	Rev Allan McGregor	
Message:	Profiting from the Word	Tbd	NEWS/ANNOUNCEMENTS
Text:	2 Timothy 3:14-17	Tbd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chinese New Year Carry-In Lunch, 10 Feb: A time for sharing. For those who are able to contribute a dish, please inform Pr Mark or Jonathan. • Prayer Meeting, 9 Feb: Pr Mark will be leading this week's prayer meeting. Following the prayer meeting, a dinner has been organised. For those who are interested to come, please inform Pr Mark. • Pray for those who are away: Mok and Carol (S'pore); Daniel, Maureen, John, Sharon, Anthony and Helen (USA); Esmeralda (S'pore), • Memory Verse Exercise: Please note that the memory verse final review exercise for the entire year of 2007 is due this week. • DHW Bible Study: Please take note that there will be no DHW Bible Study today. DHW will reconvene in two weeks time, 17 Feb. For those requiring the notes, please see Jonathan. • Church Easter Camp – 21 to 24 Mar: The speaker will be Ps Jeff O'Neil. If you would like to assist with the logistics of the camp, please inform Anthony. • Sis Sabelo: Continue to remember and pray for God's grace to be with Sis Sabelo Dlamini following the recent bereavement of her daughter, Nerissa.
Organist:	Grace	Yanning	
Evening			
Chairman:	Jonathan Kim	John Poh	
Preacher:	Pr Mark Chen	Rev Allan McGregor	
Message:	Samaritanical Religion	Tbd	
Text:	2 Kings 17:24-41	Tbd	
Pianist:	Joy	Anthony	
Other Duties			
	Today: 03/02/2008	Next Week: 10/02/2008	
Ushers	Wah Soon/Joyce	Jee/Yetta	
Sunday Sch:	Joyce	Yanning	
Lunch:	Constance	CNY Carry-In Lunch	
Washing-up:	Volunteers	Volunteers	
Bible Study:	No DHW Class	No DHW Class	
Appointments of the Week			
Fri 08 Feb	Young Adults Fellowship: No YAF Meeting		
Sat 09 Feb	4.00 pm	Prayer Meeting & Bible Study: Led by Pr Mark Chen	
<u>Last Week's Worship Service Collections</u>			
Offering: £270.70		Lunch: £30.60	
<u>Memory Verse</u>			
<i>Last Week (Jan 08 Wk 3): Psalm 1:2</i>			
But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.			
<i>This Week (Jan 08 Wk 4): Psalm 1:3</i>			
And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.			