

Respecting the Lord

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- **Introduction**

- Sites and sounds that have become common this week:
 - 21 Gun salute, Hail to the Chief, Taps, Military jet flyover, lying in State, horse-drawn caisson
- All of these are associated with a military funeral
 - The pallbearers made very slow deliberate movements, out of respect.
- They are meant to show honor and respect to the dead
- This is something humans do pretty good...when it is regarding other men
- What about in our service to our Lord? Do we *respect* God? Do we give *reverence* to God? Do we *fear* God?
- Fearing the Lord
 - *Fear* defined
 - There are different types of fear
 - Cowardly, terrified, reverent respect
 - Merriam Webster: profound reverence and awe
 - In the bible, it is usually reverential fear.
 - **Philippians 2** – (12) So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling;
 - If fear means having reverence and awe, one could say, "...work out your salvation [having reverence and awe] and trembling."
 - An appropriate *fear of the Lord* would include reverence and awe
 - Trembling should be present if we know that we have offended God and do not have forgiveness
 - **Hebrews 10** – (26) For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, (27) but a terrifying expectation of judgment and THE FURY OF A FIRE WHICH WILL CONSUME THE ADVERSARIES. (30) For we know Him who said, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY." And again, "THE LORD WILL JUDGE HIS PEOPLE." (31) It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

- **Why God?**

- Why give God our respect? Why fear God and not someone (or something) else?
- God is omnipotent
 - Defined
 - Merriam Webster: having virtually unlimited authority or influence
 - We watch the "World's Strongest Man" competitions and marvel at their abilities to lift a couple hundred pounds. We are amazed at thunderstorms and their destructive and unpredictability. We

marvel at the power of the U. S. Military and the bombs and firepower that it has. Remember "shock and awe"?

- We should marvel much more at God's power, which has no limits. What is a couple hundred pounds to God's power? (If it were not for God, there would not be things to lift) God created the storms and their abilities.
- **Jeremiah 32** - (17) 'Ah Lord GOD! Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and by Your outstretched arm! Nothing is too difficult for You, (27) "Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh; is anything too difficult for Me?"
- He created everything with His spoken word
- God is omnipresent
 - Defined: Merriam Webster: present in all places at all times
 - **Psalms 139:7-12** - (7) Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? (8) If I ascend to heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there. (9) If I take the wings of the dawn, If I dwell in the remotest part of the sea, (10) Even there Your hand will lead me, And Your right hand will lay hold of me. (11) If I say, "Surely the darkness will overwhelm me, And the light around me will be night," (12) Even the darkness is not dark to You, And the night is as bright as the day. Darkness and light are alike to You.
 - Man tries to gain this ability all of the time. The whole plan of security systems is to be able have a view of everything at all times.
 - For example: The city of Boston is setting up a 24 hour network of cameras in an attempt to better fight crime by seeing all that is going on in public places¹.
 - God has this ability in largest scale possible—the entire world. He can view Boston, London, Sydney all at the same time. Surely this is worthy of our respect!
- God is omniscient
 - Defined - Merriam Webster: having infinite awareness, understanding, and insight
 - God knows everything
 - **Psalms 139:17-18** - (17) How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How vast is the sum of them! (18) If I should count them, they would outnumber the sand. When I awake, I am still with You.
 - We marvel at those that have doctorate degrees or those that are just extremely smart. Who has not heard of Albert Einstein?
 - Considering those that we label as genius, none know everything about every subject. One may be specialized in math, business, science, etc. God knows everything about everything, including the thoughts and intentions of man's heart.
 - **Hebrews 4: 12-13** - (12) For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. (13) And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.
- God is love

- **1 John 4:8** - (8) The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love.
- Consider the alternative: "God is mean"
- We are truly fortunate to have a loving God
 - Every physical need is provided for in this world
 - Every spiritual need was provided for. God sent his son for our salvation.
 - **John 3:16** - (16) For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.
- God is Holy
 - He is not tainted by sin
 - **Isaiah 1:4** - (4) Alas, sinful nation, People weighed down with iniquity, Offspring of evildoers, Sons who act corruptly! They have abandoned the LORD, They have despised the Holy One of Israel, They have turned away from Him.
- With all of these amazing characteristics of our God, you would wonder why anyone would *not* feel compelled to respect and fear God.
- **How do we express this respect, fear, reverence, and awe?**
 - Genuflection?
 - Defined – Merriam Webster: to bend the knee. to touch the knee to the floor or ground especially in worship. to be servilely obedient or respectful.
 - During the funeral services and viewing this last week for former President Reagan, many people would bow towards the casket as a sign of respect.
 - Bowing in the bible
 - **(KJV) 1 Kings 1:31** - (31) Then Bathsheba bowed with her face to the earth, and did reverence to the king, and said, Let my lord king David live for ever.
 - **(NASB) 1 Kings 1:31** - (31) Then Bathsheba bowed with her face to the ground, and prostrated herself before the king and said, "May my lord King David live forever."
 - **(NASB) 2 Samuel 9:6** - (6) Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan the son of Saul, came to David and fell on his face and prostrated himself. And David said, "Mephibosheth." And he said, "Here is your servant!"
 - **(KJV) 2 Samuel 9:6 (6)** Now when Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, was come unto David, he fell on his face, and did reverence. And David said, Mephibosheth. And he answered, Behold thy servant!
 - It was a sign of respect to those that were due it.
 - If God is due our respect, as we determined earlier, then why do we not bow to Him in prayer?
 - We will all bow one day
 - **Romans 14:11** - (11) For it is written, AS I LIVE, SAYS THE LORD, EVERY KNEE SHALL BOW TO ME, AND EVERY TONGUE SHALL GIVE PRAISE TO GOD."
 - Giving our best
 - At funerals, we wear our very best.
 - Consider the account of Cain and Abel and their sacrifices

- **Genesis 4:3-5** – (3) So it came about in the course of time that Cain brought an offering to the LORD of the fruit of the ground. (4) Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and for his offering; (5) but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard. So Cain became very angry and his countenance fell.
- **Hebrews 11:4** - (4) By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous, God testifying about his gifts, and through faith, though he is dead, he still speaks.
 - What was wrong with Cain’s sacrifice?
 - His heart was not right.
 - **1 Samuel 16:7** - (7) But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."
 - How does this relate to us today, since we do not sacrifice?
 - The magnitudes of our actions reflect what is truly in our hearts.
 - In giving back each week, it is not the amount that we give back; it is how our hearts are. We should *want* to give as much as we can back to the Lord’s work.
 - We should *want* to arrive on time. We should *want* stay awake during bible study. We should *want* to wear our very best. We should *want* to focus our minds on the worship.
 - Just *showing up* to services is not the best that we can offer. Our hearts must be right.
 - **Proverbs 4:23** – (23) Watch over your heart with all diligence, For from it flow the springs of life.
 - By doing any less, do we *really* fear God? Are we *really* showing respect for God?
 - Consider it in relation to secular events: Funerals, weddings, etc.
 - Would we be late?
 - Would we dress down?
 - Would we fall asleep?
 - Would we carelessly chitchat with our friends?
 - Doing any of these would be considered nothing less than disrespectful. Why would it be any different with our worship?
- Worship
 - All of this relates to how we worship the Lord

- Defined – Merriam Webster: reverence offered a divine being or supernatural power. To regard with great or extravagant respect, honor, or devotion
- Our worship is pointless if we do not show respect.
 - Showing proper respect would eliminate traditions in our worship
 - **Isaiah 29:13** – (13) Then the Lord said, "Because this people draw near with their words And honor Me with their lip service, But they remove their hearts far from Me, And their reverence for Me consists of tradition learned by rote,
- The problem obviously lies with the man.
- Essentially, he is taking in all of the good things without stopping to say "thank you"
 - We teach children from a very young age to say "thank you" when something is given to them (birthday, holidays, etc.).
 - We tend to look down on those that are not grateful when we give them gifts...and sometimes use that as a reason to not give them anything ever again!
 - Fortunately, our God is not that way.
 - We should feel indebted to our God. We owe him something!
 - **Hebrews 12:28** – (28) Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe;
 - We have so many reasons to worship and reverence Him, but we also have a *commandment* to do so.
 - **Matthew 4** – (10) Then Jesus said to him, "Go, Satan! For it is written, 'YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.'"
 - **Revelation 22:8-9** – (8) I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed me these things. (9) But he said to me, "Do not do that. I am a fellow servant of yours and of your brethren the prophets and of those who heed the words of this book. Worship God.
- **How important is it to fear the Lord?**
 - It is the beginning of knowledge
 - **Proverbs 1:7** – (7) The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; Fools despise wisdom and instruction.
 - It will cause one to hate evil
 - **Proverbs 8:13** – (13) The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way And the perverted mouth, I hate.
 - It will prolong life
 - **Proverbs 10:27** – (27) The fear of the LORD prolongs life, But the years of the wicked will be shortened.
 - It will provide confidence and is a fountain of life
 - **Proverbs 14:26-27** – (26) In the fear of the LORD there is strong confidence, And his children will have refuge. (27) The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, That one may avoid the snares of death.
 - It prompts one to depart from evil

- **Proverbs 16:6** – (6) By lovingkindness and truth iniquity is atoned for, And by the fear of the LORD one keeps away from evil.
 - **Proverbs 3:7** – (7) Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the LORD and turn away from evil.
- It leads to a satisfying life
 - **Proverbs 19:23** – (23) The fear of the LORD leads to life, So that one may sleep satisfied, untouched by evil.
 - **Proverbs 15:16** - (16) Better is a little with the fear of the LORD Than great treasure and turmoil with it.
- It is the way to riches, honor, and life
 - **Proverbs 22:4** – (4) The reward of humility and the fear of the LORD Are riches, honor and life.
- It will protect our hearts from sinners
 - **Proverbs 23:17** – (17) Do not let your heart envy sinners, But live in the fear of the LORD always.
 - **Proverbs 24:21** – (21) My son, fear the LORD and the king; Do not associate with those who are given to change,
- *Without* this fear of the Lord
 - We shut out the blessing of God’s wisdom and knowledge
 - We will not take evil seriously and allow ourselves to be corrupted by it
 - Our lives could be shortened by the consequences of sin
 - We will not know the love of God that results in confidence of salvation
 - We will not be motivated to turn from sin and turn toward God
 - We will not be motivated to work towards heaven and our own salvation
 - We will be more likely to have evil companions
- Lacking a fear of God, a respect of God, and reverence results in the wrong attitude necessary to grow spiritually
 - God’s commandments will be ignored, rather than obeyed.
 - God may be blamed for difficult times
 - God’s name may be taken in vain, showing complete disrespect
- **How do we develop our fear of the Lord, reverence, and respect?**
 - Study the word. Just as faith comes by hearing, so does a fear of the Lord
 - **Deuteronomy 31:10-13** – (10) Then Moses commanded them, saying, "At the end of every seven years, at the time of the year of remission of debts, at the Feast of Booths, (11) when all Israel comes to appear before the LORD your God at the place which He will choose, you shall read this law in front of all Israel in their hearing. (12) "Assemble the people, the men and the women and children and the alien who is in your town, so that they may hear and learn and fear the LORD your God, and be careful to observe all the words of this law. (13) "Their children, who have not known, will hear and learn to fear the LORD your God, as long as you live on the land which you are about to cross the Jordan to possess."
 - **2 Peter 3:9, 14-15** – (9) The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance. (14) Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless, (15) and

regard the patience of our Lord as salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you,

- **Romans 11:33-36** – (33) Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! (34) For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, OR WHO BECAME HIS COUNSELOR? (35) Or WHO HAS FIRST GIVEN TO HIM THAT IT MIGHT BE PAID BACK TO HIM AGAIN? (36) For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.

- **Conclusion**

- Do you “fear the Lord” as you should?
 - **(KJV) Psalm 89:7** – (7) 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.
 - **Hebrews 12:9** – (9) Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live?
- Do you give your best to the Lord out of respect and reverence?
 - Cain did not and God did not regard his offering?
- Are you living your life in a way that is respectful to God?
 - At funerals, many times we heard, “so and so would be proud”. Would God be proud of your actions?
- We are told to work out our salvation with fear and trembling
 - **Philippians 2** – (12) So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling;
- We talked of the different types of fear. Cowardly, terrified, reverential fear.
 - **Hebrews 10** – (26) For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, (27) but a terrifying expectation of judgment and THE FURY OF A FIRE WHICH WILL CONSUME THE ADVERSARIES. (30) For we know Him who said, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY." And again, "THE LORD WILL JUDGE HIS PEOPLE." (31) It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.
 - If, in the end, we have lived a life of sin and have not repented, we will fear God in the *terrified* sense.

ⁱ <http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/local/baltimore.md.cameras10jun10,0,2211108.story?coll=bal-local-headlines>