

DANGER: LIFE AHEAD!  
NAVIGATE WISELY.  
THE BOOK OF PROVERBS, PART 2  
THE KEY TO SUCCESS

# TALKINGPOINTS WALKINGPOINTS

Talk together about the glory of God's kingdom. —Psalm 145:11  
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. —Joshua 22:5

2016-1-31



"Talking Points, Walking Points" is a publication of  
the adult discipleship ministry of Triangle Community Church.



## Starter Question:

What from Sunday's message interested you? ...made sense to you?  
...confused you? ...intrigued you? ...upset you? ...encouraged you?  
...and why?

## Questions for Reflection or Discussion:

- When a movie or book purports to be an account of someone dying and appearing before God, what emotions and experiences do they report having?

Read Revelation 1:9-17a. How does this reliable report square with the popular ones?

- As a group, discuss each of the following statements about the fear of the Lord:

*The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom...* (Psalm 111:10)

*The fear of the LORD is to hate evil. Pride and arrogance and the evil way and the perverted mouth, I hate.* (Proverbs 8:13)

*The fear of the LORD prolongs life, but the years of the wicked will be shortened.* (Proverbs 10:27)

*The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, that one may avoid the snares of death.* (Proverbs 14:27)

*The fear of the LORD leads to life, so that one may sleep satisfied, untouched by evil.* (Proverbs 19:23)

*The reward of humility and the fear of the LORD are riches, honor and life.* (Proverbs 22:4)

Which of those passages do you find most attractive, most motivational—and why?

What **one thing** can you do which has the greatest potential to increase your fear of God?

- What can you do to try to foster more fear of God in our congregation?

What help do you need from your pastors in order to make this happen?

## Application-Challenge

(Please let us know, writing to [DanClement@tcc.org](mailto:DanClement@tcc.org))

- As you read your Bible, look for evidences of his great power and majesty.
- Do a personal study of God's attributes.

## Sermon Summary

The key to success in life is simple, though profound. It can be stated in three propositions: (1) “There is a God.”, (2) “You are not Him.”, and, (3) “You are to revere, worship and obey the God who is.” The book of Proverbs was written to give us the wisdom and discipline we need to live skillfully and successfully in God’s world. You cannot be successful in God’s world until you acknowledge that it is His world (Psalm 100:1-3). Only God sits on the throne—and it’s not a love seat! We don’t share the throne with God. We answer to Him; he does not answer to us. The only proper response to God is one of reverence, worship and obedience. To know God, to really know him, to really see him for who he is, is to provoke in us a holy fear and reverence (Proverbs 1:7). Isaiah’s response is typical of other instances where God revealed himself to man (Isaiah 6:1-5). Compare Isaiah’s response of godly fear and reverence to your posture toward God. I fear that in our desire to create an atmosphere of worship that is contemporary and comfortable we have managed to minimize God’s majesty. Our attitude toward him is too smug, too arrogant, too cavalier, too presumptuous.

**Students! Join us for...**

Middle School Worship: Today @ 9:30am

High School Worship: Today @ 11:15am

High School ACTS Bible Study: Tonight @ 6p

Middle School ECHO Groups: Tuesday @ 6<sup>30</sup>p

**Don't miss out!**

Some of you are thinking, “Isn’t ‘fearing God’ just an O-I-d Testament concept?” Not hardly; take a look at 1 Peter 2:17 and Acts 9:31. “But Doug, isn’t there a verse somewhere that says something about perfect love driving our fear?” Yes there is, but 1 John 4:18 is not denying the need for the creature to have a reverent and holy fear of his Creator, it is simply teaching that mature believers need not fear the day of judgment. In fact, a holy fear of God is imperative if we are to live wisely and skillfully in god’s world. It gives us a proper orientation in life. Those who fear God don’t live as though they are the center of the Universe. They realize that they have someone to whom they must answer. Their values are rooted in eternal verities rather than temporal pleasures. Without fear of God we are like a pilot flying blind at night without instruments. We have no ultimate reference point. Such a person cannot be successful in God’s world.

A holy fear of God protects us from much of life’s pain and trouble. Much of the pain that we experience in life is the result of the principle of sowing and reaping (Galatians 6:7-8; Proverbs 16:6-7). A holy fear of God also makes us better parents (Proverbs 14:26). In a home where God is feared there are boundaries. A holy fear of God contributes to good health and a long life (Proverbs 10:27). Those who fear God are going to experience a lot less of the guilt which leads to a host of maladies such as ulcers, migraine headaches, and high blood pressure. Those who are plagued by guilt are more likely to engage in other destructive behaviors in order to dull the pain of a misdirected life (Proverbs 3:2 & 20:27).

So, we cannot be successful in God’s world without fearing him—but how does one go about cultivating and nurturing fear of God? (1) As you read your Bible, look for evidences of his great power and majesty (for example, in Genesis 1-2 and 7-8; throughout Exodus; and 1 Samuel 17). (2) Do a personal study on God’s attributes, such as his eternity, omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence (Psalm 90:2; 102:12; 139:1-6; 147:4; 1 Kings 8:27; Isaiah 66:1; Jeremiah 23:23-24; Matthew 6:8; 10:28-30; 19:26; Luke 1:37; Acts 7:48-49). You also can study his truth, grace, justice, unity, holiness, and love. Surely such a study will expand your view of God and cultivate a healthy reverential fear. You will become convinced that **there is a God—and you are not him!**

# Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

**Monday**—Read Proverbs 1:7; 10:27; 14:27; 19:23 and 22:4 (on the next page).

- Make a chart of each of the benefits of the fear of the Lord, and note what the opposite trait would be (sometimes that opposite is stated in the passage, other times you will need to figure it out).
- Which of those benefits are most attractive to you; which of the opposites is most fearful? Why those?
- Which of those benefits are you currently experiencing? How can you experience more of them?

**Tuesday**—Read 2 Corinthians 7:1 and Philippians 2:12 (on the next page).

- To what promises does 2 Corinthians 7:1 refer? (Read 2 Corinthians 6:14-18)
- What is the connection of those promises to the commands of 7:1?
- What are some examples of “defilements of the flesh” that you still experience? And “of the spirit”? What would be some steps you can take to cleanse yourself from each?
- Is “perfecting holiness in the fear of God” related in any way to grace? If so, how?
- How is “working out our salvation with fear and trembling” related to grace? (See Philippians 2:13.)

**Wednesday**—Read Ephesians 5:18, 21; 1 Peter 2:17 and Acts 9:31 (on the next page).

- Do you fear **Christ**? Why or why not?
- What’s the connection between “fearing Christ” and relating submissively to other Christians?
- What’s the connection between fearing God and loving other Christians?
- List all of the benefits the church in Judea/Galilee/Samaria experienced as a result of fearing God. How many of those benefits have you experienced at TCC?
- Do you think there’s very much fear of God/Christ at TCC? How can you help increase it?

**Thursday**—Read 2 Corinthians 5:10-11 and 1 Peter 1:17-19 (on the next page).

- **Whose** is the “judgment seat” (2 Corinthians 5:10)?
- How should we prepare for our appearing before the Lord Jesus Christ for judgment, knowing that he is the One who loved us enough to die for us?
- **About what** do you think you should be “persuading” others? Are you? If not, who could you begin with?
- Notice the interesting connection in 1 Peter 1:17-19. We have a “Father/Son” (not, “God/slave”) relationship, yet just because of that he does not cease to judge impartially. God doesn’t “let us slide” just because we’re related to him. **IF** you’re in this sort of relationship, **then** “conduct yourselves with fear” while you’re on earth. Do you tend to think of God as “letting you slide” just because you’re saved?
- What is the relationship between the costliness of our redemption and our responsiveness?

**Friday**—Read Deuteronomy 6:1-2 (on the next page).

- Explain the “complementary and reciprocal” nature of relationship with God and obedience to him.
- Explain how relationship **precedes** responsiveness.
- Explain how obeying God **produces** fear of God.
- How have you see these dynamics in your life?

**Saturday**—Study the diagram on the next page, then...

- Have you ever lived in “servile, slavish” fear of God (ie, viewing him only as your Judge)?
- Have you made progress in moving toward “filial fear” of God? If so, what helped you do so?
- Circle each word (“terror” through “worship”) which now describes you. Cross out each word which doesn’t. Note that “trust” and “worship”—attitudes which many people would claim as true of themselves—are at the extreme “filial” end of the spectrum, while other attitudes which you **may have crossed out** as not describing you (attitudes such as “astonishment” or “reverence”), are more basic responses. What does this tell you about the true nature of trust and worship?
- Want to grow more in the fear of the Lord? Write to **DiscipleMe@tcc.org**



