

life group study guide

May 3, 2015

Big People - Little God

Fear the LORD, you his holy people,

for those who fear him lack nothing.- PSALM 34:9

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, PROVERBS 1:7

"We are more concerned about looking stupid (a fear of people) than we are about acting sinfully (a fear of God)."

When we began this series on fearing man compared to fearing the Lord I have to confess I was a bit taken aback. I had never thought of the two concepts in the way they have been presented to us. I am not a hero worshiper, nor have I ever been one. All those years ago when I first came to know Jesus, someone once told me, "now that you've met the King of King's, what man is there to worship or fear?" I often times find myself wondering, as the years have passed, if that advice has gone full circle. Occasionally I seem to struggle understanding the fear of the Lord. It often feels like a concept and not a reality.

Why? I still don't do hero worship, and *I wouldn't say I have a fear of mankind*, but I realize that there are things about me that I don't want people to know. And I wonder if that fear, the fear of "looking stupid," or worse, has influenced how I see God, and how I respond to fearing the Lord. Have my efforts or my life over the years resulted in a crooked view of who God really is, and how I am to relate to Him?

We have studied this for weeks now, so let's do some reflection- Where do we as people find ourselves fearing other people?

What kind of fear is that?

What does it look like?

What does it prevent us from doing, from accomplishing?

Proverbs tells us that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of Knowledge, or wisdom. What is the fear of the Lord?

If God is a loving God, why do we fear Him?

Do we need to fear Him?

What does THAT look like?

How does one build that fear of God into their hearts? To live that?

Matt's sermon title today was: *Step 5. Examine where your desires have been too big. When we fear people...people are big, our desires are even bigger, and God is small. Step 6. Rejoice that God have covered your shame, protected you from danger, and accepted you. He has filled you with His love.*

Let's look at that a bit, What does it mean, your desires have been too big? Give some example of that-

Have we ever been in a position where our desires have been too big?

What were the results of that?

Break down Step 5: *When we fear people...people are big, our desires are even bigger, and God is small*

Have you ever been that that position? Care to share that?

How you think a Christian may get to that position?

Let's look at Step 6: God has covered our shame...

As Christians, we know this. We live in a state of Grace, accepting what Jesus has done for us. Without that knowledge, there isn't any reason for this conversation- One of the quotes from the book Matt uses is: **"The gospel is only available to people who know they are unclean."** I suspect that would be an easy quote to take out of context- but I have said for years the main thing Jesus says to the non-believer is "Who do you say that I am?"

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So knowing our position in Christ- how does that affect our fear of God? Is the fear of the Lord a different thing for the saved and non-saved? If you think so, in what way? Break *that* down...

Being honest, I often find myself struggling with the concept of fearing the Lord. Perhaps living out fearing the Lord in my life would be a better way to put it... I suspect I'm not alone.

As a Christian, I am not looking for Christian concepts on living. I feel I have a solid knowledge of life- I know when I've done something "wrong," and yet the concept of Fearing God often seems to elude me. I don't sit and think about it, but when I fail in my life, if I get angry, or cuss, or find myself with impure thoughts, where is that fear of the Lord then?

How do I grasp that, bring it into my life at that moment, at every moment?

I can't put into words my feelings or thoughts on fearing the Lord as well as I'd like to. And honestly, I find myself often times afraid of praying for that knowledge, like praying for patience... Who can handle the response? So where do we, I, go...?

Matt shared this as well-- **"When you spend time in the throne room of God, it puts things in perspective. The opinions of others are less important, and even our opinions of ourselves seem less important..."**

I spend time in the throne room. I love to go to the Lord in prayer, and yet I occasionally still struggle with this concept of fearing the Lord. Does anyone else? Am I alone in a sea of believers?

I don't know, but I doubt it. Here is what I do know- I am forgiven and cleansed. Yet still occasionally fall short, sometimes very short. Why is that?

Are we more concerned about the fear of man than the fear of the Lord?

How do we explain this concept of Fearing God to a non-believing world, or is this just a Christian concept?

I have a verse that I have memorized, to help me in my understanding of how to properly fear a loving God.

[Matthew 10:28](#)--

Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell.

As a Christian, I know I am saved. I know my destination at life's end. How do I now, in this world, grasp and properly live that fear of the Lord?

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