

21T16f Now What? (Part 6) Fear the Lord

Hello my friends. Thanks for joining me @ the PUNLA coffee table.

Now What? We have been asking this question. Once you are a Christian, Now What? What should I do? How should I do it? How do I act? and on and on and on. I know the questions because I have asked these questions myself over and over during my life. But honestly, did you ever get an answer to those questions?

Well, the short answer to all these questions is the Bible. But I know that is not very specific. Today we are going to ask the Now What question. What does it mean to Fear the Lord? If you are a Christian, I'm sure you have heard this phrase, but do you know what it really means to Fear the Lord.

The first word we need to understand is "Fear". If you look up the definition of fear in your dictionary, you will see fear is defined as an unpleasant emotion caused by the belief that someone or something is dangerous, likely to cause pain, or a threat. This is not the type of fear we are talking about in the Bible. If you keep looking down the definitions in your dictionary you will eventually come to what they usually call the archaic or old definition of the word. These old definitions are what the word really means, not the modern cultural definitions but the true meaning of the word. The Archaic definition of Fear is a mixed feeling of dread and reverence. This is what the word Fear is meant to convey in the Bible. For example, in Matthew 10:28 the word Fear is translated from the Greek word "phobēthēte" (fob'-et-thete) which means dread or reverence, to be afraid or terrified. I think you need to combine all of these to have a full understand of the word. In the old testament, the Hebrew word most commonly translated as fear is "yir-'at" or "yir-'aw". This word literally means fear, but it is translated awesome, extremely, fear, reverence in various scriptures in the old testament. Again, if you look at all of these words, we can get a better understand of what the original word was trying to convey. Awesome reverence or a respectful reverent fear.

The second word we don't understand is the word Lord. The definition of lord is someone or something having power, authority, or influence; a master or ruler.

But we don't understand what this means because most of us have never lived in a country with a king or dictator. If you have then you understand what a Lord is. A few hundred years ago, everyone would have understood this term. You have a respect for your lord or ruler because they have authority over you. This is a respectful dread because you know if you say the wrong thing or do the wrong thing, that king or lord has the power to hurt you. You respect their words because you are compelled to do so. Even if your king is good and kind. You still need to have a healthy respect for them, or you could end up in trouble. A ruler or lord has the authority to impact your life against your wishes. Put very simply, there are consequences if you do not obey them.

The word that is translated as Lord in the old testament is probably better translated as God or Havah which is the proper name of the God of Israel. In the new testament the word translated as Lord is often the Greek word “kuriou” (koo'-ree-ou) meaning master, lord or sir. It is a proper way of addressing someone with authority over you, like a King or governor.

The way we approach God should be very similar. To Fear the Lord is a respectful reverence and dread for our ultimate ruler God. I fear for Christians who take this too lightly. God is love, well yes but you need to respect God. This is really greater than a simple respect though. It is a realization that God is God, and you are not. We are very very small compared to God.

I like the example of an ant. When I go out in the yard to mow, the ant screams stop you are messing up my home and my life. But I still mow the yard because the yard needs to be mowed. I can see the bigger picture that the ant can't. The ant's opinion doesn't really matter. I'm still going to mow the yard. This is like God. He has complete control of everything. He does not need to consult us before He does something. I hear many Christians talk like God has no choice but to accept them as they are. This leaves me speechless because God is God. We are the ant.

The fact God chooses to have a relationship with us is one of the true miracles of our existence. But we better understand our place. We are the created, God is the creator. We are the clay; God is the potter. He chooses how we are born, when we are born, where we are born, what we look like. He is God and we are not. Fear the Lord.

Fellow Christian, we must understand our place in the story of life. It is not about you or me. Fear the Lord. Respect God. God alone is worthy, and we should understand how powerful God is. Other places in the Bible tell us to love the Lord and work out our salvation with fear and trembling. Remember who God is. We should never be casual toward God. Fear the Lord our God. Love Him above all things. Amen

Okay I hope we understand better what Fear of the Lord is but why or what. Again, the Bible will help us understand. The books of Proverbs and Psalms are referred to as books of wisdom. Statements about “Fear of the Lord” appear more than forty times in the Psalms and Proverbs. The Fear of the Lord results in knowledge, wisdom, prolongs life, is a refuge, fountain of life, turns away evil, riches and honor, blessed, praised, hates evil and many others. Here are a couple from the ESV bible,

[Proverbs 1:7 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.](#)

[Proverbs 19:23 The fear of the Lord leads to life, and whoever has it rests satisfied; he will not be visited by harm.](#)

[Proverbs 9:10 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight.](#)

Proverbs 22:4 The reward for humility and fear of the Lord is riches and honor and life.

What this means is the Fear of the Lord gives us boundaries and guidelines to live by which allow us to flourish. It helps us to shun evil and stay on the path God wants for us.

Jesus explains why we Fear the Lord clearly in Matthew Chapter 10. Jesus says, *“And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. (Matthew 10:28 ESV) a parallel to this is found in Luke 12:5. “But I will warn you whom to fear: fear him who, after he has killed, has authority to cast into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him!” (Luke 12:5 ESV)*

Jesus is reminding us God can do more than kill our earthly body. He has the ultimate power to cast us into Hell. We should be scared of Hell, which is not where we want to be. So, show some respect to the one who controls that outcome. We should be reverent to Him He is God, and we are not.

In the Acts of the Apostles, Luke writes about the early church. Luke writes, *“So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was being built up. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it multiplied.” (Acts 9:31ESV).* The early church flourished because they understood God was the ultimate authority. Living according to His wishes is the best way to live and it gave them comfort. Remember the early church faced intense persecution. Many died because of their belief in Jesus. Yet they Feared the Lord and flourished.

Fear the Lord means accepting the fact God is our ultimate authority. He is God. In the end it does not matter whether we accept it or not God is still God and as such He alone controls our ultimate outcome. I urge you to Fear the Lord. Give the Respect to God that He deserves and understand it is a miracle God can tolerate us let alone invite us into His family. Remember our place. God is God and we are not. Fear the Lord.

Let's pray.

Heavenly Father. I am humbled by your love for us. We are nothing compared to you. You are God and as such we will show you the respect you are owed. I understand it does not matter if I believe or not, you are still God. Ultimately you alone will determine my final outcome. I will Fear you and Love you at the same time. Help us to remember you are the focus of our lives not us. We are your servants, not the other way around. I will proclaim to the world, Fear the Lord my God who alone is worthy.

And I pray all these things to the Father in your name Lord Jesus. Amen.

Thank you for joining me @ the PUNLA Coffee Table today, I hope you'll join us for the rest of the series “Now What?”

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