

***Blessed are those Who Fear the Lord - Psalm 128***  
**Notes, Family Worship, Bible Reading**

**Notes from the Sermon**

Fear is a powerful motivator. In my family the fear of spiders and snakes is a real thing, and believe me, it has led to some crazy, and even irrational stories. Even deeper than this, though, is our greater fears of things such as loss of power, resources, relationships, and control. The reason fear is so powerful is that it is tied to love. We fear what could take from us the things we love the most, and on top of the list is our very lives. Let's be honest this morning, the events that took place yesterday ignited fears that we share, no matter our political leanings. We have all seen the chaos brought about by the assassinations in the 1960's to know that a single moment can change everything in a nation, and disrupt so much in our lives.

But there is something else about fear, its almost impossible to overcome on an emotional level. Think about it, what do you fear the most. Now, tell yourself to not be afraid of that. The act of trying to have a "positive mind set" about that which I fear just puts in deeper in my mind and causes more fixation on those things. I tell myself there are no spiders in the bathroom and all my mind imagines is a giant, man-eating spider hiding in the cabinet. So it is somewhat strange to think that the most common command in all of Scripture is the mandate to, "Fear not." Over and over God's people are told, "Do not be afraid." C'mon, we live in a scary world, how can we avoid fear. Yet, the imperative shows up over and over again. With one exception, we are also commanded over and over again to fear the Lord. The fear of the Lord is mentioned over 300 times in the Scriptures. Our Lord Jesus says it most clearly in Luke 12 when He tells his disciples that they should not fear people who can take their lives, rather they are to fear the One who can take lie and send them to hell. In other words, the solution to their fear of the Romans does not lie in positive thinking, it lies in a greater and more real fear. Furthermore, our text this week and many others take it a step further. We are told the secret to a blessed, happy, and wise life rests in the call to fear the Lord. "Blessed is everyone who fears the Lord," begins Psalm 128, followed by a list of amazing blesses that lead to a happy life.

Really, we are to be afraid of God, to fear Jesus? That seems odd? And this fear is the secret to happiness and blessing? Or, as Proverbs puts it, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." I have heard several sermons where preachers have tried to smooth the edges of these commands, telling their people that to fear doesn't really mean to be afraid, rather it means to have reverence and awe. I actually think they miss the point while making it, which is this. If we actually see the True and Living God rightly, we will have awe, we will have reverence, but we will also see His holiness, His glory, His majesty correctly, and the proper response is to fear Him. This sort of proper fear keeps us from trying to climb in to the tiger pen at the zoo. I don't know about you, but when look at a tiger pacing back and forth, I am at awe. But I also can't help but imagine what would happen if I met that tiger in jungle, and I get the shakes. The more I understand God as revealed in Scriptures, the more I see Him clearly, the more I will be in awe and fear Him. Jesus' disciples got this when they were in the boat after He calmed the storm and sea. Immediately, they were more afraid of the One in the boat with them than they ever were of the storm which almost cost them their boat and lives (see Mark 4:35ff). To know the Lord truly is to fear Him, because we see our smallness and weakness and His power and sovereign holiness.

Yet, there is also one more important aspect to understand the fear of the Lord, which is the path to a blessed life. There are two kinds of fear, the fear that causes us to run away screaming, and the fear that causes us to run toward in relationship. We see the first type of fear in every horror movie, as people run from Jason or Freddie to no avail. This is an unhealthy fear, and actually leads to a religious, rule keeping zeal for many. On the other hand, we see the other type of fear in the way a child fears a loving father. I had a great dad,

but to this day nothing will give me a shiver down the spine like the sound of a belt clearing belt loops or snapping leather. I loved my dad, but I was also afraid of him. Yet, this fear caused me to run to him, to stay close and avoid the things that could put me in his doghouse. So yes, I feared my dad, but when I was close to him I really didn't fear anything else, because I knew my dad would take care of me. This is fear of the Lord. It is necessary for authentic faith, because true faith has to begin with our knowledge of the True and Living God, rightly understanding Him and in awe of Him. Yet, this fear runs to Him because we know He is good, He loves us, and His redemption is real. We know what He could do to us, what He should do to us, yet we also know that His wrath has been appeased and His justice met at the cross on our behalf. So in fear and love our path is to run to Him, to obey His commands, and to keep believing that our Heavenly Father will bless us and take care of us.

**Bible Reading for the Week**

Daily Bible Readings

Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
1 Chron icles 29	2 Chron icles 1	2 Chron icles 2	2 Chron icles 3	2 Chron icles 4	2 Chron icles 5	2 Chron icles 6

Reading from this past week: Psalm 128

Reading in preparation for this coming Sunday: Psalm 129

**Family Worship**

Song - *Psalm 34 (Taste and See)*

<https://youtu.be/yOzf0VrDNGU?si=3Vuk6FsWJdaj-gPj>

Gospel Project

Unit: Paul's Mission To Rome

Story: Paul was Sent to Rome

Big Picture Question: Why should we praise Jesus?

Answer: We should praise Jesus for what He has done to provide our salvation and because He will one day make all things right.

Scripture: Acts 27-28

New City Catechism

Question 28: What happens after death to those not united to Christ by faith?

Answer: They will be cast out from the presence of God, into hell, to be justly punished, forever.

Verse: John 3:16-18, 36

Scripture

Psalm 128

- What do you fear the most in life?
- What does it mean to fear the Lord? How do we express this fear rightly?
- How can fear of the Lord displace our other fears? How does this speak to our anxieties and fears?
- Why is fear of the Lord connected to gaining wisdom and experiencing blessing? How do we apply this truth to our lives?

Prayer

\*Pray for our youth ministry, our Director of Youth Ministry Travis Dierker, and our students trip to camp this week.

\*Pray that we would be a church that fears the Lord.