

**PROVERBS SERIES EIGHTEEN**  
**THE FEAR OF THE LORD**  
**Dr. Roger Barrier**  
**Proverbs 9:10;10:27;14:16,26-27;15:33;19:23;28:14**

Today is our last sermon from the Book of Proverbs. I hope you have enjoyed the study. Next week Glenn and I will begin a most significant study on what *Closing The Gap* might look like —from where we are in our Christian lives to where God and we would like to be.

•SLIDE #: Proverb 9:10: “The Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.”

STORY of girl last Sunday who wanted to know about the term, “the fear of the lord” that I mentioned in the sermon. First-time attendee. I was beginning to explain the term. Started with the issue of Fear and she did not like to think that God was someone to be feared. It was obvious that whatever concepts of God she had, God was not be feared. She did not wait for the end of the response. She turned and said for me to hear as she left: “If this is what Christianity is like, I knew I did not want anything to do with it.”

We don’t want to leave the book of Proverbs without a deep understanding of the godly lifestyle described in the book as *The Fear Of The Lord*.

The “Fear of the Lord” sounds like a negative thing. But, according to the Word of God, it is the best living that can happen to us. It is the lifestyle we all really want. It beats all the options.

A party of tourists was on its way to Palestine, and its guide was describing some of the quaint customs of the East. When we get to Palestine the shepherd always leads the sheep, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.”

The party reached Palestine, and to the amusement of the tourists, almost the first sight to meet their eyes was that of a flock of sheep being driven along by a man. The guide was astonished and immediately made it his business to accost the shepherd.

“Why are you driving these sheep?” he asked. “I have always been told that the Eastern shepherd leads his sheep.”

“You are quite right, sir,” replied the man. “The shepherd does lead his sheep. But you see, I’m not the shepherd; I’m the butcher.”

God is not the butcher. He is the shepherd.

•TIMED SLIDE #: Proverb 9:10: “The Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.”  
--but it is not the end.

Listen to these verses which describe and decide whether or not you might want to live out “The Fear of the Lord” Lifestyle.

•SLIDE #: Proverb 10:27: The fear of the LORD adds length to life,

•SLIDE #: Proverb 28:14: Blessed is the man who always fears the LORD.

•SLIDE #: Proverb 15:33: The fear of the LORD teaches a man wisdom,

•SLIDE #: Proverb 14:16: A wise man fears the LORD and shuns evil,

•SLIDE #: Proverb 14:26: He who fears the LORD has a secure fortress, and for his children it will be a refuge.

•SLIDE #: Proverb 14:27: The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, turning a man from the snares of death.

•SLIDE #: Proverb 19:23: The fear of the LORD leads to life: Then one rests content, untouched by trouble.

SLIDE #: THE LIFE STYLE THAT BEGINS WITH FEAR ENDS UP IN PERFECT LOVE.

SLIDE #: 1 John 4:18: There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

EXPLAIN THE VERSE and salvation experience of grace: no punishment.

No punishment after we come to Christ.

No fear as the love relationship grows.

During the Revolutionary War, a young officer in the British Army, before embarking for this country, became engaged to a young lady in England.

In one of the battles of the officer was badly wounded and lost a leg. He wrote to his fiancée, telling her how he was disfigured and maimed, and so changed from what had been when she had last seen him that he felt it his duty to release her from all obligation to become his wife.

The young lady wrote an answer. In her letter she said that whether or not they married had nothing whatsoever to do with what had happened to him in battle, and wrote,

SLIDE #: “I intend to marry you as long as there was enough of your body left to hold your soul!

SLIDE #: BUT, THE LIFESTYLE DOES BEGIN WITH FEAR. WHAT MIGHT THIS WORD “FEAR” MEAN? HOW MIGHT FEAR BE EXPERIENCED AT THE BEGINNING?

SLIDE #: Isaiah 6: Isaiah falling down when he saw God mighty and lifted up.

SLIDE #: Matthew 14:22-33: Disciples more afraid of Jesus when he stopped the storm than they were of the storm.

SLIDE #: Luke 5:1-11: Peter falling down in the boat. Depart from me; I am a sinful man.

Jesus demonstrating love—but also:

SLIDE #: John 18:1-9: Jesus showing off glory in the Garden and the soldiers fell down.

A schoolteacher injured his back and had to wear a plaster cast around the upper part of his body. It fit under his shirt and wasn't noticeable at all.

On the first day of the term, still with the cast under his shirt, he found himself assigned to the toughest students in school. Walking confidently into the rowdy classroom, he opened the window as wide as possible and then busied himself with desk work.

When a strong breeze made his tie flap, he took the desk stapler and stapled the tie to his chest. He had no trouble with discipline that term.

•SLIDE #: Proverb 9:10: "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.

•SLIDE #: "As I read the Bible, I seem to find holiness to be His supreme attribute" – Billy Graham

•SLIDE #: Holy means "utterly different, wholly other."

•SLIDE #: Lower our sense of holiness, and our sense of sin is lowered. – Dan DeHaan

We want, in fact, not so much a Father in Heaven as a Grandfather in Heaven – a senile benevolence who, as they say, "liked to see young people enjoying themselves" and whose plan for the universe was simply that it might be truly said at the end of each day, "a good time was had by all."

Because God is holy He hates sin.

•SLIDE #: Proverb 6:16-19: There are six things the LORD hates, seven that are detestable to him:

17 haughty eyes,  
a lying tongue,  
hands that shed innocent blood,  
18 a heart that devises wicked schemes,  
feet that are quick to rush into evil,  
19 a false witness who pours out lies  
and a man who stirs up dissension among brothers.

"God hates sin but loves the sinners."

No one questions God's love for a lost world (John 3:16; Romans 5:8).

But, people can willfully sin so much that they become an abomination to God.

•SLIDE #: Proverb 3:32: for the LORD detests a perverse man

•SLIDE #: Proverb 16:5: The Lord detests all the proud of heart. Be sure of this: They will not go unpunished.

Don't tread lightly here. Serious.

This ought to scare the daylight out of some of us here today. We all ought to be afraid of this.

If have chosen to live life on your own, you are rejecting the life of the spirit. Don't think you need a partner then you ought to feel the heat.

God weeps over this.

One Jewish tradition tells of the time during the Exodus when the Israelites walked through the Red Sea on dry ground. After safely arriving on the other side, the water crashed down on the Egyptian army. As all of Pharaoh's men perished.

Up in Heaven the angels were rejoicing over the miraculous deliverance. Then they looked over to see God's reaction.

God was weeping.

God's love is so powerful and sure, that even the death of those who oppose him breaks his heart.

He knows the two roads and He longs for you to come home.

•SLIDE #: Proverb 1:29-33: Since they hated knowledge and did not choose to fear the LORD,  
30 since they would not accept my advice and spurned my rebuke,  
31 they will eat the fruit of their ways and be filled with the fruit of their schemes.  
32 For the waywardness of the simple will kill them, and the complacency of fools will destroy them;  
33 but whoever listens to me will live in safety and be at ease, without fear of harm."

World War II was drawing to a close. The German army was sending children to man the lines in a futile effort to stop the Allied invasion into their homeland. Hopeless effort.

It was March 1945. Dr. Karl H. Schlesier, a German soldier, remembers this time:

I was... in a battalion of teenage grenadiers fresh out of training [and] was sent into the front line east of the Rhine River. In bitter fighting American troops pushed through on both sides but got stuck in front of my company. About 17 or 18 of us were left...

Hopeless situation: We all knew we could not stop the Americans. We were all going to die.

The eerie silence was broken by a single voice. A lone American soldier had walked... calmly toward the entrenched Germans, saying in a calm and low voice, "Come on out. Come on out."

The American soldier had two machine guns trained on him, and we were sure he knew this, but he just kept on coming. He just wanted us to give up.

The German soldiers did as he said. They dropped their weapons and took off their helmets, tossing them back into the foxhole.

The soldier told them to put their hands over their heads. Then he turned and walked toward the American lines without looking back as the German soldiers followed.

"He must have been the most reasonable man, the most perceptive, the most understanding, and by far the most brave. We had not expected to live, and he must have seen how idiotic this wall was, and he acted on his own to save us, risking his own life in the process."

Later in the prisoner-of-war camp, we talked about him. If he had not come to get us, we would have died in our foxholes.

Time for some of you to surrender in your war against God.

SLIDE #: WHAT MIGHT THE FEAR OF THE LORD LIFESTYLE LOOK LIKE IN MY LIFE?

This is the kind of lifestyle we all want to enjoy.

•SLIDE #: "The Fear Of The Lord" Is A Life Lived With Knowledge And Wisdom.

•SLIDE #: Proverb 2:6-7: For the LORD gives wisdom, and from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.

The first step in receiving God's wisdom is receiving Jesus Christ—trusting Christ and becoming a child of

God.  
LOGOS

•SLIDE #: “The Fear Of The Lord” Is A Life Of Goodness and Rightness.

•SLIDE #: Proverb 14:16: A wise man fears the LORD and shuns evil,  
but a fool is hotheaded and reckless.

•SLIDE #: Not until I went into the churches of America and heard her pulpits flame with righteousness did I understand the secret of her genius and power. America is great because America is good, and if America ever ceases to be good, America will cease to be great.  
-De Tocqueville

•SLIDE #: “The Fear Of The Lord” Is A Life Of Security and Protection.

•SLIDE #: Proverb 14:26: He who fears the LORD has a secure fortress,  
and for his children it will be a refuge.

•SLIDE #: “The Fear Of The Lord” Is A Life Of Peace And Contentment.

•SLIDE #: Proverb 19:23: The fear of the LORD leads to life:  
Then one rests content, untouched by trouble.

•SLIDE #: Contentment is a small kitten following a leaky cow.”

A king was suffering from a malady and was advised that he would be cured if the shirt of a contented man was brought for him to wear. People went out to all parts of the kingdom after such a person, and after a long search they found a man who was really happy and content.  
But he did not even possess a shirt.

Once a rich industrialist, disturbed to find a fisherman sitting idly by his boat, asked, “Why aren’t you out there fishing?”

“Because I’ve caught enough fish for today,” was the reply.

“Why don’t you catch more fish than you need?” asked the rich man.

“What would I do with them?”

“You could earn more money and buy a better boat so you could go deeper and catch more fish. You could purchase nylon nets, catch even more fish, and make more money. Soon you’d have a fleet of boats and be rich like me.”

Then what would I do?” asked the fisherman.

“You could sit down and enjoy life.”

“What do you think I’m doing now?” the fisherman replied.

•SLIDE #: “The Fear Of The Lord” Is Indelibly Linked With The Sovereign God Who Is In Charge Of Everything.

•SLIDE #: Proverb 16:4: The LORD works out everything for his own ends —  
even the wicked for a day of disaster.

•SLIDE #: With thoughtless and / Impatient hands / We tangle up / The plans / The Lord has wrought.

•SLIDE #: And when we cry / He says, “Quiet, dear, / While I untie the knot.”

•SLIDE #: God has not promised / Skies always blue, / Flower-strewn pathways / All our lives through; / God has not promised, / Sun without rain / Joy without sorrow, / Peace without pain.

•SLIDE #: But God has promised / Strength for the day, / Rest for the labor, / Light for the way, / Grace for the trials, / Help from above, / Unfailing sympathy, / Undying love.

SLIDE #: WHAT MIGHT EXPERIENCING PERFECT LOVE FEEL LIKE?

Once a young man proposed to his girl as they sat looking over the beautiful lake. “Darling, I want you to know that I love you more than anything else in the world. I want you to marry me. I’m not wealthy; I’m not rich like Johnny Brown. I don’t have a yacht or Rolls-Royce like Johnny Brown, but I do love with all my heart.”

She thought for a minute and then replied, “I love you with all my heart, too, but tell me more about Johnny Brown.”

SLIDE #: 1 John 4:18: There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear.

God’s tender compassion and concern are seen in His care of the poor and needy.

SLIDE #: Proverb 22:22-23: Do not exploit the poor because they are poor and do not crush the needy in court,  
23 for the LORD will take up their case and will plunder those who plunder them.

•SLIDE #: Cyrus the Mede, the great conqueror of Babylon, had a general under his authority whose wife was accused of treason. The woman was tried before a tribunal, found guilty, and sentenced to death. After the sentence was announced, the general went to Cyrus with this request: “King Cyrus, please let me take her place.”

Cyrus, in awe at what the general had asked, said to his court, “Can we terminate a love as great as this?”

Cyrus relaxed the sentence and paroled the woman to her husband.

As the two left the court, the general said to his wife, “What an experience. Did you see the massive sculptures, paintings gold inlaid floor in the palace? Did you see the benevolent look in Cyrus’ eyes as he pardoned you?”

The wife replied, “I only had eyes for the one who loved me enough that he was willing to die for me.”

•SLIDE #: Proverb 4:18-19: The path of the righteous is like the first gleam of dawn, shining ever brighter till the full light of day.  
19 But the way of the wicked is like deep darkness; they do not know what makes them stumble.

Choose the fear of the Lord.