

Noteworthy

Prayer Requests: Jo Anderson (*at Scott Lake Health and Rehabilitation*), Joe Brown (*ongoing medical*), Mildred Church (*shut in*), the Day family (*Robyn's father, Ricky, has cancer*), Linda James (*at Northdale Rehab Center, 3030 Bears Ave., Tampa, FL 33618*), Paul Lloyd (*rehabilitation in Toledo, Ohio*), Linda McKenzie (*tending to mother's health*), Butch Morgan (*shut in*), Dottie Reynolds (*ongoing medical, needs encouragement*).

Family and friends: Marvin Brown (*from Plant City, cancer*), Roger Church (*Mariam's husband recovering from recent heart procedure*), Ruth Fogel (*Jill Boyette's mother, cancer*), Ned Hicks (*Larry Hicks' father, ongoing medical*), Brian James (*cancer*), Diana Marcum (*Arlene Turner's sister, cancer*), John Marschall (*Bob's father*), Lyndell McReedy (*Cindy Hicks' aunt*), Betty Parrish (*Diana Jordan's mother*), Summer Rivera (*Erika Stevens' friend*), Alan Turner (*illness*), Johnny Wisdom (*Larry Wisdom's brother*).

Group Meeting: Group 1 will meet next Sunday after the PM worship service.

Men's Bible Study: The 4th Sunday of each month at 5 pm (*June 23rd*).

Kids' Review: Immediately following the PM worship assembly next week.

Ladies Bible Class: Will resume in the fall at a date TBD.

Area Meetings: The Lake Gibson Church of Christ has a meeting this week (*Jun. 2-5*) with David McClister of Temple Terrace, FL. Other meeting flyers are also posted in the foyer. Please see bulletin board for details regarding those.

Remember and encourage others who are struggling physically and spiritually.

Assignments for Worship Service

Wednesday Night: 6/5/19

Song Leader: Trent Stevens
 Opening Prayer: Sherman Johnson
 Invitation: Jordan Lawson
 Announcements: Mike Sadler
 Closing Prayer: Jim Elliot
 Recordings: Clay Sadler
 Usher: Mike Sadler

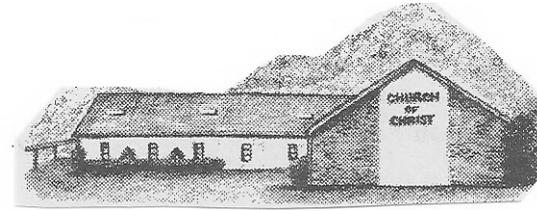
Sunday Evening: 6/9/19

Song Leader: Clay Sadler
 Opening Prayer: Ryan Boyett
 Lord's Table: Keith Marschall
 Announcements: Leon Miller
 Closing Prayer: Earl Branham
 Recordings: Bob Marschall
 Usher: Gus Johnson

Sunday Morning: 6/9/19

Lord's Table: Keith Marschall (B)
 Bucky Day (C)
 Serving: Timothy Payne
 Jerry Williams
 Song Leader: Colby Sadler

Opening Prayer: Sherman Johnson
 Announcements: Leon Miller
 Closing Prayer: Mike Sadler
 Recordings: Bob Marschall
 Usher: Gus Johnson



**Lakeland Hills
 Leader**

LAKELAND HILLS CHURCH OF CHRIST

2510 Lakeland Hills Boulevard Lakeland Florida 33805 (863) 688-4336

www.lakelandhillchurchofchrist.com

ELDERS

Larry Hicks (863) 899-7405
 Leon Miller (863) 640-6378
 Larry Wisdom (863) 583-4311

SERVICES

Sunday
 Bible Study 9:00 A.M.
 Morning Services 9:50 A.M.
 Evening Services 6:00 P.M.
 Wednesday
 Bible Study 7:00 P.M.

DEACONS:

Robert Marschall
 Michael Sadler
 Moses Stevens
 David Williams

EVANGELIST:

Ian Rice (863) 213-9795

"Fear of the Lord"

Fear is one of those dichotomies of scriptural teaching. We are told, "*Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man*" (Ecclesiastes 12:13). But we also are told, "*And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell*" (Matthew 10:28).

There are at least two kinds of fear. One is that feeling that extends from stark terror to reverence and can be either good or bad, depending upon the circumstances; and the other is better defined as cowardice, always condemned in the Scriptures.

The primary interest of the Christian, however, is in the command to "fear God." There is a tendency among Christians to either misunderstand or minimize this command.

Why Should We Fear God?

Any student of the Bible recognizes the awesome power of God. He is the very creator of life, having formed man from the dust of the ground. Such power, when fully realized, is cause for fear. "*For in him we live, and move, and have our being*" (Acts 17:28). God's omniscience is compelling reason for fear as well. Imagine the power possessed by one who can read every inner thought of a man.

God's righteousness, the fact He never errs in judgment, compared to our frequent errors, is yet another cause for fear. We often use the word "reverence" to describe this feeling, but its basis is in fear of anyone so superior.

Perhaps the most often cited cause for fearing God is the Bible teaching concerning His judgment. The writer of Hebrews, in describing the plight of those willfully sinning after receipt of the truth, says of the future: *"But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, said the Lord.... It is a fearful thing to fall unto the hands of the living God"* (Hebrews 10:27-31).

That each of us will be held individually accountable (II Corinthians 5:10-11) and that God is *"no respecter of persons"* (I Peter 1:17) builds that fear in light of the impossibility of anyone escaping that answering to God. The punishment promised to the wicked is no slap on the wrist for Romans 6:25 says *"the wages of sin is death."* God has created a place of punishment called hell, where *"the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched"* (Mark 9:44). The very description of that burning place of torment sends an involuntary shudder through the believer. Beyond that, the bottom line of God's punishment for sin is eternal separation from Him, a situation not even faced by the vilest sinner as he lives in this world today.

Judgment and punishment are sufficient causes for fear but the love of God likewise compels us to fear. Paul describes God's love by saying, *"He that spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all..."* (Romans 8:32). God's own son was the sacrifice for our sins. Imagining a man, much less our creator, offering his only son for savage abuse and tortured death certainly commands reverential fear in the face of such

love. On the other hand, to ignore that sacrifice and its purpose is justification for stark terror of His judgment as righteousness is vindicated.

What Fear Accomplishes In The Life Of A Christian

Fear of the Lord brings obedience. We have in Noah an example of this incentive nature of fear. *"By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house..."* (Hebrews 11:7). God has always warned His people. He has threatened punishment and given the opportunity for fear to accomplish obedience in the hearts of those who believe Him.

Fear also serves to keep the obedient holy. In II Corinthians 7:1, the Apostle Paul put it this way: *"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."* Explained yet another way, *"Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it"* (Hebrews 4:1).

Knowledge is a by-product of godly fear. The writer of the Psalms said, *"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge"* and Proverbs 8:13 explains, *"The fear of the Lord is to hate evil."* Summed in these passages are the elements of true knowledge, philosophy and life goals.

Fear Exemplified In Father/Son Relationship

Often Christians find difficulty understanding how they should fear a loving God. Attempts are made to explain this relationship by substituting for the word "fear" the words "respect" and "reverence." This, however, really is unnecessary for in our own relationships as parents to children we can see how fear operates in the heart of "a child of God."

My sons fear my power. While short of stature, I still loom twice the size of any of them, am capable of delivering a spanking, lifting them off the ground and any number of other acts based on size and age that show the differential in physical strength. The difference in knowledge plays a role in this fear in the mind of a child as well.

Having felt the sting of a spanking, they fear what violation of certain rules can bring, especially when punishment is promised. This is a proper situation, as evidenced by Hebrews 12:5-9, which says, *"And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?"* The Scriptures very clearly make analogy between the fear and discipline an earthly father commands and exerts and that of our "heavenly Father."

Even deeper often times than the fear of daddy's spanking power is the simple fear of offending. Dad's displeasure is often worse than the spanking. What parent hasn't wrinkled his forehead in a frown of displeasure with a child's act only to receive a tear-burst before any discussion of punishment is voiced. We call that respect.

Love is involved in this latter aspect of a child's fear of his parent. It is a desire to please and a fear to displease. Again, this sums up the duty of a child and the role of fear in shaping acceptable behavior. The person who doesn't fear doesn't love. This is evident in the current lack of respect (fear) of authority in our society. It reflects the absence

of any fear of offending others, a basic component of love.

Godly fear is modified as we mature. The fear I once had of my father's hand on my posterior is replaced today with a fear of displeasing him. My fear, or respect, or love, has matured. So it is with the maturing Christian. Initial obedience to the will of God often is response to the dread of eternal hell, the fear of punishment. As the Christian matures, however, obedience is based on a deeper concern than fear of punishment. It is based on a commitment to do nothing that would offend our Father in heaven, who created us, redeemed us and has prepared a place for us. Fear has become love.

That fear alone is not enough to save is evidenced in the fact that the "devils believe and tremble." Yet fear when blended with love brings obedience and obedience salvation.

Conclusion

Fear is a motivator. Because of fear we don't step in front of speeding cars, or jump from a top high building or place our hands in a fire. Our fear of pain and death constrains us. The Bible utilizes fear in the same mode, commanding us to "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" and threatening everlasting punishment to all those unwilling to obey the will of God.

We can fear the wrong things. Fear of men, their ridicule, of being an outsider or different, or even of being harmed or killed, is discouraged by the teaching of Scripture. Yet we are commanded to fear God. The latter fear, as it develops, chokes out the first fear. First century Christians were beaten, castigated, even fed to hungry lions but refused to renounce their loyalty to the God of heaven.

Fear and love often are spoken of as if they exist at opposite ends of a spectrum. In fact, neither exists without the other.