

The fear of God in our hearts.

Proverbs 1:5 - 7 *"A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels: (6) To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings. (7) The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction."*

God said a "wise man" will hear and the instruction they hear "*will increase learning*" and the more you learn from God's word, that learning will cause us to "understanding shall attain unto wise counsels:" As Christians it should be our main goal in life to hear God's word, increase our learning, and "*attain unto wise counsels:*" The wise counsel is God's counseling us in His word, the we hear the more we grow, on the other side, the less we hear the less we grow in God's counsel. Hearing and understanding God with fear is lacking today, some people tune God out and fail to fear God. Our fear of God is what causes us to be good Christians and servants of God.

A. What does it mean to "Fear God"?

1. God said, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge..." V. 7
2. The word means to reverence God, **Psalms 111:9 - 10** *"He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend is his name. (10) The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever."* The name "reverend" means one that is to be feared.
3. God is so Holy, so wonderfully above and beyond our imagination. All of His attributes show us how bright and brilliant He is, that we as Christians should fear Him. God said, "*The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom...*" The same thing we saw in the proverb.

4. Our Reverence of God shows our respect of Him, our fear of Him shows our respect of Him, our seeking His counsel shows our respect of Him. Therefore, we reverence Him.
 5. The problem in this world is that the world, and even a lot of Christians fail to reverence or fear God. **Psalms 112:1** *"Praise ye the LORD. Blessed is the man that feareth the LORD, that delighteth greatly in his commandments."* The person that truly fears the Lord delights in His word, as written.
 6. Fearing God is not to accept our own thinking or the thinking of man. **Proverbs 8:13** *"The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate."*
 7. **Proverbs 14:16** *"A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil: but the fool rageth, and is confident."* Not fearful and learning, not seeking God's counsel because he is prideful and confident in himself.
- B. Our fear of God starts us with "the beginning of knowledge".
1. The word "knowledge" means - "to understand completely," and to know or to have proper knowledge it begins with the fear of God and leaning of God's word enough to know truth.
 2. Let's look at two words, understanding, and wisdom.
 - a. Understanding means – a reflective thought of the mind or intelligence" – understanding God is to fear God and to follow His instruction, it becomes our mind set.
 - b. Wisdom means – prudence – which is the skill and good judgment in the use of information. Basically, it is how to handle our understanding.
 - c. So, our understanding is to read and read and gather the knowledge of the bible, our wisdom is to recognize how to make this understanding work in our hearts, and then it is knowledge

or our complete understanding of what God teaching and acting in fear to accomplish it in our daily life.

- d. Wisdom is important because it is the link between understanding and knowing, and while all are gifts from God God tells us to ask for wisdom. **James 1:5** "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."
 3. But let us not forget that "*The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge*" We must fear or reverence God enough to search, pray, and study until it becomes knowledge, understand is not enough.
- C. Why do so many fail to have knowledge of the scriptures? "*but fools despise wisdom and instruction.*"
1. God did not say "lost people", He said fools despise wisdom and instruction. Wisdom is the reasoning of the understanding of the scriptures, and without reasoning we will never know or have knowledge.
 2. Fools is a humanistic or thinking in a human-centered way of thinking. Human thought is never God's way, it is always against God. **Romans 8:7** "*Because the carnal mind is enmity against God...*" While the carnal mind is referred to the lost, it is also referred to the saved without understanding of the scripture, wisdom of that understanding, and knowledge of God's truth.
 3. Paul basically rebuked the church at Corinth with these words, **1 Corinthians 3:1 - 3** "*And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. (2) I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. (3) For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?*" The church had no

knowledge of God's teaching and they thought fleshly which caused "envying, and strife, and divisions" in the church. Fellowship and love are found only in God and our reverence of Him. **James 3:13 - 16** *"Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. (14) But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. (15) This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. (16) For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work."*

4. A church and Christians know they are walking in knowledge and fear when there is peace and love among them. God is not the Author of confusion. **1Cor. 14:33** *"For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints."*