“Who Fears the LORD These Days?”

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On July 19th, 1910 the Governor of the State of Washington proclaimed the first Father’s Day in the USA. But it was the year before, in May of 1909, Sonora Smart, having just heard a Mother’s Day sermon, decided she wanted to honor her father, Mr. William Jackson Smart. Her mother had died giving birth and her dad had single-handedly raised her along with her five siblings. So, she spoke to her Pastor, having decided that on her dad’s birthday, June 5th, 1910, she’d like to honor all Fathers. She wrote to the town council of Spokane, WA and asked for a day to be set aside to honor fathers.

That Sunday, July 19, 1910 the Churches in Spokane and elsewhere handed out beautiful red roses to all the fathers. They handed out white roses to those whose fathers had passed away. Then sixty-two years later, in 1972, President Richard Nixon made it an official national holiday and set aside the third Sunday in June.

What can be said that will strengthen fathers? Whatever I say today, I say in order to strengthen your heart. That’s my hope today. Please take your Bible with me and open to Psalm 112.

Psalm 112 is a “praise ye the LORD” Psalm; one of eleven “praise ye the LORD” Psalms in your Bible. Some Bible teachers call them “The Hallelujah” Psalms. And why? Because they begin or end with the words “Praise ye the LORD,” which in Hebrew is the word “Hallelujah!”

Notice with me verse one [read Psalm 112:1].

In Hebrew you will find two things here. One, the four words at the beginning of the Psalm are “Praise ye the LORD.” In the original, it’s just one word; a command from God “Hallelujah!” The LORD commands you to “praise Him.”

You are I are here in this world not to merely earn a living, raise our families, and retire. Rather, as you can see throughout the entire Bible, you are here to bring praise to the LORD; to acknowledge Him; and to live a life of gratefulness to *Him*. So, praise the LORD.

The second thing you will find in the Hebrew is this. Psalm 112 is a Hebrew Acrostic; one of ten. It’s how the Ancient Hebrews taught their children to read and to memorize while they learned the ways of the LORD. They would teach them by the use of an alphabetic acrostic. So, there are twenty-two statements here that describe a man who fears the LORD. Each one begins with one letter of the Hebrew alphabet. And the theme is “the fear of God.”

The message of Psalm 112 is what is on my heart today; “the fear of the LORD.” Verse one again, *“Praise ye the LORD. Blessed is the man that feareth the LORD.”*

The implication is simple. Fearing the LORD and praising the LORD are closely related? Simply put, when you carry out your work and live each day with a heartfelt fear of the LORD, you will live a life that brings praise to Him.

So, as you can see, what is on my heart today is this. Men, God is calling you to fear Him. I’ve titled today’s sermon “Who Fears the LORD These Days”? Shall we pray?

Now, how important is it; this topic of fearing God today? Ecclesiastes 12:13 says this *“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.”*

Proverbs 29:25 says this. *“The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe.”*

Men, my hope today is to get you to practice your whole duty as a man and to persuade you to find your safety in the LORD.

So, what does it mean to fear the LORD?

Is it the fear of a prisoner or a slave or prisoner on the run? Or is it the fear of a five year old boy?

Here is as simple an answer as I can offer you.

Fearing God means “having such a reverence for Him that it impacts the way you live. The fear of God is respecting Him as you would your father and your Creator. It’s obeying Him. It’s submitting to His discipline and worshipping Him in awe and wonder.” And to fear Him is to behave towards Him as a little child would behave towards his dad; great love and great respect.

Deuteronomy 10:12 *“And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul,…”*

Yet, for the most part, here in our United States, the fear of God is not before our eyes. America seems to have lost her fear of God. And why do I say that? We are more concerned; more fearful of what those around us think than we are with what God thinks. One man puts it like this, although it’s not true in every place. “Our culture is saturated with demonic influences and has deteriorated into a boozing culture of dirty-minded television addicts, selfish pleasure-seekers, gluttons, sports-fanatics, gossips and critics, self-righteous hypocrites, liars, marriage quitters, idolatrous celebrity worshippers, immoral ingrates, arrogant fools who have no fear of God before their eyes.” [Found on [www.godlovespeople.com](http://www.godlovespeople.com) in an article titled “No Fear of God.”]

Another writer puts it like this. “There was a time when committed Christians were known as God-fearing people. This was a badge of honor. But somewhere along the way we lost it. Now the idea of fearing God, if thought of at all, seems like a relic from the past" (Jerry Bridges) [Found on [www.opc.org](http://www.opc.org) in an article titled “The Fear of The LORD” by Robert B. Strimple].

Now, I wouldn’t agree with every word of those two statements. But here’s the point. Whenever you find the fear of God reigning, you find the behavior and the lifestyle of people affected. And where there is no fear of God, you will see the society on a moral landslide. The fear of the LORD has sadly been replaced with the fear of man in America.

Psalm 112 is a message on the fear of God. But, it isn’t just for dads. There’s a word here for each one of us.

See with me here in Psalm 112 that there are a whole host of good reasons for you to be a man who fears God.

So, look with me at these words as God’s answer to a country who has lost its fear of God.

How does the fear of the affect your life?

First and foremost; it affects your level of happiness - verse one. *“Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord…”*

Isn’t that one of the richest blessings you can imagine? What does the LORD say comes first when you have a true respect for Him? Happiness. Now notice how this “fear of the LORD” happiness works. Verse one again “that greatly delights in His commandments.”

There are far too many of us who think that happiness is found outside the LORD. We’ve probably all said at one time or another “If I had another hundred thousand dollars, I’d (fill in the blank).” And that, you think, would make you happy.

But how could that generate happiness when true happiness falls right in between fearing God and delighting in His commands?

What you delight most in will tell you what you think would give you a sense of happiness. To disregard Scripture is the surest way I know to lose your measure of happiness. Surrender to the LORD. Commit yourself to personal obedience. That will do more for you than anything you’ve ever found to influence your happiness quotient.

First, then, fearing the LORD affects your level of happiness.

Second, it affects your home – verse 2. Look with me at Psalm 112:2 *“His seed shall be mighty upon earth; the generation of the upright shall be blessed.”* There’s that word “blessed,” “happy” again.

Look down through this passage and see with me just who the Psalm is referring to.

Verse two – “the generation of **the upright**…”

Verse four – “Unto **the upright** there ariseth light…”

Verse five – “A **good man** shows favor and lends…”

Verse six – “**the righteous** shall be in everlasting remembrance.”

And every other verse refers to this same character trait of righteousness.

Men, you, if you have believed on Jesus Christ; if you’ve been saved by the blood of Jesus; if you find your life in Him; you are the generation of the upright in your home and at your job and in your neighborhood.

Yours might not have been a godly heritage. You might have had a father or grandfather that spurned the name of the LORD. But *you* are different. *You* are in a new generation. You are called by the LORD “the generation of the upright.”

You see; your family is affected by your faith. But isn’t it even more affected by your fearing the LORD? How many men are there who have trusted in Christ? They are banking on the fact that they will one day enter the gates of glory. Yet, they live their lives with no fear of God before their eyes.

Men, you live in the greatest generation of your family tree. You have the wherewithal in Christ to live the life of an upright man. Your wife and your children need you to be a good man? Those who work with you need to see a “righteous” man working alongside them.

First, fearing the LORD affects your happiness- v. 1

Second, it affects your family - v. 2

Third, it affects your finances - verse three.

Verse three *“Wealth and riches shall be in his house; and his righteousness endureth forever.”*

Men, your money does not have to come between you and your God. Money is not your god, as the world will teach you. Money, Biblically speaking, your money is your servant. You are the master of your checkbook. And don’t forget the heart message of the NT on this same subject. Hebrews 13:5 *“Let your conversation [lifestyle and behavior] be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.”*

And as you can see here. Along with contentment comes the assurance that the LORD will never forsake you. He will be continually with you.

But try to live with your money apart from the fear of the LORD and you will likely become a great waster. You see, fearing God means finding God’s principles in the use of your time, talents, and income. It means seeing that He’s entrusted you with His money. You are a steward of His resources. It’s all His. He’s given it to you to use.

And so He says to the man who fears the LORD. “*“Wealth and riches shall be in his house; and his righteousness endureth forever.”*

Now, can you, men, that there is a strong connection between your finances and your righteousness; your income and your relationship with the LORD? You can do what is right with your money when you heart is set on fearing Him.

First, fearing the LORD affects your happiness – v. 1.

Second, it affects your family – v. 2.

Third, it affects your finances – v. 3.

Fourth, it affects your character – verses 4 -5.

Verse four *“Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness: he is gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous. (5) A good man sheweth favour, and lendeth: he will guide his affairs with discretion.”*

Men, if the fear of the LORD has no effect on your character; if it doesn’t change you, then you are not fearing Him. You’ve got something else that you fear more than Him.

The Bible doesn’t teach that you’ll never experience darkness. There *will* be times when you will find yourself in the dark. But the LORD promises you that “light” will arise in that darkness. You’ll be among those who learn the ways of the LORD even when He allows a dark period to come your way.

And men, if you want to be gracious in spirit towards people; if you want to be filled with compassion for those in need; if you want to live an upright life; if you want to be a good man who shows favor and lends to those in need; if you want to guide your affairs with discretion, pray that the LORD would teach you to fear Him.

The LORD knows your heart very well. He knows when you pray what you truly desire. So, make the fear of the LORD your priority this year. And watch how that fear affects your character.

First, fearing the LORD affects your happiness.

Second, it affects your family.

Third, it affects your finances.

Fourth, it affects your character.

Fifth, it affects your confidence – verse 6 - 8.

Verse six *“Surely he shall not be moved for ever: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance. (7) He shall not be afraid of evil tidings (bad news): his heart is fixed, trusting in the LORD. (8) His heart is established, he shall not be afraid, until he see his desire upon his enemies.”*

Did you notice the three promises God gives to the God-fearing man here?

Verse 6 – “Surely he shall not be moved forever…”

Verse 7 – “He shall not be afraid of evil tidings…”

Verse 8 – “He shall not be afraid…”

Folks, everybody receives what you’d call bad news from time to time. Winds and storms and lightening does pass upon you now and then. But does that “move you”? Are you often distressed by what you hear?

Fearing the LORD means you are trusting Him no matter what.

When you read a passage like Psalm 112 and especially one like verse seven, you realize that the Old Testament people were exactly like you and me. They had homes and family and jobs and income and trials and yes, bad news. Yet, the key to life both then and now is this “Is your heart fixed, are trusting in the LORD in every part of your life?” Are you established in Him?

Men, God’s heart is really concerned with your heart. First and foremost, the external you is not the entire you. You are a man of heart; a true man. You are, first of all, connected to or disconnected from God by way of your heart. Don’t deny it. God created you in His image; in His likeness.

And you’ve been made for *His* glory. If you let your heart be steered by the LORD; if you set your heart on doing things that please Him; if the fear of the LORD fills your heart day by day, you will then find a measure of confidence the world can never give you.

First, fearing the LORD affects your happiness.

Second, it affects your family.

Third, it affects your finances.

Fourth, it affects your character.

Fifth, it affects your confidence.

Sixth, it affects your giving – verse 9.

Verse nine *“He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor; his righteousness endureth for ever; his horn shall be exalted with honour.”*

Here’s the heart of the righteousness man in relation to those less fortunate than him. This ninth verse, by the way, is quoted in the NT. It’s found in the longest NT passage on Christian giving; II Corinthians 8 & 9.

II Corinthians 9:6 *“But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. (7)* *Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.*

*(8) And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work: (9)* ***(As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever.”***

Here’s the man who fears the LORD. His righteousness endures forever in eternity. But in the present he gives. He disperses out of the bounty the LORD has given to him. He finds a way to help those in need. His heart is not closed to the poor. He extends his hand to him.

But what is even more of a blessing is this. Look with me at the eighth verse of II Corinthians nine. The God of all grace has His gracious hand upon you. He’s the All-Sufficient One. So, He makes His grace to abound towards you so that you will abound in every good work.

Then, Paul quotes Psalm 112; verse nine.

Men, your righteousness endures forever; doesn’t it? And doesn’t God’s grace to you in Christ provide you will “all sufficiency in all things”? Well, the reason is so that you will “abound in every good work” especially the good work of caring for those who are less fortunate than you are.

Fearing God is your foundation for looking to God to help those in need. Fear is very practical, isn’t it? God’s ways are so much better than ours.

Men, put the fear of God in your hearts daily and see the adventures God has in store for you.

First, fearing the LORD affects your happiness.

Second, it affects your family.

Third, it affects your finances.

Fourth, it affects your character.

Fifth, it affects your confidence.

Sixth, it affects your giving.

Seventh, and finally, fearing God affects your enemies – verse 10.

Verse ten *“The wicked shall see it, and be grieved [be angry and enraged]; he shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away; the desire of the wicked shall perish.”*

There is a huge difference between the godly and the ungodly; the righteous and the wicked. The ungodly really don’t like it when they see the righteous blessed of the LORD. The LORD says they are grieved. Remember: He knows every heart. He sees their anguish.

One thing you can count on. The devil does not approve or take any liking to your practical righteousness. There will be people in your extended family, your neighborhood, and your workplace that will not like it when they see you walking in the fear of God and seeing God prospering and blessing your life.

Wouldn’t the world would rather you be greedy and selfish, uncompassionate, a cheater, anything in some cases, but a Christian and a Christian who stands up for what is good and right and true?

But, men, you are here to exalt your Savior and exalt Him in the practical, everyday life you live. Men, the high road is the road of fearing the LORD. When others around you don’t like your lifestyle because it reflects your love for the LORD, so what. It must affect them; either negatively or positively.

And, by the way, it’s not just those you work with. Sometimes it’s even closer to home. A Pastor had this happen to him. The Church of which he was Pastor had a bit of land they were not using. A realtor came to the Pastor and asked if they’d be willing to sell it. After discussing with the Church leadership, they agree to sell.

One problem, though. When it came to selling it, the men in the Church decided to do not tell the prospective buyers about some problem with that piece of land. The Pastor spoke up and told them he felt they should disclose it and let them know exactly what the problem was. The men felt that if they did that, the price would be lowered. Besides, what does a Pastor know about business?

The Pastor went to counsel with another Pastor as to what to do. His friend said this to him. “Brother, you need to stand for righteousness and declare to those buyers what the Church knows to be true about that section of the property.”

He brought his advice to the men in the Church. When they realized that their Pastor was about to quote “spoil the deal,” they fired him and the Church made much more money on the sale of that land.

Let me remind you that when you choose to stand for what is right, it may cost you. But who is it that you stand or fall before? Is it not the LORD Jesus?

Men, there is both a promise and a warning here. Verse ten *“The wicked shall see it, and be grieved [be angry and enraged]; he shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away; the desire of the wicked shall perish.”*

Those who fear the LORD will not always be liked or wanted. They will appear to lose on some occasions. Yet, even then the LORD knows what to do on your behalf.

Men, will you let your fear of the LORD affect these six areas of your life? They are the areas that God says it must affect.

In conclusion, what will it be for you? Jesus Christ came to this world to convert your soul into that of a God-fearing man. So, what will it be? Will you choose the fear of the LORD today?

Have you repented and are you now trusting in the LORD Jesus Christ? Today is the day of salvation.

“**Repent**” = to change your mind about God, Christ, your sin, and God’s free gift of salvation?

“**Believe**” = to simply trust the Lord Jesus Christ alone as the One Who paid the entire penalty for your sins?

I offer you the Sinner’s Prayer.

“LORD, I admit I am a sinner. I believe that Jesus died in my place on the cross. I repent of my sins. I want to be completely forgiven today. I am trusting you right now to save me. Thank you. Amen”

I also offer you the prayer the Prayer of Surrender. “LORD, thank you for the Blessed Cross of Christ. Right now I submit all that I am to you, my spirit, my soul, my body, my time, my finances; my entire life to yours to control. Do with me what is most pleasing to You. Work out Your Blessed will upon me today.”

Shall we pray?

Hymn #