

Family Focus

SHEPHERD'S CORNER

FEAR AND LOVE POWER FOR MOTIVATION

Which is greater, fear or love, in a Christian's relationship to God? The following was developed after meditating upon the discussion in Bible Class a few Sundays ago. "The serpent [Satan] said to the woman [Eve], 'Did God really say you must not eat from any tree in the garden?' She said, 'We may eat from the trees in the garden, but God did say you must not eat fruit from the tree in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it [added by Eve], or you will die.' (Genesis 3:1-3)"

It appears that Eve feared death, or at least believed in the consequence for disobedience. Significant it is to read further the response of the serpent: "You will not surely die (Genesis 3:4)." The serpent in verse 5 states the reason why God forbade Adam and Eve from eating the specified fruit.

Fear is enforced by believing in the consequences for being disobedient to God's commands. Removing the fear or doubting punishment removes the motivation to be obedient to God's commandments. Many remember so-called "fire and brimstone" preachers whose sermons lead many into the waters of baptism by creating a fear of eternal damnation in hell. The Apostle Paul addressed the "saints in Christ Jesus" at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons: "Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed, not in my presence, but much more in my absence, continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling. [Because] it is God who works in you to will and act according to His good purpose (Philippians 2:12-13)."

A commentary footnote states: "Working out one's salvation is not an attempt to earn salvation by works, but an expression of one's salvation in spiritual growth and development. It's an ongoing process. Fear and trembling is not anxiety or doubt, but reference to an active reverence and singleness of purpose to God's grace." The Apostle John comments that, "There is no fear [of God's judgment] in love. Perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment (I John 4:18)." "The fear of the Lord leads to life; then one rests content, untouched by trouble (Proverbs 19:23)." Do we fear God or love Him? Your answer motivates your relationship with Him.

~ Glen Godsey

Shepherds' Vision Goals

Overall Goal:

To grow spiritually and numerically as "a family growing people to the glory of God".

Goals for the next 12 months:

1. Increase participation by at least 10% in these areas: Sunday Worship, Bible School, Ministry Works, and Small Groups.
2. Make a list of 5 folks to pray for & invite to Small Group or Worship.
3. Add 20 new teachers.
4. Total Congregational giving challenge - increase giving by 28%.

Want to learn more about specific plans to reach these goals? Ask an elder or minister or go to our website: www.fairviewroad.org.

Our Shepherds

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