

The Reason for Living

Int.

1. Aim: To explain the real purpose of our life - Fear GOD !
2. Ecl. 12:13-14
3. Solomon was the King of Israel
 - a. He had money, power and wisdom. - 1 Kings 10:27 - 1 Kings 3:9-14
 - b. He had 700 wives and 300 concubines - 1 Kings 11:3
4. Solomon had tried everything possible to find the purpose of life
 - a. Wisdom - Ecl. 1:13-18
 - b. Pleasure - Ecl. 2:1-3
 - c. Architecture - Ecl. 2:4
 - d. Gardening - Ecl. 2:5-6
 - e. Ranching - Ecl. 2:7
 - f. Fine Arts - Ecl. 2:8
 - g. Wealth - Ecl. 2:9 - 1 Kings 10:27
 - h. Reputation - Ecl. 2:16
5. And he discovered this was all vanity - word occurs 37 times
 - a. It means that life under the sun was all futile, empty - useless!! - Eccl. 2:17
 - b. Mt. 16:26 NKJV "For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"
 - c. It is vanity to be concerned only about life here on this earth
6. After trying all these things Solomon writes the conclusion to his book and gives us the reason for living.

7. Ecl. 12:13-14 "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. 14 For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."
8. The Reason for Living:
- a. Text - Expound Ecl. 12:13-14
 - b. Other verses that talk about fear
 - c. Some who Feared God
 - d. What does it mean - Fearing God leads us to...

Discussion

I. Eccl. 12:13-14 - Expound

A. Context - Chapter 12

1. V. 1 - Remember now thy Creator in days of youth
2. Then he briefly describes the cycle of life - growing old
3. V. 7 The dust returns to earth, spirit returns unto God.
4. In Conclusion - v. 13
 - a. This is the climax
 - b. ASV "This is the end of the matter, all hath been heard"
 - c. This is the advice he would give from his life
 - d. This is the purpose of Life - the Reason for living
 - e. He has tried everything, and now he can tell us what he has learned is the real reason for living.

B. **FEAR God** - In the O.T., there are two basic words translated "fear."

1. Meaning: "Terror," "dread," "that which causes one to fear."
2. "Reverence;" "Respect for God because of who He is, His character, etc."
3. To fear God is to reverence his name and respect his authority.
4. We do not fear him as we fear disease, storms, or wild animals; our love for God casts out or makes impossible such fear. - 1 Jn.4:18 "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love."

C. **And keep his commandments**

1. In the time of Solomon it meant to keep the Law of Moses
2. Today it means to obey the commands of the gospel given through Christ and recorded in the N.T.
3. Acts 10:35 NKJV ""But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him." - Peter told Cornelius to fear God and work righteousness - keeping the commandments of God is the same as working righteousness

D. **For this is the whole duty of man**

1. ASV - footnote for this is the duty of all men.
2. NKJV "For this is man's all." BBE "because this is right for every man."
3. It is man's complete purpose and reason for existence.
4. It is his whole work and business

E. **For God shall bring every work into Judgment,**

1. This is the reason why we should fear God and keep his commandments
2. We will one day give an account to our Creator
3. The man who fears and obeys will have nothing to fear in judgment.
4. Every work = means all things done, good and evil
5. But the man who fears God and keeps his commandments will not have to face the evil of his life because the blood of Christ will cover those mistakes so that they will not be remembered against him in judgment

F. **With every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil.**

1. These would be the sins we refuse to confess - secret sins
2. We cannot hide our sins from God -- we must confess them!!

II. OTHER VERSES IN NEW TESTAMENT WITH THE PHRASE "FEAR GOD"

- A. ACTS 13:16 "Then Paul stood up, and beckoning with his hand said, Men of Israel, and ye that fear God, give audience."
- B. 1 PET.2:17 "Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king."
- C. Acts 9:31 "Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied."
- D. Acts 10:34-35 "Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."

E. Phil. 2:12 "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."

F. Word Fear in New Testament

1. Greek word Phobos
 - a. First had the meaning of flight, that which is caused by being scared - running away from that which causes fear
 - b. Being startled and running away or staying away
2. Our English word Phobia comes from this word
 - a. Excessive fear of an object or thing
 - b. Acrophobia = fear of high places
 - c. Astraphobia = fear of thunderstorms
 - d. Musophobia = fear of mice
 - e. Pyrophobia = fear of fire
 - f. Claustrophobia = fear of enclosed places
3. Fear causes people to do strange things:
 - a. A woman in Sydney Australia was obsessed by a fear of food poisoning and she starved herself to death.
 - b. Fear of failure has caused many people to play it safe and attempt nothing.
 - c. Fear focuses on failure; faith steers toward success.
 - d. The future belongs to those whose fear has been transformed into faith!!

4. Phobos + Theos = Fear + God

- a. When the word is joined with the word for God - it means reverential fear of God
- b. It is not a mere fear of His power and righteous retribution, but a wholesome dread of displeasing Him, a fear which banishes the terror that shrinks from His presence." [EDNT p. 84]
- c. To hold in respect [TDNT Vol. I X p. 189]

G. Fear of God is not just Terror or dread

1. Some perform as a slave that works with drudgery.
 - a. He works because he fears the whip or other forms of punishment.
 - b. He does his work with reluctance and secretly murmurs against his master.
 - c. He secretly wishes that the command was recalled and that the one who gave the commands was not in existence.
2. If we obey God with this idea of terror then...
 - a. We will do only the minimum
 - b. We will secretly wish that we did not have to do these things that God has commanded.
 - c. We murmur and complain
3. Instead of Fearing God being like terror it should be....

H. 1 Jn. 4:18 "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love."

1. This fear is lacking in genuine love - but has the dread of the whip in the hands of the master
2. This kind of fear hath torment - expecting punishment. This is a foretaste of it before it actually begins!
3. Perfect love casts out such a fear.
4. Godly fear is not terror but respect and love for God with a desire to please Him.

III. SOME WHO FEARED GOD

A. Noah

1. Heb. 11:7 "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; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith."
2. "Moved with fear" asv = Godly Fear
3. God told him that there would be a world wide flood and all flesh would be destroyed.
4. Noah prepared an ark - kept his commandments -- therefore he and his family were spared
5. Fear - a desire to please God, because of his faith in what God told him.

B. Job - Job 1:1 "There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil."

C. Early Church

1. Acts 9:31 "Then had the churches rest throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied."
2. Rest = lack of persecution
3. Edified = built up
4. "Walking in the fear of the Lord" = living for God
5. In the comfort of the H.S.
6. Were multiplied = fear of God was before Growth

IV. FEARING GOD LEADS US TO:

A. Depart from Evil

1. Pro. 3:7 "Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the Lord, and depart from evil."
2. Pro. 16:6 "By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the Lord men depart from evil."
3. Job. 28:28 "And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding."
4. Departing from evil comes with the fear of God.
5. Paul explains that the sins of the Jews was caused by the fact that "there is no fear of God before their eyes." Rom. 3:18
6. Hate Evil
 - a. Pro. 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."
 - b. The evil which we hate is the evil which Jehovah hates

- c. Pro. 6:16-19 "These six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: 17. A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, 18. An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, 19. A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren."

B. OBEY HIS COMMANDMENTS

1. Ecl. 12:13
2. Acts 10:34-35 "...fear God and work Righteousness..."
3. Ps. 112:1 "Praise ye the Lord. Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord, that delighteth greatly in his commandments."
4. When we obey the commands of God we will be blessed
5. Notice what Solomon says: Pro. 1:7 The "Fear of the Lord" is the beginning of knowledge

C. The fear of the Lord comes through the word of God

1. Just as "faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" - Rom. 10:17 -- the same can be said for the "fear of the Lord".
2. In Deut. 31:10-13 the children of Israel were told to gather every seven years to read and hear the Word. What was the purpose? "...that they may learn to fear the Lord.!"
3. Ps. 34:11 "Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the Lord."

4. As we read the Word of God, we should gain a healthy degree of the "fear of the Lord."
 - a. One of the ways we fear God is to fear punishment.
 - b. This kind of Godly fear will taper off as we are perfected in Love.
 - c. But for now, the fear of God will keep us from Evil.
 - d. Phil. 2:12b "...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."
 - e. Heb. 10:31 "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the Living God.:"

CONCLUSION

1. What is the purpose of life?
2. Not: - They are vanity and vexation of the spirit
 - a. Wisdom - Ecl. 1:13-18
 - b. Pleasure - Ecl. 2:1-3
 - c. Architecture - Ecl. 2:4
 - d. Gardening - Ecl. 2:5-6
 - e. Ranching - Ecl. 2:7
 - f. Fine Arts - Ecl. 2:8
 - g. Wealth - Ecl. 2:9
 - h. Reputation - Ecl. 2:16
3. But to Fear God and Keep his commandments:
 - a. Obey the Gospel
 - b. Continue to walk in the Gospel - Walk in the Light - be faithful and pleasing to God in your daily life.

4. Do you fear God?
 - a. Mt. 10:28 "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."
 - b. If you do not obey Him then you do not fear Him!
 5. Will you obey Him Today?
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