

Series: Psalms

Title: Christ teaches us to Fear

Text: Psalm 34: 9-22

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All who fear the LORD shall never want any good thing.

That includes the life that now is and the life to come. That is a bold, all-inclusive statement. Can I back that up with scripture? Christ speaking in our Psalm says,

Psalm 34: 9: O fear the LORD, ye his saints: for *there is no want to them that fear him.* 10: The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good *thing.*

We are living in perilous times. Paul described these times:

2 Timothy 3: 1: This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. 2: For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, 3: Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent [no self-control], fierce, despisers of those that are good, [especially of God's people] 4: Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; 5: Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

I expect every generation considered that a description of their times. Because each generation is worse than the one before. Sinners and society continually runs further away from God.

Yet, in the midst of such perilous times, Christ gives us this promise—“*there is no want to them that fear him...they that seek the LORD shall not want any good thing.*”

Subject: Christ teaches us to Fear

Proposition: Fear the Lord and you shall never want any good thing in this life or the life to come.

CHRIST'S COMMAND

Psalm 34: 9: O fear the LORD, ye his saints:

When Christ speaks effectually into our hearts to give us the fear of the LORD at least three things are involved.

One, the fear of the LORD is to be persuaded of God's absolute sovereign power and wisdom and of our absolute total weakness and ignorance. Nebuchadnezzar was taught this.

Daniel 4: 34: And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion *is* an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom *is* from generation to generation: 35: And all the inhabitants of the earth *are* reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and *among* the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?

Two, the fear of the LORD is to be persuaded of God's perfect holiness and that we are completely ruined in sin.

Isaiah 6: 1: In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. 2: Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. 3: And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, *is* the LORD of hosts: the whole earth *is* full of his glory. 4: And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. 5: Then said I, Woe *is* me! for I am undone; because I *am* a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.

Three, the fear of the LORD is knowing God's love and grace has saved me from my sins so that I really want to have Christ my All and serve him.

Isaiah 6: 6: Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, *which* he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: 7: And he laid *it* upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged. 8: Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me.

Just as the fear of the LORD made Isaiah serve the LORD, it made Paul count all things loss for Christ.

Philippians 3: 7: But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. 8: Yea doubtless, and I count all things *but* loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them *but* dung, that I may win Christ,

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom because when he brings us to fear him above all other things then we have the LORD to provide and protects us over all things.

Isaiah 8: 11: For the LORD spake thus to me with a strong hand, and instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying, 12: Say ye not, A confederacy, to all *them* to whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid. 13: Sanctify the LORD of hosts himself; and *let* him *be* your fear, and *let* him *be* your dread. 14: And he shall be for a sanctuary;

Do you hear Christ speak in our Psalm?—"O fear the LORD, ye his saints." Has he given you this reverence for God: reverence for his sovereign power and wisdom, for his perfect holiness, for his free forgiveness in Christ our Righteousness? If so then let's hear...

CHRIST'S PROMISE

Psalm 34: 9:...*there is* no want to them that fear him. 10: The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good *thing*.

This is Christ's promise to all that fear the LORD. Our Lord promises those that fear him shall not want. God will not allow one of his saints who fears him to want any good thing. Concerning what we need for heaven: God our Father has met our need in Christ his Son through the Holy Spirit by giving us righteousness, holiness, redemption, a new heart of love and mercy and longsuffering. Concerning what we need for daily provision: God does not promise to give us luxuries or extras but he promises to supply all our need.

The young lions are the king of the jungle. He is fierce, cunning, strong and vicious, in the prime of life, and at the top of the food chain. Yet with all their strength, they shall lack, they shall hunger. The same is true of men who are try to make themselves righteous and holy for heaven and who in this life are crafty and strong in power, being oppressive over men with no fear of God before their eyes. Despite all their worldly strength, God is against them in this life and when they meet God without Christ they shall lack the one thing needful—Christ Jesus the Righteous!

Yet the believer who reverences God with a child-like fear, trusting Christ shall not want. Though we do not have the power and cunning of men of this world, who are like greedy lions, God has justified us in Christ. And with Christ, God shall feed us, clothe us and shelter us so that we shall not want.

Look to Christ. He speaks from experience. He is the *Lion of the tribe of Judah*—God all powerful, the King of kings and LORD of lords. But when he died unto sin he was crucified through weakness as the defenseless Lamb of God.

Isaiah 53: 7: He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

But did our Savior want any good thing? Not one! God our Father provided for him in this life and has raised him and given him all things in glory!

Therefore, in Christ, by Christ and for the sake of Christ nor do those who trust in him! We are defenseless lambs amidst lions but those that fear the LORD shall not want any good thing. This is why Christ teaches us not to make this world's gain our objective in life but to seek Christ preeminently in all things at all times. He said,

Matthew 6: 19: Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: 20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: 21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also....25: Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? 32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek: [lost worldly men) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. 33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

I watched a documentary on JP Morgan. What a crafty, ruthless business man! He built an empire off of war. But the lowly, unknown, weak sinner who believes God for all our need, both in this life and the life to come, is far richer than all this world's wealthiest businessmen combined.

CHRIST TEACHES US THE FEAR OF THE LORD

Psalm 34: 11: Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the LORD. 12: What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good? 13: Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile. 14: Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it.

As fathers and mothers we call our children to our side and we teach them the right way to speak, the right things to do in this life, which will result in a better life than a life of evil. Christ is the Head of the church with all power as the GodMan Mediator who calls all his children through the preaching of the gospel, saying—“*Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the LORD.*”

This is why Christ is our Prophet, Priest and King. As our Prophet he gets all the glory for teaching us the fear of the LORD through the preaching of his gospel. As our High Priest he gets the glory for being our Righteousness and Holiness in the holiest of holies in God's presence and he gets the glory for applying his blood to our hearts through the Holy Spirit. As our King he gets all the glory as our sovereign who by his power overcomes every obstacle to bring each of his children the gospel and makes this word effectual in our hearts, making us believe on him and making us hunger after righteousness from a holy heart in our daily lives.

He asks a rhetorical question—*“What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good?”* We all do. Well, this is the blessing of God. So what Christ is declaring is that these things he is about to teach us concerning walking in the fear of the LORD are what God delights in. Those who speak and walk in this way are already blessed of God with all Righteousness in Christ, already blessed of God who makes us be able to speak and walk this way, and shall be blessed of God with a fruitful, productive life, chiefly with eternal life hereafter because these are righteous things in which our righteous God delights.

Concerning our speech, Christ commands, *“Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile.”* Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. Christ is the holy one who walked this earth with a holy heart. Christ only spoke that which was true and right. He only spoke the gospel of God. Our great Prophet went everywhere declaring salvation is not by the works of our hands but by him fulfilling the law for his people, redeeming us from the curse of the law. There was no deceit in his mouth in anything he spoke, only truth. God is well-pleased with Christ for his righteousness sake.

Brethren, all who rest entirely in Christ our Righteousness, should only speak what is right and what is the gospel, never evil, never deceit. When God gave us a new heart, in which is no guile, then we ceased speaking the evil and deceitful lies in which we made our boast that we found Christ by our will and contributed to our salvation by our works. Now, we speak the truth confessing Christ to be the Author and Finisher of our faith, all our Salvation. And in our daily lives, rather than speaking evil, we speak that which is good, true, and for edification.

Colossians 3: 16: Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.
17: And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

The apostle Peter quoted our Psalm,

1 Peter 3: 8: Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: 9: Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing. 10: For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: 11: Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it. 12: For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil. 13: And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?

In the mid-eighties, I recall digging water lines for the church in south Arkansas with brother Otto McGoogan. We worked for a good ten hours that day. The entire time we worked brother Otto preached the gospel to me. There were very few words he spoke that day that were not pointing me to Christ. And that was a time when the Lord had begun to teach me the gospel so I was soaking up every word. I pray God would make each of us more ready to speak the gospel of Christ for the edification of our hearers and less apt to speak just for the sake of talking.

Concerning our doing, Christ says the fear of the Lord will cause us to “*Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it.*”

Think on this! Being conceived of corrupt seed “*every imagination of the thoughts of [our] heart was only evil continually.*” (Gen 6: 5) But God sent his Son who was conceived in the womb of a virgin by the Holy Spirit and “*every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only good continually.*”

The Lord Jesus *desired life and long days*—eternal life—for all those the Father gave him. So he *sought peace* between God and his people and *pursued it*. He did so by dying in place of his people to satisfy justice, to erase our crimes from record, and he brought God and his elect together in peace. When he gives us a fear of the LORD he makes us depart from our evil will-works religion and makes us *pursue Christ our Peace*, confessing him to be all our salvation, trusting in him, his work.

Romans 5:1: Therefore being justified, by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

Due to the Spirit of Christ dwelling in us, in our daily lives, it is the desire of our inward man to “*Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it.*” Folks are always talking about wanting to be happy. If you want to be happy, make someone else happy. The apostle Paul quoted our Lord Jesus,

Acts 20:35: I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

Do good for one another, brethren. Seek peace and pursue it with one another and with all men as much as possible. Peter preached from this passage and said, “*And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?*” (1 Pet 3: 13)

CHRIST TEACHES US GOD IS JUSTICE IN PROVIDENCE AND SALVATION

Psalm 34: 15: The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry. 16: The face of the LORD is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth. 17: The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles. 18: The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.

Now, we saw at first, Christ said those who fear the LORD have the promise that God will provide for us. Having shown us what it is to walk in the fear of the LORD, he elaborates on that promise—“*The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry.*”

Be sure to get this! God is as just in daily providence of his people as he is in our salvation.

Christ bought his people with his precious blood and made us the very righteousness of God in him. So it is right and just that the Lord’s eyes are upon us. They were before we were born-again. Now, that we believe, his eyes are certainly upon us. He has made us servants of righteousness so that in our daily lives we love these things that are righteous. His eyes are upon us because we are well-pleasing in the sight of our righteous God in Christ our Righteousness. Therefore, for the LORDs own name’s sake, for his glory’s sake, for the sake of Christ his Son—“*The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry....The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles. The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.*”

I know from experience that when your heart is broken you do not feel like God is anywhere around. But for you who are suffering in trials, whose heart is broken, Christ is near you, God's eyes are upon you, his ears are open to your cry, and his hand ready to deliver you out of all your troubles.

And, because God is just in providence the same as in salvation—*“The face of the LORD is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.”* God sees the righteous and the evil. If the evil is that they are speaking and doing evil in their daily life, the LORD is against them in daily providence to cut them off from their pursuits in this world. If the evil is that they are looking to their own will and works, rather than Christ, the LORD is against them to cut them off eternally.

God is just in providence as well as in salvation. Therefore, believer, we can be sure that for the sake of his justice, God will do what is right in providing and protecting each one for whom Christ died because in Christ we are righteous. It is just for God to do so!

CHRIST TEACHES US WE SHALL HAVE TROUBLE, BUT

Psalm 34: 19: Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all. 20: He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken. 21: Evil shall slay the wicked: and they that hate the righteous shall be desolate. 22: The LORD redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.

Does Christ mean that a believer will never have trouble in our life if we do what he says is right? No, we shall have trouble. Christ taught us to expect it.

John 16: 33: These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

But Christ is teaching us *“the LORD delivereth him out of them all. He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.”* This is Christ teaching us what he knows from experience as our Substitute. When Christ and the two thieves hung on the cross, the soldiers were sent to break their legs so they would die. So they could get them off the cross before the sabbath day.

John 19: 33: But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs:...36: For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.

What do we learn from that? God is so well-pleased with Christ that he delivered him without allowing even one bone to be broken, as he promised. He did so fulfilling the type of the passover lamb who had not a bone broken. He has and shall do the same for all who trust in him. It does not mean that we shall not have a bone broken. But it speaks of the care of Providence over the righteous.

Matthew 10: 29: Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. 30: But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. 31: Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.

The evil shall be slain by their evil because they are guilty—*“Evil shall slay the wicked: and they that hate the righteous shall be desolate.”* Desolate means guilty. Man's own evil shall slay the wicked. They hate Christ Jesus the Righteous therefore they shall remain guilty before God.

But those who trust in the LORD can have no charge laid against us in Christ—*“The LORD redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.”* God purchased the soul of his

servants with his own blood. Therefore, none of that that trust in him shall be guilty before his judgment seat. Our judgment was settled in Christ when he said, "It is finished!"

Our righteous and holy God loves righteousness and holiness in his Son. He is against those that do evil by not trusting in Christ. But he hears and delivers those who trust in his Son. We shall not want in this life or the life to come—*"For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."* (1 Tim 4: 8)

Amen!