

1980

#55 - "Fear God"

Department of Health Education

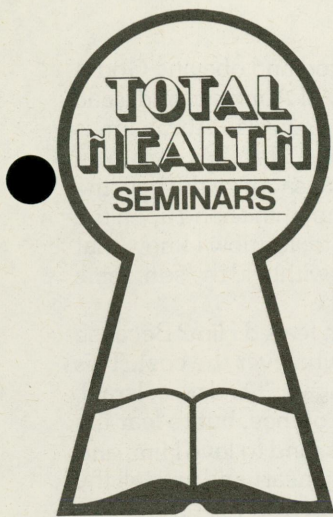
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Keys to Total Health

PRODUCED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH EDUCATION, SCHOOL OF HEALTH

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“Fear God”

He is the Creator of the *mighty* universe. David says again,

“And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.” (Revelation 14:6,7) This is the first angel’s message. But in this lesson we want to look at just one aspect of the first angel’s message: “Fear God.” What does it mean to fear God?

God Is Feared By Reverence

Our concept of God affects our relationship to God. Some people see God as an exacting dictator. They see Him as an all-powerful tyrant. And so they are afraid of the Sovereign of the Universe.

Other people see God as a wishy-washy ruler of the universe. One who is going to save every person, no matter how evil or wicked they may be.

To some people God is a big edition of Daddy. They attribute to God the things they see in their own earthly parent. Some people think of God as the Creator who is far away from us. One who created the universe, wound it up like a clock, and then walked away and left it. Others believe in a pantheistic God - a God which exists throughout nature. But we can only find the truth about God as we study Him the way He has revealed Himself to us in His sacred book.

David cried out, “Let all the earth fear the Lord: Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. For He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast.” (Psalm 33:8,9) David here equates fearing the Lord with standing in awe of Him. We are to respect the Creator of the universe, even more than we would respect an earthly ruler, because God is the ruler of the universe.

When we look on an American coin we find the words, “In God we trust.” But we have not trusted in God. Instead, we have placed our trust in satellites, rockets, atomic bombs, atomic submarines, and other inventions of mankind. But these things can never produce security. They only produce suspicion and fear. If we are really going to be at peace with ourselves, we must have something beyond ourselves in which to place our implicit trust.

David instructs us, “God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all *them that are about Him.*” (Psalm 89:7) Why is God to be greatly feared? We learn from the astronomer that there are

more than 40 billion suns in our own little Milky Way system. Think of it--40 billion giant suns, many of them with planets circling about them as in our own solar system. We cannot fathom a number such as 40 billion! It is beyond our understanding. Yet these 40 billion suns are all in our own Milky Way system. And there are over 200 million other such systems just like our own, and many of these other systems are much larger than ours.

The very thought of it staggers us. There are more giant suns in the sky than there is sand on all of the seashores of the world; yet we, with our naked eye can only see a very small portion of God’s universe. Even with our most powerful telescopes we cannot see all there is in space. No wonder the prophet Job cries out, “Lo, these are parts of His ways: But how little a portion is heard of Him? But the thunder of His power, who can understand?” (Job 26:14)

God is to be feared, or respected, or revered, because He is a Creator of the *mighty* universe. David says again, “Stand in awe, and sin not; Commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah.” (Psalm 4:4)

Scientists have learned how to transform matter into energy. That is where we get atomic energy, and the atomic bomb. Scientists have taken matter, and by a new-found process, have transformed that matter into the great nuclear explosions of which we see pictures, and hear, and read. And it requires only a small amount of matter to produce the most powerful explosion we can imagine. The bombs that were dropped on Hiroshima, Nagasaki, were only babies compared to what we have now! Yet, you could hold in the palms of your hands enough matter to produce the most powerful explosion known to man. There is tremendous energy in the smallest amount of matter.

When God called this little world into existence, He reversed the process of science. Scientists convert matter into energy, but God converted energy into matter. Think for a moment of how much energy it would take to call your automobile into being. There is enough energy contained in the matter comprising your car, to split the globe wide open if it were all released at once. Yet God did not call just an auto into being, He created this whole globe by the breath of His mouth. No wonder Job says, “God thundereth marvelously with His voice; great things doeth He, which we cannot comprehend.” (Job 37:5)

Joshua instructed, “That all the people of the earth might know the hand of the Lord, that it is mighty: that ye might fear the Lord your God forever.” (Joshua 4:24) When God is near, even the very air seems to be sacred. This is

illustrated by Joshua when he met the Lord. "And the captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot: for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so." (Joshua 5:15) When we understand the universe, and the infinite power that it took to create it, when we get a new look at God, we can and do fear Him.

This little world is one of the smallest of God's creation. Jupiter, one of the planets in our own solar system, is 1,300 times larger than earth. And our giant sun is 300,000 times larger than this planet we call earth. God created both of these masterpieces in one day. He called them into existence by the breath of His mouth.

But even our giant sun, 300,000 times larger than earth is tiny compared to some other specimens of God's handiwork. Betelgeuse, one of the stars of the evening sky, is a blazing sun 27 million times larger than our sun. Our little speck of an earth is indeed infinitesimal compared to these giants of the evening sky. Dr. Harlow Shapley of Harvard made this statement, "The earth is a grain of sand with a whiff of atmosphere and a smear of biology, plodding its way around the sun with monotonous regularity."

Where do we come in? We are an indiscernible part of the smear of biology. Compared with God's great creation, we aren't very much. The prophet Isaiah has correctly stated, "Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance." (Isaiah 40:15) When you weigh something, how much difference does the dust on the scale make? No difference. You don't carefully dust off the scale every time you weigh yourself, because the dust doesn't weigh anything. It wouldn't even register. And so it is will all of the nations of this earth compared with God's great universe. They are as the dust of the scale; they are too small to even be counted.

"And this is life eternal that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."

God Is Feared By Obedience

The connection between fearing god and obeying God is probably best illustrated by the story of Abraham and Isaac in the twenty-second chapter of Genesis. Abraham is commanded to offer Isaac as a sacrifice. He takes him up on the mountain and just as he is ready to sacrifice the boy, the Lord stops his hand and says, "Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seen thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me." (Genesis 22:12)

How did God know that Abraham feared Him? Because Abraham was willing to obey God, whatever the cost. This same thought is reflected by Moses again, "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, to keep the commandments of the Lord, and His statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?" (Deuteronomy 10:12,13) Fearing God and keeping His commandments go hand in hand. "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments: For this is the whole duty of man." (Ecclesiastes 12:13) A person who claims to fear God, then deliberately disobeys His commandments, is demonstrating that his claim is false. The person who truly fears the Lord, will keep His commandments.

"If ye will fear the Lord, then shall both ye and also the king that reigneth over you continue following the Lord your God." (I Samuel 12:14) In order to obey God, we must know what God wants. We must know what His commandments are.

Therefore, fearing God includes knowing how to study His Guidebook. So the next lesson in this series will be "How to Understand the Bible." We can't obey God unless we understand His instructions. We must know how to communicate with Him in a meaningful way. Then when we know how to listen to His voice, through His word which He has provided us, we can truly keep His commandments, and fear Him as the message of Revelation 14 commands us.

This series of study guides has been developed to help you understand and follow the everlasting Gospel of Revelation 14. To find real peace in your life, you need to know God. It is not enough simply to know about God. We need to know God personally. "And this is life eternal that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." (John 17:3) There is eternal life in knowing God. In order to know God we must know how to listen as He speaks to us, and we must know how to communicate with Him through prayer. As we focus on these two vital components of the Gospel in our next class, you can begin developing a faith that will not die. God has promised a special blessing to those who study to know His will. At the beginning of this book of Revelation this blessing is pronounced, "Blessed is He that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand." (Revelation 1:3) May God continue to bless you as you study and grow in grace in the knowledge of His Word.

Scriptural Worksheet

"FEAR GOD"

1. What is the first part of the "Everlasting Gospel?" (Revelation 14:6, 7)

2. Why should man "fear God?" (Psalm 33:8, 9)

3. How do we "fear God?" (Psalm 89:7)

4. Can we really understand God's creative power? (Job 26:14; 37:5)

5. How large is earth in comparison to God's Universe? (Isaiah 40:15)

6. How is the fear of God illustrated in Scripture? (Genesis 22:12)

7. How does obedience figure in to fearing God? (Deuteronomy 10:12, 13)

8. What is the "whole duty of man?" (Ecclesiastes 12:13)
(1) _____
(2) _____
9. On what basis is eternal life promised? (John 17:3)

Now move on to the Worksheet in the lesson



God Speaks!

GOD SPEAKS!

In the quiet of the night God speaks
In the day so warm and bright.
The flaming sunset paints the sky and sets the clouds ablaze—
God speaks—in all these wond'rous ways.

GOD SPEAKS!

In the mountains and the plains He speaks
In the scent of autumn rains,
In endless rivers rushing in their haste to reach the sea—
God speaks—in even you and me.

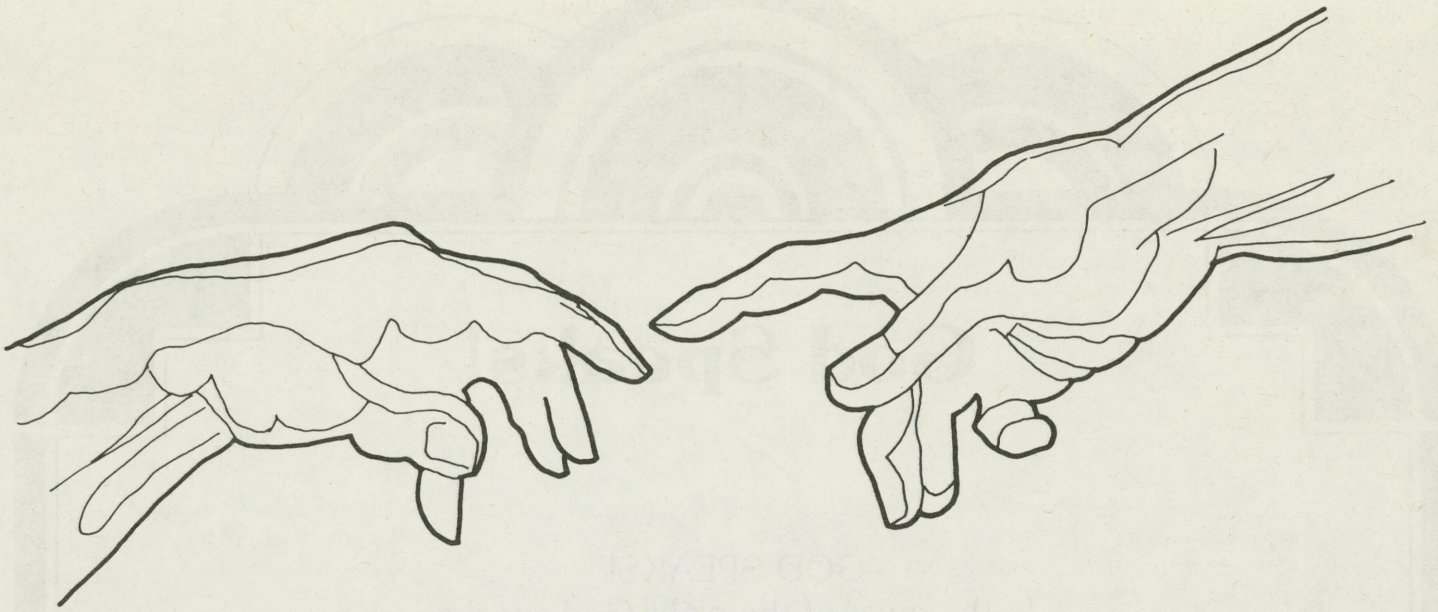
How can we feel alone with God so near?
Lift up your heart—what do you hear?
When things go wrong and no one seems to care
Just look around—God's love is everywhere!

GOD SPEAKS!

In the beauty of the snow He speaks
In the breathless winds that blow.
His voice is heard in chapel bells and in the peaceful doves.
God speaks—in every heart that loves.

—Rubylin Pittman

FEAR GOD



Directions:

Write or think about:

1. Describe the picture you have of God as He reaches toward man.
2. What is your reaction when God reaches toward you?
3. When in your experience have you especially felt God's love?
4. What thought in the Bible study could mean the most in your life?

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

Phone _____