

#11: The Intrinsic Significance of Fearing the Lord
in the Economy of God 4/12-18 **OL Summary:**

I. The first principle for man to live a proper human life is for him to fear the Lord, to revere the Lord; to fear the Lord is to be in fear of offending Him, of losing His presence, and of not receiving Him as our reward in the next age; we should be in fear of missing the Lord's smile in this age and His reward in the next: **A.** To fear the Lord is to consider and regard Him in everything, never forgetting that He is the wonderful God who has created us; fearing the Lord stops us from doing evil; it also causes us to be touched by the sufferings of others and to show mercy and compassion to them. **B.** To fear the Lord is not only fleeing from sins but also, and even more, rejecting the self; fearing the Lord is not merely to fear that we have sinned or that we are worldly but to fear that what we are doing is out of ourselves, not out of the Lord. **C.** The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding; knowledge, wisdom, and understanding come from God; if we fear Him, revere Him, these will be our possessions.

II. Isaiah prophesied that the Spirit of Jehovah—the Spirit of understanding, the Spirit of counsel, the Spirit of might, the Spirit of knowledge, and the Spirit of the fear of Jehovah: **A.** The Spirit was with the Lord Jesus all the time and was one with Him; He walked by the Spirit and lived a life in, with, by, and through the Spirit; Isaiah 11:2 shows that in the Lord's human living the Spirit was manifested with all the above attributes.

III. To fear God is to trust in Him: **A.** Proverbs 3:5-8 charges us to trust in the Lord with all our heart and not rely on our own understanding; in all our ways we should acknowledge Him, and He will make our paths straight; we should not be wise in our own eyes; we should fear the Lord and depart from evil; this will be healing to our body and refreshment to our bones. **]**

IV. To fear the Lord means that we also honor Him: **A.** Proverbs 3:9-10 says that we must honor the Lord with our substance and with the firstfruits of all our produce; then our barns will be filled with plenty, and our vats will burst open with new wine. **B.** We should not be those who make more money to lay up treasure for our future; at least one-tenth, the firstfruits, of our produce must be given to God; we should always be generous in giving of the things that God has given us; this honors God. **C.** We should beseech the Lord to make our heart single in fearing His name; "Teach me, O Jehovah, Your way; / I will walk in Your truth. / Make my heart single in fearing Your name" (Psa. 86:11). **D.** We need to "cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and of spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear God"; the fear of God here is not daring to touch things that do not belong to God or are not related to Him (2 Cor. 7:1).

V. The holy fear of the Lord is actually a source of joy as a fountain of life and as a tree of life to dispense God into

us for the carrying out of His economy: **A.** The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, that one may turn aside from the snares of death; to fear the Lord, to trust in the Lord, and to take refuge in the name of the Lord are to walk on the paths of life; the paths of life are the paths of the tree of life, the source of which is God Himself. **B.** The fear of the Lord leads to life; it is the constricted way (the way of the few, not of the many) that leads to life; the paths of life are for us to live in God and thus to touch and obtain life; these paths are the highways that God has put in our heart for us to enter into Him. **C.** The ways of death are the ways of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the source of which is Satan and which is manifested in our self; to live in the self is to be without God's presence, to walk in the ways of darkness, and to be void of life. **]**

VI. God promised to give us, His people, one heart and one way, to fear Him all the days, for our own good and for the good of our children after us, and He puts His fear into our hearts, so that we will not turn away from Him: **A.** We, the chosen people of God, should all have one heart—to love God, to seek God, to live God, and to be constituted with God that we may be His expression—and one way—the Triune God Himself as the inner law of life with its divine capacity. **B.** This one heart and one way are the one accord; divisions result from having a heart for something other than Christ and taking a way other than Christ. **C.** God made an eternal covenant, the new covenant; it is by this covenant that God will not turn away from us, and He puts His fear into our hearts, so that we will not turn away from Him. **D.** When we fear God, we are instructed by God concerning the way that we should choose, and we are able to know God's intimate counsel and His covenant; only those who fear God can have God's revelation of His covenant, and He gives His intimate counsel only to those who fear Him.

VII. The fear of the Lord and the love of the Lord are two wonderful results of the forgiveness of our sins: **A.** God's forgiveness does not cause man to become audacious and reckless; the grace of God's forgiveness brings man into the fear of the Lord; "With You there is forgiveness, / That You would be feared" (Psa. 130:4). **B.** The grace of God's forgiveness also cause us to love God; the reason the sinful woman in Luke loved the Lord much is that she was forgiven much by the Lord. **C.** The more the Lord forgive us, the more we fear Him; and the more we fear Him, the more we love Him; on the negative side, because we fear Him, we refrain from doing things that are displeasing to Him; on the positive side, because we love Him, we do things that are pleasing Him.

VIII. Proverbs 31 presents to us two models of those who fear the Lord; on the one hand, we should be like a king, a royal man like the Lord, having the authority to rule; on the other hand, we should be a worthy woman, knowing how to arrange, manage, take care of, and provide for the needs of the saints in the house of God.

CP1: Apply the Spirit of reality to your daily living and have God-fearing living in God's economy

OL1: Isaiah prophesied that the Spirit of Jehovah—the Spirit of wisdom, the Spirit of understanding, the Spirit of counsel, the Spirit of might, the Spirit of knowledge, and the Spirit of the fear of Jehovah—would rest upon Christ.

OL2: In His human living, Jesus was filled with the Spirit of the reverential, obedient fear of the Lord; He also delighted in the fear of the Lord; in His resurrection He is now the all-inclusive, bountifully supplying Spirit of Jesus Christ as the Spirit of the fear of Jehovah, who includes the indescribable human living and ministry of the Lord Jesus.

No human being ever feared God as much as Jesus did; in carrying out God's New Testament ministry, the Lord Jesus told us that He never did anything out of Himself, He did not have His own work, He did not speak His own word, He did everything not by His own will, and He did not seek His own glory. Jesus lived a life in which He did everything in God, with God, and for God; God was in His living, and He was one with God; this is the reality in Jesus. **OL3:** We need to ask the Lord as the Spirit of reality to guide us into the reality of experiencing His life of submission and His life of obedience to the Father. Day by day we need to completely and absolutely open to the Father and ask Him to fill us with the resurrected Christ as the all-inclusive Spirit, which is also the Spirit of the fear of the Lord that includes the human living and ministry of the Lord Jesus. **OL4:**

Proverbs 3:5-8 charges us to trust in the Lord with all our heart and not rely on our own understanding; in all our ways we should acknowledge Him, and He will make our paths straight; we should not be wise in our own eyes; we should fear the Lord and depart from evil; this will be healing to our body and refreshment to our bones. **OL5:**

“Blessed is the man who trusts in Jehovah / And whose trust Jehovah is. / And he will be like a tree transplanted beside water, / Which sends out its roots by a stream, / And will not be afraid when heat comes; / For its leaves remain flourishing, / And it will not be anxious in the year of drought / And will not cease to bear fruit” (Jer. 17:7-8).

According to God's economy, the one who trusts in God is like a tree planted by water, signifying God as the fountain of living waters. A tree grows beside a river by absorbing all the riches of the water; this is a picture of God's economy, which is carried out by His dispensing; in order to receive the divine dispensing, we as the trees must absorb God as the water. The riches of the supplying God dispensed into us as the trees constitute us with God's divinity and cause us to grow into God's measure; in this way we and God become one, having the same element, essence, constitution, and appearance. **OL6:** He who gives heed to the word will find good, and blessed is he who trusts in the Lord; the Lord will be our confidence, and He will keep our foot from being caught. **OL7:** Those who love God learn the fear of God by coming to the Lord in the Scriptures; we are commanded to cleave to and obey the Word of God as the evidence of our fear of God.

Application: Newly saved, Youth and College Students

Jesus had a Spirit to revere and to fear God in His human life. You may decide to live a God-fearing life, even if you try to imitate Jesus' life on the outside, you cannot do it. This exemplary person is now the life-giving Spirit, the Spirit of reality. **John 16:13** But when He, the Spirit of reality, comes, He will guide you into all the reality. You should, ① exercise your own spirit and pray, ② call on the name of the Lord, ③ set your mind on the spirit, read the Word and pray, ④ open your heart and fellowship with the brothers and sisters who are leading you. And when you touch the Spirit of reality in the Word and in the Body, you will come to fear God naturally.

The vision of God's economy is for you to enjoy Christ, fear God, and build the church. This vision should be applied to your school life and more. For example, you got a good grade in school, or your boss praised you for doing a good job. At this point, the germs of pride begin to multiply inside, and you almost say, “I'm great!” In this situation, instead of saying “Oh, I'm great!” you should pray by saying, “Oh Lord Jesus, I'm nothing but sin!” And keep on calling “Oh Lord, oh Lord, oh Lord Jesus.” Then, the effect of the cross inside the Spirit of reality will work, and the germs of pride will be killed. Furthermore, the Spirit of reality reveres and fears God, which permeates your soul. This is what it means to fear God and apply the Spirit of reality to your daily life.

Phil. 1:19 For I know that for me this (Paul's daily life in prison) will turn out to salvation through your petition and the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. **20**

According to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I will be put to shame, but with all boldness, as always, even now Christ will be magnified in my body, whether through life or through death.... **4:22** All the saints greet you, and especially those of Caesar's household.

When Paul wrote the book of Philippians, his daily life was a life in prison. Even if your environment is not good, it may be better than Paul's. Even though Paul was separated from the saints, he lived out the Body life of Christ, rejoiced in the Lord, loved Christ and His church, and expressed Christ in a magnified way. He preached the gospel from his prison cell to those of Caesar's household, and some of them were saved. Paul is your pattern. Enjoy the Spirit of reality, fear God, love others, dispense Christ into others, and build the church in your daily school life, your daily work life, your daily family life, and your church life's gospel preaching and shepherding! **Prayer:** Oh, Lord Jesus, You were the one who was filled with the Spirit of fearing God, You have become the life-giving Spirit, and is now living inside me. I shall ① exercise my spirit and pray, ② call on the name of the Lord, ③ set my mind on the spirit and pray-read the Word, ④ open my heart and fellowship with the brothers and sisters who are leading me, and touch the Spirit of reality in the Word and in the Body. Let me enjoy the Spirit of reality, fear God, love others, dispense Christ into others, and build the church in my life!

CP2: Manifest our fear and honor of the Lord by giving more than one tenth of our income

OL1: Proverbs 3:9-10 says that we must honor the Lord with our substance and with the firstfruits of all our produce; then our barns will be filled with plenty, and our vats will burst open with new wine. We should not be those who make more money to lay up treasure for our future; at least one-tenth, the firstfruits, of our produce must be given to God; we should always be generous in giving of the things that God has given us; this honors God.

OL2: We should beseech the Lord to make our heart single in fearing His name; "Teach me, O Jehovah, Your way; / I will walk in Your truth. / Make my heart single in fearing Your name"—Psa. 86:11.

OL3: To be in the fear of Christ is to fear offending Him as the Head; this involves our being subject to one another; we need to serve the Lord with fear; then we will love the Lord in order to rejoice in and enjoy the Lord.

OL4: We all should have a proper fear of God because we believers in Christ will all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; at that time Christ will judge His believers at His coming back, not concerning their eternal salvation but concerning their dispensational reward.

OL5: Fearing the Lord is a way to lengthen life; God loves, saves, protects, blesses, and provides for those who fear Him.

OL6: The holy fear of the Lord is actually a source of joy as a fountain of life and as a tree of life to dispense God into us for the carrying out of His economy. The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, that one may turn aside from the snares of death; to fear the Lord, to trust in the Lord, and to take refuge in the name of the Lord are to walk on the paths of life.

OL7: The fear of the Lord leads to life; it is the constricted way (the way of the few, not of the many) that leads to life; the paths of life are for us to live in God and thus to touch and obtain life; these paths are the highways that God has put in our heart for us to enter into Him.

We thank the Lord that today He is judging us in the course of our life in order to give us new opportunities and new beginnings before His consummate judging. This is His mercy; otherwise, we would be condemned along with the world. In this process every judgment is a reminder and a deliverance. With each new beginning, God gives us fresh grace.

Application to business persons/ graduate students

Prov. 3:9 Honor Jehovah with your substance and with the firstfruits of all your produce; **10** then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will burst open with new wine.

Business persons should honor God by giving at least 10% of their income. Based on the increase of income, the percentage can be further increased. **Malachi 3:10** Bring the whole tithe to the storehouse that there may be food in My house; and prove Me, if you will, by this, says Jehovah of hosts, whether I will open to you the windows of heaven and pour out blessing for you until there is no room for it.

Excerpt from Life Lessons vol.2 "The offering of material riches":

From the time that man developed a problem with God because of the fall and left the position where he took God as everything, material riches have become a critical matter in the life of fallen man. In his fallen condition, man fell into the darkness of acknowledging only material riches and not God, of trusting only in material riches and not in God, and even of serving material riches, taking material riches as God, and allowing material riches to replace God. God's enemy, Satan the Devil, exploited the fallen condition of men to come in and deceive men to worship idols, such as the god of wealth, for riches and gain. By being behind these idols, he supplants men's worship and service that are due God. For this reason, the Lord Jesus told us that one "cannot serve God and mammon" (Matt. 6:24).

However, we have received God's mercy and the Lord's salvation, which delivered us from the authority of Satan and turned us to God. After we have received God's salvation in this way, we are confronted with an issue in our practical living, that is, what we should do with material riches that Satan used in time past to delude us and all the world.

① 1 Tim. 6:17 "Nor to set their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God who affords us all things richly for our enjoyment". This word exposes Satan's plot to delude men, showing us that all the material things and enjoyment in our living apparently come from the uncertain riches, but they actually come from God's giving. They are supplied to us from God's rich giving. Hence, we must not set our hope on deceitful and uncertain material riches, but on the very God who gives us all things for our enjoyment.

② 2 Cor. 9:10 "Now He who bountifully supplies seed to the sower". The Bible regards the offering of material riches as sowing. The seed is supplied by God and comes from God. This reveals that the material riches which the believers offer to God come originally from God and are given by God.

At the Olympic trials this month, swimmer Ms. Ikee was selected after returning from leukemia. Her coach was amazed at her concentration. She had previously testified that she wanted to overcome the ordeal of leukemia, thinking that "there is no trial you cannot overcome, using "God is faithful, who will not allow that you be tempted beyond what you are able (1 Corinthians 10:13)". There will be trials and temptations when business persons try to honor God, but overcome them in the Lord.

Prayer: Oh Lord Jesus, giving material riches is to honor the Lord. Malachi says to give at least 10% of our income. I love God and I serve God and not loving mammon by loving the riches. I do not set my hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God who affords me all things richly for our enjoyment. I honor the Lord by giving material riches. Amen!

CP3: Be a managing king under Lord's reign and serve as a wise and worthy woman who love the Lord

OL1: Proverbs 31:3-9 speaks of a reigning king—one who does not drink wine but who speaks for the rights of others and ministers justice (typifying Christ and His overcomers); only this kind of person can reign. Our Lord was fully under God's restriction; hence, He could reign for God; if we can be restricted by God and thus deal with ourselves, we will be able to reign for God. In ruling over the people, the king first had to be instructed, governed, ruled, and controlled by the word of God; the principle should be the same with the elders in the churches. In order to administrate, to manage, the church, the elders must be reconstituted with the holy word of God.

OL2: Proverbs 31:10 through 31 describes a worthy woman—one who is wise, kind, diligent, and capable and who can arrange, manage, and provide for her household; "Her price is far above corals" (Prov. 31:10). In the aspect of overcoming, we should be like a king; in the aspect of loving the Lord, we should be like a worthy woman. The main characteristic of a worthy woman is that she fears the Lord (reverently worshipping, obeying, serving, and trusting the Lord with awe-filled respect); "Grace is deceitful, and beauty is vain; / But a woman who fears Jehovah, she will be praised" (Prov. 31:30). "She does him good and not evil / All the days of her life" (Prov. 31:12); "Her husband is known in the gates, / When he sits among the elders of the land" (Prov. 31:23). Such a worthy and prudent woman is from the Lord as the crown of her husband; her children and husband rise up and call her blessed; her husband also praises her by saying that she surpasses all others. A husband should be able to see with his own eyes his wife's "pure manner of life in fear"; her adorning should not be the outward plaiting of hair and putting on of gold or clothing with garments, "but the hidden man of the heart in the incorruptible adornment of a meek and quiet spirit, which is very costly in the sight of God" (1 Pet. 3:1-4). Godly reverence is a godly fear toward God, a revering and honoring of God. Older women should be reverent in their behavior, their deportment, so that "they may train the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be of a sober mind, pure, workers at home, good, subject to their own husbands, that the word of God would not be blasphemed" (Titus 2:3-5).

Application to the serving ones

For the expansion and building of the church, the responsible brothers, reconstituted with the Word of God and under the rule of God, should manage the affairs of the church on behalf of God. And as worthy women, sisters should be wise, kind, diligent, capable, and able to plan, manage, and provide for their household. **Testimony of Brother's company and the church:** Japanese companies mainly hired and promoted men, so I thought that there must be many capable women coming to foreign companies. I often talked with the HR department and said, "For this reason, at our foreign-affiliated company, women may be better than men. If

we do not strategically promote women, their talents will be buried. As a result, the company loses its competitiveness." The HR department seemed to feel that I was a person who said unusual things, and I think they didn't understand my reasonable suggestions. However, with the help of the U.S. headquarters, I promoted seven women out of the department's nine managers. When I came to this company, we were far below the industry standard, but in three years, we have grown to be the best in the industry in terms of development capability because of the leadership of the US headquarters, my management under the president of the Japanese subsidiary, and the work of the female employees.

In Japan, everyone knows that the advancement of women is one of the most important themes, but it is difficult to accept ideas that do not fit into the cultural concept in the actual situations. Such a bold appointment of women would not have been possible without the help of the US headquarters.

In the church life, Bro. Lee testified that 90% of the increasing numbers in the revival of Shanghai came from the sisters. We have done so because the Christian population in Japan is very small and we need to use the sisters, especially those who love the Lord. As a result, due to the success of the sisters, the church in Kobe was able to get a little more increasing. (April 1993: 3 ⇒ April 2021: Approx. 200) The God-ordained way requires not only that the joints (the gifted members) function, but that all the parts function according to the measure of Christ. **In order for the sisters to function properly, the responsible ones have been careful to "enjoy Christ, deny natural life, follow the guidance of the church, function in the coordination of the Body, express Christ, and share Christ with others."** In this way, without prejudice or personal feeling, we have respected the sovereignty of the Holy Spirit and developed the function of the sisters in the Body. Service groups need to build relationships, but not in natural relationships, but in relationships between members in the Body of Christ. Also, Ananias, who was sent to baptize Paul, was a small member. We don't know from which little member the Holy Spirit speaks, so we always need to humble ourselves and listen for His voice. The reason why we decided to move to Rokko Island last September was because a fifth-grade sister asked her mother, "Why doesn't the church go to Rokko Island? There are lots of kids in Rokko Island!". Also, there is no distinction between Japanese, Chinese, Korean, African, etc. in the church, the one new man. **We hope that all will crucify prejudices and concept, respect the sovereignty of the Holy Spirit in the Body of Christ, and grow into Christ the Head, adding to His measure and functioning according to their measures.** **Prayer:** Oh Lord, as the one who fears the Lord, on the one hand, we need to be reconstituted with the holy word of God in order to become kings like the Lord and have the authority to rule. On the other hand, I learn to be worthy women, to arrange, manage, take care of, and provide for the needs of the saints in the house of God. May the veil of cultural concepts be removed so that I can function as a wise and worthy woman.