

## ***Fearing God Is Loving God***

### **I. THE HONESTY OF GOD**

- A. The evaluation or judgment of God is clean and completely honest. In God's love He gives us truth that has power to save us and bring us forth in maturity and righteousness.

***<sup>9</sup>The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. (Ps. 19:9)***

- B. The letters from Jesus in Revelation 2-3 teach us that we will stand before the Lord and offer up our works and lives. This is the greatest appointment we'll ever attend. In the letters to the churches, Jesus confronts (evaluates) the seven churches—and us today—with perfect truth, in the hope that there would be no confrontation with truth on the final Day.

***<sup>10</sup>For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. <sup>11</sup>Knowing therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men... (2 Cor. 5:10-11)***

### **II. TWO TYPES/LIFESTYLES**

- A. Paul spoke to believers who have experienced salvation in Christ concerning how they continue their lives in Christ and gives a strong warning to “take heed” how one lives their life in God because it will be tested or evaluated by the fire of God on that “Day.”

***<sup>9</sup>...you are God's building... <sup>10</sup>...I have laid the foundation... But let each one take heed [move forward carefully] how he builds [how he spends his life] on it. <sup>11</sup>For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. <sup>12</sup>Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, <sup>13</sup>each one's work [life] will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work [life], of what sort it is. <sup>14</sup>If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. <sup>15</sup>If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire. (1 Cor. 3:9-15)***

- B. The way we build our lives matters to God.

***<sup>27</sup>...let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ... (Phil. 1:27)***

***<sup>9</sup>...we make it our aim...to be well pleasing to Him (2 Cor. 5:9)***

***<sup>28</sup>And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence [courage, boldness] and not be ashamed [regretful] before Him at His coming. (1 Jn. 2:28)***

***<sup>8</sup>Look to yourselves [carefully observe, be realistic], that we do not lose those things we worked for [attained spiritually], but that we may receive a full reward. (2 Jn. 8)***

- C. There are two completely different types of elements mentioned in this passage. They represent two different ways, or lifestyles, in which people will build, or live, their lives.

1. Type #1: Gold, silver, and precious stones are sought out and mined. You have to dig deep in the earth to produce them. It takes long, consistent, and focused hard work. Think of the work of a miner. It takes time, money, and planning to establish a successful mine.  
*<sup>47</sup>Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: <sup>48</sup>He is like a man building a house, who dug deep... (Lk. 6:47-48)*  
*<sup>13</sup>Enter by the narrow gate...<sup>14</sup>narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life and there are few who find it. (Mt. 7:13-14)*  
*<sup>15</sup>...having heard the Word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience [steadfast, perseverance]. (Lk. 8:15)*
2. Type #2: Wood, hay, and straw exist on the surface of the earth with no labor to get them.  
*<sup>18</sup>...these are the ones sown among thorns; they are the ones who hear the word <sup>19</sup>and the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches and the desire for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. (Mk. 4:18-19)*  
*<sup>14</sup>...the ones that fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity. (Lk. 8:14)*  
*<sup>15</sup>If anyone's work is burned he will suffer loss [wood, hay and straw are burned away in fire leaving nothing to show](1 Cor. 3:15)*
- D. Notice the contrast between one who does not focus on building a life in God and one who does.
- E. Some are in a hurry because of too many *things* and take no time to go deep in God to produce great wealth in Him. They build on their foundation in haste and with little focus. In contrast, the other group resists several *things* and gave priority to the difficulty of going deep in God.  
*<sup>13</sup>Enter by the narrow gate...<sup>14</sup>narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life and there are few who find it. (Mt. 7:13-14)*  
*<sup>20</sup>Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven... (Mt. 6:20)*  
*<sup>33</sup>Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness... (Mt. 6:33)*  
*<sup>21</sup>There are many plans in a man's heart, nevertheless the LORD's counsel—that will stand [endure]...<sup>23</sup>The fear of the LORD leads to life, and he who has it will abide in satisfaction; he will not be visited with evil. (Prov. 19:21, 23)*
- F. A day is appointed for all believers when the worth of the way we spent our life will be tested by the fire of God to see what type it is: precious stones or stubble. With what "type" are we building our life in God?  
*<sup>13</sup>Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man's all. <sup>14</sup>For God will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, whether good or evil. (Eccl. 12:13-14)*

### III. HIS COUNSEL TO US: LIVE IN WISDOM & THE FEAR OF THE LORD

<sup>17</sup> **...conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear (1 Pet. 1:17)**

<sup>28</sup> **And to man He said, “Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom.” (Job 28:28)**

<sup>7</sup> **The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom... (Prov. 1:7)**

A. Those who choose to live without the wisdom of heaven alive in their hearts will not be safe when terror breaks in. The fear of the Lord *now* is our guarantee for safety *then*.

<sup>24</sup> **...I have stretched out my hand and no one regarded, <sup>25</sup> ...you disdained all my counsel, would have none of my rebuke...<sup>27</sup> ...when distress and anguish come upon you. <sup>28</sup> “Then they will call on Me, but I will not answer; they will seek Me diligently, but they will not find Me. <sup>29</sup> Because they hated knowledge and did not choose the fear of the LORD, <sup>30</sup> they would have none of My counsel and despised My every rebuke. <sup>31</sup> Therefore they shall eat the fruit of their own way, and be filled to the full with their own fancies. <sup>32</sup> ...the complacency of fools will destroy them <sup>33</sup> but whoever listens to me [obedient lifestyles] will dwell safely, and will be secure, without fear of evil. (Prov. 1:24-33)**

B. In the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) Jesus preaches a sermon that calls every person from every walk of life to be found wise before God. It doesn't matter what your talents or gifting are, whether you're male, female, rich, poor, old, or young—all are called to this great calling.

C. The Sermon on the Mount is like the constitution of God's kingdom. It can be used as a litmus test to measure our wisdom, spiritual maturity, and ministry impact.

D. Many need a paradigm shift in what wisdom, greatness, and success actually are. Jesus measures them according to how we hear (receive) and teach (model) the values of the Sermon on the Mount.

<sup>19</sup> **Whoever breaks...the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom...but whoever does and teaches them...shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. (Mt. 5:19)**

<sup>24</sup> **Whoever hears these sayings of Mine and does them, I will liken him to a wise man... (Mt. 7:24)**

E. The foundational message in the Sermon on the Mount is that we are to live out the eight beatitudes as we fully commit to obey His Word. The beatitudes are the core values of God's kingdom. They attract the Holy Spirit and are what the Father blesses.

F. We must cultivate each one of the beatitudes and make them the foundation of our own lives (Mt 7:24). These values will impact our attitude, actions, and responses from day to day and in every circumstance.

1. *“Our lives should always be the first things to speak; and if our lips speak more than our lives it will avail very little. So often the tragedy has been that people proclaim the gospel in words, but their whole life and demeanor has been a denial of it. Let us never forget this order deliberately chosen by our Lord; ‘the salt of the earth’ before ‘the light of the world’. We are something before we begin to act as something.” (Martyn Lloyd-Jones)*
  
- G. The life of Jesus is the supreme model of the beatitudes. From day to day, no matter the situation, His heart was consistently rooted and grounded in them. We are called to be like Him.  
*<sup>15</sup>For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. (2 Cor. 2:15)*  
*<sup>20</sup>...we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us. (2 Cor. 5:20)*  
*<sup>8</sup>But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me [His representatives]. (Acts 1:8)*
  
- H. As we commit to live out the Sermon, we are choosing to live in the fear and wisdom of God. Thus, we “build” with “gold, silver, and precious stones” as Paul urged.
  
- I. When we submit to a particular area of the Sermon, we are, in essence, adding to the foundation of our lives something that will endure and pass the test of the fire of God on that “Day.”

#### IV. FEARING GOD IS LOVING GOD

*<sup>10</sup>If you keep my commandments you will abide in My love... (John 15:10)*

- A. When we commit to obey Jesus’ Sermon, we are loving God. Inclining our hearts to obey God, especially when no one is watching, means more than we may think. God sees. God knows. He’s moved by our weak attempts to keep His commandments.
  
- B. Many think that they only show their love for God while attending a worship service or a prayer meeting, with their hands held high toward heaven. We do love God in this way, yet we also love Him when we’re home alone and resist the temptation to look at something we shouldn’t or when we choose to speak blessing instead of gossip or hateful words.
  
- C. The greatest expression of our love towards God is fearing Him as we keep His commandments.  
*<sup>13</sup>Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man’s all. (Eccl. 12:13)*