

ECCLESIASTES 12:13-14 - DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

FEAR GOD AND KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS - [\(SERMON MP3\)](#)

Solomon said in Ecc. 12:13 that life is all about fearing God. A.W. Tozer would agree with Him. He said, "What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us."



- *How does an accurate knowledge of God impact everything else you know? Give two or three practical examples of how knowing God changes your view on another area of life.*
- *What does the following statement from Oswald Chambers mean? "When you fear God you fear nothing else, whereas if you do not fear God you fear everything else." (Consult Deut. 5:29, Ps 111:10, Prov 9:10, Luke 12:4-7, John 6:28-29, 2 Cor. 7:1, 1 John 4:17-18)*

We are to demonstrate our proper fear of God by keeping His commandments. Do you find that hard to do? Why is it so difficult to "keep God's commands" (Ecc. 12:13)?



- *Read 1 John 5:3. God's commandments "are not _____." Jesus himself said in Matt 11:30, "My yoke is _____ and My burden is _____."*
- *How can we make sense of these verses when they are not always true of our experience? What is the connection between fearing and keeping? Read John 14:15, 15:9-10, 1 John 2:3-6.*
- *In what area of your life do you find it the most difficult to obey God?*

We fear God and keep His commandments, because of the reality of judgment. The joys of the present depend on the security of the future.



- *Does a day of future reckoning motivate me or paralyze me? Our proper motivation is found in 1 Peter 4:7-11 and 1 John 4:17-18.*
- *What will it take for me to hear Jesus say, "Well done, good and faithful servant" (Matt 25:21, 23)?*

When read in light of the rest of the Bible, Solomon's conclusion (12:13-14) is a ultimately gospel call. How can you begin an explanation of the gospel with this sentence? "There's a massive canyon between the way things are and the way they ought to be."



- *How does a deep understanding of the futility of life under the sun help us in sharing the gospel?*
- *Did Jesus experience the emptiness and meaninglessness of this world? How? How did He escape it? How do we? ¹*

1. Mark Dever, *The Message of the Old Testament*, p. 544.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: *The fear of God in some ways defies our attempts at definition, because it is really another way of saying ‘knowing God.’ It is a heart-felt love for him because of who he is and what he has done, a sense of being in his majestic presence. It is a thrilling awareness that we have this greatest of all privileges, mingled with a realization that now the only thing that really matters is his opinion. To have the assurance of his smile is everything, to feel that he frowns on what we do is desolation. To fear God is to be sensitive to both his greatness and his graciousness. It is to know him and to love him wholeheartedly and unreservedly. To fear God, to trust God, to love God, and to know God—these are really one and the same thing. In fact, the fear of God about which [Solomon] speaks arises from the discovery of God’s love for us in our sin and weakness. It is the sense of awe that results from the discovery that he knows me through and through, means to destroy all that is sinful in me, and yet does so because he loves me with an intensely faithful love. That stretches my mind and emotions to their limit. (Sinclair B. Ferguson, *The Pundit’s Folly*.)*

DIG DEEPER FOR FURTHER STUDY

What does it mean to “fear God” (Ecc. 12:13)? How would I define this in my own words?

- We were _____ by God and for God. We are not our own. (Dt 32:6, Rom 14:7-8, 1 Cor 6:19)
- We are _____ to God and will eventually be judged for every deed, every word, every thought, every thing we do. In other words, we have significance. What we do matters. (Eccl 3:17, 12:14, Mt 12:36)
- We comprehend God’s great forgiveness, mercy, patience, grace and love for us and we fear disrupting our _____ with the One who loves us so dearly. (Ps 103, Isa ch 40, Jn 3:16, 10:11-18)
- We passionately, desperately and aggressively _____ His Word and tenaciously submit to His way in our lives whatever the cost. (Dt 8:4, 10:12-13, Ps 86:12, Mt 4:4, Jn 14:15, Rom 12:1-2, Col 3:23 2 Tm 3:16-17)
- We understand who God is so well that there is not one ounce of _____ but only humility. That only fear of the Lord. (Ps 10:4, 131:1-3, Prv 8:13, 11:2, Isa 66:2, Mt 5:3-10, 18:4, 23:12, Phil 2:1-11, Jam 3:13, 4:6-10.)²

Throughout the book of Ecclesiastes, Solomon leads us to several conclusions about life under the Sun. Ultimately, life under the sun is about _____ God and keeping His _____. Survey the following passages to follow Solomon’s logic.

- Godless _____ leads to cynicism (1:7-8)
- Godless greatness leads to _____ (1:16-18)
- Godless _____ leads to disappointment (2:1-2)
- Godless labor leads to _____ of life (2:17)
- Godless philosophy leads to _____ (3:1-9)
- Godless eternity leads to _____ (3:11)
- Godless life leads to _____ (4:2-3)
- Godless _____ leads to dread (5:4-7)
- Godless _____ leads to trouble (5:12)
- Godless existence leads to _____ (6:12)
- Godless _____ leads to despair (11:1-8)
- Godly fear leads to _____ (12:13-14)³

PRAYER REQUESTS

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² Keith Porter, Finale - Ecc. 12:9-14, Preached March 20, 2014. <http://hillsdalefmc.net/2014/03/20/finale-ecclesiastes-129-14/>

³ The New Geneva Study Bible: NKJV, p. 1001