

# “WHOM DO YOU FEAR?”

## Psalm 34

Pastor Keith E. Gephart

### INTRODUCTION

[This sermon is dedicated to Cindi; her life verse in 34:3: “O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together.” In all the years of our marriage I’ve never before preached this psalm—sorry it only took 42 years!!] How many of you have a *favorite verse* in this psalm? What is it? PRAYER

What are you afraid of? What person/people do you fear?

Tell me whom or what you fear, and I will tell you what kind of a person you are!

Let me tell you a story from the life of David—how fear of man nearly ruined his life and caused his death:

**I Samuel 21:10-15** [Read and discuss; first he feared Saul; then he came to fear Achish, king of Gath]

Fear of people has ruined the life of many a believer:

- Fearing peer disapproval—take the alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, promiscuous sexual activity, watch pornography or inappropriate movies, go where you ought not to be, etc. etc.
- Fearing the disapproval of the boss if you take a stand for what is right—might fire you, not promote you etc.
- Fear the rejection of family if you do what pleases God—not have you over, not come to your house, not support you financially, etc.
- Fear the disapproval of your religious companions, denomination, leaders, school, seminary, etc. if they are going in an inappropriate direction in doctrine or practice and you believe Scripture disapproves.
- Fear that you will be ruined financially if you start tithing or giving beyond the tithe.
- Fear to fully commit yourself to Christ and His service because you might have to give up too much of what you want and enjoy.
- Fear of waiting for the right person to marry and be one with and enjoy physical pleasure with—I might not ever get married or may never be truly happy unless I go for this person I now have the opportunity with.
- Fear of contracting some horrible disease, of dying too young, of having some terrible auto accident, etc.
- NAME OYHER FEARS: \_\_\_\_\_ [**Audience participation**]

### YOU MUST FEAR GOD—NOT MAN OR CIRCUMSTANCES!

Note first that the believer does have “fears”—v. 4; and troubles—v. 6, v. 17—“all their troubles”; and “afflictions”—19.

Next, let us look at the exhortations to fear God in this psalm:

- God’s angel protects “those who **fear** Him—v. 7.
- “Fear the Lord, you His saints”—v. 9.
- There is no want (lack, unmet need) to “those who fear Him” (9b).

- “I will teach you the **fear of the Lord**”—v. 11.

We will examine four significant issues in this psalm: *What the God-fearers are, What the God-fearers do, What God does for the God-fearers, and what God does with the wicked.*

- I. WHAT THE GOD-FEARERS ARE (v. 7, 9)
  - A. “The humble”—as the result of affliction and forsaking self-dependence (v. 2; v. 6 “poor man”)
  - B. “Saints”—set apart for God and therefore “holy” (v. 9)
  - C. “Children” who listen to divine wisdom teaching (11)
  - D. “Righteous” (15, 17, 19, 21)
  - E. “Broken-hearted” and “crushed/contrite in spirit” (18)
  - F. “Servants” of God (22)
  - G. “Happy, blessed” (8)
  - H. Not held guilty or condemned (22)
  
- II. WHAT THE GOD-FEARERS DO
  - A. Bless, praise, rejoice in, boast in, and magnify the Lord and exalt His name (1-3).
  - B. Seek the Lord, look to Him, cry to Him, (4, 5, 6, 10, 17)
  - C. Experience Him (8—“taste and see”)
  - D. Listen to godly teachers (11)
  - E. Desire life, length of days, to see good (12)
  - F. Guard their tongue and lips—from evil and deceit (13)
  - G. Depart from evil and does good (14)
  - H. Seek peace and diligently pursue it (14b)
  - I. Take refuge in the Lord (22)
  
- III. WHAT GOD DOES FOR GOD-FEARERS
  - A. He answers their prayers, hears them, is open to them and responsive to them —His eyes and ears, is near to them (4, 6, 15, 17, 18).
  - B. He delivers them, saves them, rescues them, redeems their soul (from all their fears—4, out of **all** his troubles—6, 7, 17—from all their troubles, 18, 19—delivers out of all his troubles, 22).
  - C. He makes them radiant with His glory (5a).
  - D. He removes shame from their faces (5b).
  - E. He protects them, keeps all his bones (7—with the Angel of the Lord, 20—not one of them is broken).
  - F. He takes care of their wants better than young lions so that they lack no good thing (9-10).
  
- IV. WHAT GOD DOES WITH THE WICKED
  - A. His Face is against them (16).
  - B. He “cuts off their memory from the earth”—they have no future! (16)
  - C. He lets their own evil slay them (21).
  - D. He holds them guilty and condemns them (21).

## CONCLUSION

I lived in fear before I became saved.

Do you live in fear today? What is it that you fear? Who is it that you fear?

**To live in the fear of God is to be delivered from the fear of man!**

### **YOU MUST FEAR GOD—NOT MAN OR CIRCUMSTANCES!**

If you are unsaved I urge you with the words of verse eight, “O taste and see that the Lord is good; how blessed is the man who takes refuge in him.”

If you are a carnal Christian, I urge you in the words of verse nine, “O fear the Lord you his Saints; for to those who fear him there is no want” – Psalm 23:1: “the Lord is my Shepherd I shall not want.”

Let us conclude this message by quoting together the words of Psalm 34:3-- “O magnify the Lord with me and let us exalt his name together.”