

Fool Proof
Understanding the “Fear Factor” Week #2
Small Group Notes
January 7 and 10, 2021

Introduction:

Do you have a story as a child of something that you were very afraid of? Are you still scared of that thing today?

Has there ever been anything that you have always wanted to do, but once you tried it or even beforehand, you became very scared?

Fear is a very real, and powerful emotion that causes people to act in a way that looks like they lack self-control. Fear can also keep us from taking action or thinking clearly. It can create doubt in our minds and cause us to respond in ways that make us look crazy.

As we read more into Proverbs we can see that Solomon affirmed that the way we begin to acquire wisdom is in having a healthy fear of God (Read Proverbs 1:7 and 4:7). For today’s discussion, we are talking about understand the “fear factor” in our faith journey. In fact, we are going to see that it is acceptable for us to have a healthy fear of the Lord and yet we will see how it does not prevent us from engaging with circumstances around us, rather, fear teaches us how to live in the wisdom of God.

Discuss: What does it mean for us to understand the fear factor?

1. Fear is foundational to wisdom.

- Read Psalms 11:3 and 119:120a; Revelations 1:17. What is the common theme in these verses?
- A healthy fear of God is wisdom’s most neglected step.

Explain: Spurgeon said, “We are never so much alive as when we are dead at his feet.” These verses all show us that wisdom should give us awe in the presence of God but this awe is rooted in a healthy fear of the power, majesty, omnipotence, and wonder of God.

Ask:

What surprises you in hearing that the way that wisdom begins is with true fear?

What are ways that our culture misunderstands the fear of God?

How can you show in your personal life a wise fear of God with others?

2. Fear is a proper response to God's power and position.

- Read Mark 4:35-41

Explain: Jesus could say they had **no faith** because they accused Jesus of a lack of care towards them. When they woke Him, they said, "*Do you not care that we are perishing?*" (Mark 4:38) When we think Jesus doesn't care about us, it shows we have **no faith**, because we don't believe the truth about Jesus. It takes great faith to trust the sleeping Jesus, to know that He cares and works for us even when it does not *seem* like it. But this is the kind of trust God wants to build in us.

Ask:

How would you have responded to this miracle? What do we learn about Jesus from this passage? How do you see that to the disciples the rescue was more fearful than the storm?

What is the relationship of our fear of God and the way that we obey God? How does that impact the way we view his power and authority?

What does it mean that true changes don't begin to really take root in your life until you have a fear for God?

3. Living with "No Fear" is utter foolishness

- Read Proverbs 1:7, Psalms 14:1

Explain: The fact that some people insist on denying the existence of God does not erase God from the universe; it instead speaks to their own standing as *fools*. Therefore, to not live in the fear of God is to choose to be

foolish in spite of all the evidence that exist. Thus, the consequences for their choice will be revealed in eternity for rejecting God (hell). Furthermore, while we do not scare people into a relationship with Christ, having a proper fear of God and his judgment is vital to understanding what we are being saved from and to.

Ask:

A statement from the sermon is “Without a healthy fear of God, we will have a limited love for God.” How have you seen this statement in your personal testimony?

When you share your faith with others, why is understanding the consequences of unbelief important for unbelievers to understand as well?