

WHY YOU ARE AFRAID?

MOTIVES: HEALTHY OR HARMFUL?

Motives, such as emotions, anger, fear, parenthood etc. are essential in man's life. Man realizes his/her existence, as a human being, through them. They are divine gifts, deposited in man's hands to direct them by the Holy Spirit for his progress and for the edification of mankind. These motives may be healthy when they are sanctified, or harmful when they are misused.

For example without **emotions** how can men have the experience of mutual love between each other; and between man and God; and man and the heavenly? How can we enjoy the conjugal and family life without emotions? How can a priest practice his fatherhood to all mankind without emotions? How can I express my love towards God without emotions? But these emotions become harmful when they are not directed into their right way, when we misuse them as if they are just a fun.

Also **anger** is very essential for having an effective decision when we discover our own faults, or sins. Without anger man become careless, slothful, and spiritless and be in lack of sincerity to correct himself. When we misuse it by attacking others, ignoring their feelings, we loose brotherly love, discernment and wisdom.

FEAR

Fear as other human motive, in its purpose, is a beneficent feeling. It is an unpleasant awareness arises in the mind in the presence or anticipation of danger, and moving to its avoidance. It also arises with the feeling of reverence, awe, and respect in the presence of superiors and of striking manifestations of power, etc.

Fear may be directed towards God, man, future and some times towards nothing. It may be either healthy or harmful.

KINDS OF FEAR

1. Superstitious fear, which is natural consequence of ignorance and sin. As man gives his back to God, the Source of peace and joy, immediately he suffers of inner fears, even if all circumstances seem to be in his side. Although he appears sometimes full of peace and joy, fear reigns over his heart and his mind. The sources of his fears are within him. Sometimes he complains of men, sickness, his business, and even of God. The unbeliever or the wicked person who insists not to return to God has every reason to be panic-stricken at thoughts of God, for he stands condemned before Him (Matt 10:28; John 3:18). And yet, this kind of fear of God does not often lead to repentance. It normally leads to a feeble attempt to hide from God (Gen 3:8; Rev 6:15-17) or worse, to a denial of God's existence and His claim on a person's life (Ps 14:1; Rom 1:18-28).

- ❖ Our first parents, **Adam and Eve**, enjoyed the meeting with the Logos of God in the Garden. Surely they felt that they were a king and queen. The entire world is created specially for them as their royal palace. They were the happiest creatures on earth. When they gave their back to their God, fear had dominion on their hearts and minds. In Genesis 3:8-10 we read...
- ❖ **On the level of nations**, we read in Deuteronomy 28:25, 28 we read, "...” The real enemy is not another nations nor the wrath of God. It's their wicked will that refused the Source of peace.

❖ **On the Lord's Day** those who did not accept to be hidden in the side of the Crucified Lord will ask the rocks and mountains to hide them, regardless their ranks, positions, sex and age. It is said, "...” (Revelation 6:15-17)

In brief the fruits of the superstitious fear are:

- a. Suffering of a kind of depression.
- b. Disability of facing God, entering in dialogue with Him, and beholding Him through prayers, reading the bible and worshipping Him
- c. Denial of God's existence openly or through behavior.
- d. Murmuring against God and all circumstances of life.

The Logos of God became Man, and through His crucifixion we are reconciled with the Father. In Him the superstitious fear lose its dominion over our inner man, and we have the right to attain the heavenly peace.

2. Servile fear, which leads to abstinence from many sins through apprehension of punishment.

3. Filial fear, which has its spring in love and prompts to care not to offend God and to endeavor in all things to please Him.

Fear of the Lord

“For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.” (2 Tim 1:7).

3. Filial, which has its spring in love and prompts to care not to offend God and to endeavor in all things to please Him. It is another term for practical piety and comprehends the virtues of the godly character (Ps 111:10; Prov 14:2), whereas its absence is characteristic of a wicked and depraved person (Rom 3:18). This fear would subsist in a pious soul were there no punishment of sin. It dreads God's displeasure, desires His favor, reveres His holiness, submits cheerfully to His will, is grateful for His benefits, sincerely worships Him, and conscientiously obeys His commandments.

13 As a father pities his children, So the LORD pities those who fear Him.
Psalms 103:13

15 For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." Romans 8:15

7 For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. Hebrews 2:15

The Scriptures declare, *"the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge"* (Prov 1:7) as well as *"the beginning of wisdom"* (Prov 16:16).

The Holy Spirit produces it in the soul, and great blessing is pronounced upon those who possess this trait:

His angels protect them (Ps 34:7); 7 The angel of the LORD encamps all around those who fear Him, And delivers them. Psalms 34:7

They "abide in the shadow of the Almighty" (91:1).

It is an essential element in the worship and service of Yahweh (2 Kings 17 often; Ps 2:11, etc.); it is a Divine qualification of the Messiah (Isa 11:2-3). This "fear of Yahweh" is manifested in keeping God's commandments, walking in His ways, doing His will, avoiding sin, etc. (Ex 20:20; Deut 6:13,24; 2 Sam 23:3; Ps 34:4,9

parallel Prov 8:13; 16:6). It is the true wisdom (Job 28:28; Ps 25:14; Prov 1:7; 15:33); it gives life (Prov 10:27, etc.), blessedness (Ps 128:1,4), sufficiency (34:9), Divine friendship (25:14), protection (34:7), deliverance (85:9), and forgiveness (130:4).

9 Surely His salvation is near to those who fear Him, That glory may dwell in our land. Psalms 85:9

FEAR AND LOVE

The "fear of the Lord" is highly exalted, e.g. Eccles 1:11-30; the idea of it became gradually more and more elevated; in 2:15,16 it is joined with the love of God.

In the New Testament dread, or fear of God in the lower sense, is removed; He is revealed as the loving and forgiving Father, who gives to men the spirit of sonship (Rom 8:15; 2 Tim 1:7; 1 John 4:18); we are invited even to come "with boldness unto the throne of grace," with confidence, assurance (parrhesia), which, however, may have its literal meaning of free "utterance" (Heb 4:16; 10:19); but there remains a filial fear and sense of awe and of the greatness of the issues involved (Rom 11:20; Eph 5:21) "of Christ"; 1 Tim 5:20; Heb 4:1); all other fears should be dismissed (Matt 8:26; 10:26-28,31; Luke 12:32).

18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. 1 John 4:18

Fear and love must coexist in us in order that either passion may be healthy and that we may please and rightly serve God.

"The fear of the Lord" is used for the worship of God, e.g., "I will teach you the fear of the Lord" (34:11) and for the law of God (19:8-9). The "fear of Isaac" (Gen 31:42,53) is God, whom Isaac worshiped with reverent awe.

11 Serve the LORD with fear, And rejoice with trembling. Psalms 2:11

7 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, But fools despise wisdom and instruction. (Proverbs 1:7)

10 "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. Proverbs 9:10

27 The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, To turn one away from the snares of death. Proverbs 14:27

2 The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, The Spirit of counsel and might, The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD. Isaiah 11:2

3 His delight is in the fear of the LORD, And He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes, Nor decide by the hearing of His ears; Isaiah 11:3

6 Wisdom and knowledge will be the stability of your times, And the strength of salvation; The fear of the LORD is His treasure. Isaiah 33:6

THE "FEAR OF MAN"

A harmful fear is a sense of terror or dread. Believers are instructed not to fear human beings (Matt 10:28; Phil 1:28), because they cannot ultimately harm us. Wicked men, however, constantly fear other people, especially the righteous (Prov 28:1; Matt 14:5; Rom 13:3-4). Such fear causes them to act deceitfully in an attempt to hide their sins (2 Sam 11; Matt 28:4-15).

The "fear of man" is that dread of the opinions of our neighbors that makes us cowards in the performance of those duties that we fancy they do not practice (Prov 29:25).

2 But to you who fear My name The Sun of Righteousness shall arise With healing in His wings; And you shall go out And grow fat like stall-fed calves. Malachi 4:2
28 And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. Matthew 10:28
15 "Fear not, daughter of Zion; Behold, your King is coming, Sitting on a donkey's colt." John 12:15

DON'T BE AFRAID

"And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be on every beast of the earth, on every bird of the air, on all that move on the earth, and on all the fish of the sea. They are given into your hand." (Genesis 9:2)

"Then the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said to her, "What ails you, Hagar? Fear not, for God has heard the voice of the lad where he is." (Genesis 21:17)

"And the Lord appeared to him the same night and said, "I am the God of your father Abraham; do not fear, for I am with you. I will bless you and multiply your descendants for My servant Abraham's sake." (Genesis 26:24)

19 And he said, "O man greatly beloved, fear not! Peace be to you; be strong, yes, be strong!" So when he spoke to me I was strengthened, and said, "Let my lord speak, for you have strengthened me." Daniel 10:19

5 According to the word that I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt, so My Spirit remains among you; do not fear!' Haggai 2:5

THE FEAR OF ISAAC

42 Unless the God of my father, the God of Abraham and the Fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely now you would have sent me away empty-handed. God has seen my affliction and the labor of my hands, and rebuked you last night." Genesis 31:42

53 And Jacob swore by the Fear of his father Isaac. Genesis 31:53

27 "I will send My fear before you, I will cause confusion among all the people to whom you come, and will make all your enemies turn their backs to you. Exodus 23:27

17 Therefore you shall not oppress one another, but you shall fear your God; for I am the LORD your God. Leviticus 25:17

25 This day I will begin to put the dread and fear of you upon the nations under the whole heaven, who shall hear the report of you, and shall tremble and be in anguish because of you.' Deuteronomy 2:25

22 You must not fear them, for the LORD your God Himself fights for you.' Deuteronomy 3:22

25 No man shall be able to stand against you; the LORD your God will put the dread of you and the fear of you upon all the land where you tread, just as He has said to you. Deuteronomy 11:25

6 Be strong and of good courage, do not fear nor be afraid of them; for the LORD your God, He is the One who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you." Deuteronomy 31:6

8 And the LORD said to Joshua, "Do not fear them, for I have delivered them into your hand; not a man of them shall stand before you." Joshua 10:8

16 So he answered, "Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them." 2 Kings 6:16

20 And David said to his son Solomon, "Be strong and of good courage, and do it; do not fear nor be dismayed, for the LORD God - my God - will be with you. He will not

leave you nor forsake you, until you have finished all the work for the service of the house of the LORD. 1 Chronicles 28:20

10 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do His commandments. His praise endures forever. Psalms 111:10

10 Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.' Isaiah 41:10

1. The root of religion is the fear of God reigning in the heart, a reverence of his majesty, deference to his authority, and a dread of his wrath.

Wherever the fear of God is uppermost in the heart, there will be a respect to all his commandments and care to keep them.

+ In his sight the vile person is condemned, but he honors them that fear the Lord: (Ps. xv. 4) the fear of the Lord excels every thing; fear God, and keep His commandments; for this is the whole of man: (Eccl 12: 13); you be not envious of evil men; (Ps. 49: 16) all flesh is grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass;" (Isa. 40: 7).

St. John Chrysostom

1. In 1 Cor. Hom. 29:9

+ Moreover, it is right that you should fear God while you are yet young, before you give yourself over to evil things, and before the great and terrible day of God come, when the sun shall no longer shine, neither the moon, nor the rest of the stars, but when in that storm and commotion of all things, the powers above shall be moved, that is, the angels who guard the world; so that the mighty men shall fail, and the women shall cease their labors, and shall flee into the dark places of their dwellings, and shall have all the doors shut.

St. Gregory Thaumaturgus

1. A Metaphrase of the Book of Ecclesiastes.

+ "Fear God," he says, "and keep His commandments: for this is every man." For whosoever has real existence, is this, is a keeper of God's commandments; and he who is not this, is nothing. For so long as he remains in the likeness of vanity, he is not renewed in the image of the truth. "For God shall bring into judgment every work," "whether it be good or whether it be evil, with every despised person,"-that is, with every man who here seems despicable, and is therefore not considered; for God sees even him, and does not despise him nor pass him over in His judgment.

St. Augustine

1. City of God 20:3.

+ "Fear," said he, "the Lord, and keep His commandments. For if you keep the commandments of God, you will be powerful in every action, and every one of your actions will be incomparable. For, fearing the Lord, you will do all things well. This is the fear, which you ought to have, that you may be saved. But fear not the devil; for, fearing the Lord, you will have dominion over the devil, for there is no power in him.

Hermas

1. The Shepherd, 2, Comm. 7.

+ Vanity not simply but superlatively. Let us believe him, and lay hold on that in which there is no vanity, in which there is truth; and what is based upon a solid rock, where there is no old age, nor decline, but all things bloom and flourish, without decay, or waxing old, or approaching dissolution. Let us, I beseech you; love God with genuine affection, not from fear of hell, but from desire of the kingdom. For what is comparable to seeing Christ? Surely nothing! What to the enjoyment of those good things? Surely nothing! Well may there be nothing; for "eye has not seen, nor

ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for them that love Him." (1 Cor. 2:9)9.

St. John Chrysostom

+ For as the multitude of dreams is vain, so also the multitude of words. But the fear of God is man's salvation, though it is rarely found.

St. Gregory Thaumaturgus

1. A Metaphrase of the Book of Ecclesiastes.

St. John Chrysostom says: [Where the fear of God is, there is no need for longevity or fate, on the contrary, if there is no fear of God, time is meaningless... If we threw a rusty container in the furnace of the fear of God, it would be purified in no time at all²⁵.]

3. Fearing God.

As often in the Old Testament, our proper response to God is described as fearing him, that is, acknowledging him to be God, and living our lives in that attitude. It means that we will worship him and seek to please him in all we do. It includes the idea that he sees all that we do and that one day we will answer to him. See 5: 1- 7; 7: 18, 26; 8: 2, 12, 13; 12: 1, 13.