When People are Big and God is Small

Edward T. Welch

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I. Introduction-Love Tanks with a Leak.

A. Okay in Christ.

1. Who cares what they think?
    a. Already measured up because of what Christ did.

2. Is it Christ I am standing on or standing on my own perceived successes and favorable opinions.

B. A Grand Awakening.

1. Love of God.
2. Bondage to others what you want or need something from.

C. Facing the 'Fear of Man'.

1. Peer pressure.
2. People pleasing.
3. Codependency.

D. A Universal Problem.

1. Problem being controlled by or dependent on someone else believed to be solved by loving yourself more.

E. The Search for a Biblical Response.

1. Better treatment for codependency is to know that God loves you more.
2. Problems.
    a. Misses call to consider others better than ourselves.
        1.) [Philippians 2:3]- Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

    b. Ignores personal repentance.
    c. Allows our needs to be the center of our world, giving God the task of inflating our self-esteem.

Part One: How and Why We Fear Others.

II. "People Will See Me."

A. Proof text.

1. [Proverbs 29:25]- He that is of a proud heart stirreth up strife: but he that putteth his trust in the Lord shall be made fat.

B. The Reason for Fear of Men.

1. They can expose and humiliate us.
2. They can reject, ridicule, or despise us.
3. The can attack, oppress, or threaten us.
4. These reasons' commonality.
    a. They see people as bigger (more powerful and significant) than God.
    b. They give people the power and right to tell us what to feel, think, and do.

C. <u>Step 1: Recognize Fear of Man is a major theme in the Bible and life.</u>

D. Fear coming from Shame.

1. Shame from sin described as nakedness before God. (Sin in ourselves)

a. [Genesis 3:7,10]- And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.
b. [Job 1:20-21]- Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, and said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.
c. [Genesis 9:22-23]- And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without. And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid it upon both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces were backward, and they saw not their father's nakedness.
d. [Genesis 42:9]- And Joseph remembered the dreams which he dreamed of them, and said unto them, Ye are spies; to see the nakedness of the land ye are come.
e. [Exodus 33:25]- And when Moses saw that the people were naked, (for Aaron had made them naked unto their shame among their enemies,)
f. [Amos 2:14-16]- Therefore the flight shall perish from the swift, and the strong shall not strengthen his force, neither shall the mighty deliver himself: neither shall he stand that handleth the bow; and he that is swift of foot shall not deliver himself: neither shall he that rideth the horse deliver himself. And he that is courageous among the mighty shall flee away naked in that day, saith the Lord.

2. Shame from being victimized or sinned against. (Sin from others)
a. [Genesis 34:5]- And Jacob heard that he had defiled Dinah his daughter: now his sons were with his cattle in the field: and Jacob held his peace until they were come.
b. [Leviticus 20:11,17,19-21]- And the man that lieth with his father's wife hath uncovered his father's nakedness: both of them shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them. And if a man shall take his sister, his father's daughter, or his mother's daughter, and see her nakedness, and she see his nakedness; it is a wicked thing; and they shall be cut off in the sight of their people: he hath uncovered his sister's nakedness; he shall bear his iniquity. And thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy mother's sister, nor of thy father's sister; for he uncovereth his near kin: they shall bear their iniquity. And if a man shall lie with his uncle's wife, he hath uncovered his uncle's nakedness: they shall bear their sin; they shall die childless. And if a man shall take his brother's wife, it is an unclean thing: he hath uncovered his brother's nakedness; they shall be childless.
c. [Proverbs 19:26]- He that wasteth his father, and chaseth away his mother, is a son that causeth shame, and bringeth reproach.
d. [Psalm 79:1]- O God, the heathen are come into thine inheritance; thy holy temple have they defiled; they have laid Jerusalem on heaps.
e. [Leviticus 20:24]- But I have said unto you, Ye shall inherit their land, and I will give it unto you to possess it, a land that floweth with milk and honey: I am the Lord your God, which have separated you from other people.

3. Shame in today's world. (Self-esteem)

E. Hiding and Spying.
1. Developing Walls with Cracks and Windows.
a. Hiding our own weaknesses.
b. Spying out other's weaknesses.

2. Development of safe fantasy relationships.
3. Low self esteem-the dark quieter side of pride.

F. The Midnight Hour.

1. The use of masks.
    a. The Midnight Hour, as described by Soren Kierkegaard, is when everyone has thrown off his or her masks.

2. The fear of men.
    a. A way to avoid God's eyes is to live as if fear of men is our deepest issue.
    b. [Luke 23:28-30]- But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us.

G. God's Answer.
1. God's gaze not a curse but a blessing.
    a. [Psalm 139:1]-O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me.

2. Not the fear of being crushed but a trembling before Most High God.
    a. [Psalm 119:120]- My flesh trembleth for fear of thee; and I am afraid of thy judgments.
    b. [Isaiah 6:5]- Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.

3. The Occasions of this Fear.
    a. Unconfessed Sin.
    b. Lack of confidence in God's promises.
    c. Feeling unclean after being sinned against.

4. The Cure for this Fear.
    a. Remember that in Jesus' death, resurrection, and ascension, through faith He has covered you with righteous robes and removed our shame.
    b. Confess our sins and reaffirm that by faith we are made holy.
        1.) [Hebrews 10:10]- By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

H. For Further Thought.
1. Consider ways that your private life is different from your public life.
2. Consider some of the strategies you use to cover yourself, even with multiple layers.
3. Does your conscience condemn you? If so, confess your sin before God.

III. "People Will Reject Me."
A. Examples of rejection-fear.
1. Moses to the judges and leaders of Israel.
    a. [Deuteronomy 1:17]- Ye shall not respect persons in judgment; but ye shall hear the small as well as the great; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man; for the judgment is God's: and the cause that is too hard for you, bring it unto me, and I will hear it.
    b. Pressure to make the judgment light.

2. Saul
    a. Sparing King Agag and the best of everything that was good.
        1.) [1 Samuel 15:9,24]- But Saul and the people spared Agag, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them: but every thing that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly. And Saul said unto Samuel, I have sinned: for I have transgressed the

commandment of the Lord, and thy words: because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice.

b. Saul's justification.
   1.) Pressure for generals to bring home spoils of war.
   2.) Fear if others was common and Samuel might accept his excuse.

3. New Testament Pharisees.
   a. Living under a delusion.
      1.) [John 8:45-50]- And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not. Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me? He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God. Before Abraham Was, I Am Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil? Jesus answered, I have not a devil; but I honor my Father, and ye do dishonor me. And I seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth.

   b. Possible reaction from the synagogue.
      1.) [John 12:42-43]- Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

4. We would prefer to die for Jesus than to live for Him.
   a. Lack of evangelism.

B. "Peer Pressure" and the Praise of God.
   1. The awesome power of fear of man.
      a. [John 5:44]- How can ye believe, which receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only?

   2. 'We are more concerned about looking stupid (a fear of people) than we are about acting sinfully (fear of the Lord).'
   3. Jesus' stark contrast.
      a. [Matthew 22:16]- And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men.

   4. Paul's stark contrast.
      a. [1 Corinthians 4:16]- Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me.
      b. [1 Thessalonians 1:6]- And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost:
      c. [2 Thessalonians 2:4]- who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.
      d. [Galatians 1:10]- For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men ? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.
      e. [Ephesians 6:19-20]- and for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds; that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

C. Peter's Battle with the Fear of Man.
   1. Denying the Lord.
      a. [Matthew 26:69-75]- Now Peter sat without in the palace: and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee. But he denied before them all, saying, I

know not what thou sayest. And when he was gone out into the porch, another maid saw him, and said unto them that were there, This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth. And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man. And after a while came unto him they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art one of them; for thy speech betrayeth thee. Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew. And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly.

b. His denial to someone with no prominence.
c. His life was not in danger.
d. A denial with an oath.
e. A denial while calling down curses.
f. Jesus' gaze was as if Peter was the first Adam and couldn't have felt more naked.

2. Jesus' grace to Peter after denial.
   a. [Mark 16:7]- But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you.
   b. [John 21:15-19]- So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jona, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jona, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jona, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, feed my sheep. Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me.

3. Peter's fear of circumcision group.
   a. [Galatians 2:11-14]-But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?
   b. Leading others into error.
   c. Clear hypocrisy.
   d. Luke's recording of Paul's ministry in Acts over Peter's.

4. Peter's ministry to those to fear not.
   a. [1 Peter 3:13-14]- And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good? But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled;
   b. [Luke 22:32]- but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not : and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. ***
   c. [John 21:17]- He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jona, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep. ***

D. People-Our Idol of Choice.

1. ***[Romans 1:25]- who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.***
2. Idolatry, an age-old strategy of the human heart.
3. Idolatry, an avoidance of God.
4. Result of people-idolatry.
    a. Idol soon owns us.

E. For Further Thought.
1. In your own words, what is the fear of man?
2. If the fear of others is as prevalent in our lives as the Bible suggests, make a list of the ways it is expressed in your life. Start from youth to last week.
3. Other questions to ask yourself.
    a. What thoughts or actions do you prefer to keep in the dark? Lusts, animosities, and certain habits can point to fear of men.
    b. Have you noticed times when you cover up lies, justifications, blaming, avoiding, or changing the subject?
    c. Do you show favoritism? Rich over poor or intelligent over less intelligent?

4. What are some word pictures that describe you?
5. Looking at Codependent No More and its description of fear of man, try to interpret these descriptions.
    a. Think and feel responsible for others.
    b. Feel compelled to help people solve their problems.
    c. Get tired of feeling like always giving to others but no ones gives back to them.
    d. Blame, blame, blame.
    e. Feel unappreciated.
    f. Fear rejection.
    g. Feel ashamed of who you are.
    h. Worry whether other people like them or not.
    i. Focus all their energy on other people and problems.
    j. Threaten, bribe, and beg.
    k. Try to say what they think will please, provoke, or get them what they need,
    l. Manipulate.
    m. Let other people keep hurting them and never say anything.
    n. Feel angry.
    o. Feel like martyrs.
    p. Be extremely responsible or irresponsible.

IV. "People Will Physically Hurt Me."

A. <u>Step Two: Identify when your fear of man has been intensified by people in your past.</u>

B. The Power of Words
1. ***[Proverbs 12:18]- There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword: but the tongue of the wise is health.***
2. The sin of others leave some prone to heightened version of fear of man.

C. The Cowardly Hero
1. Examples of those responses to threats and attacks.
    a. Abraham
        1.) [Genesis 12:11-13]- And it came to pass, when he was come near to enter into Egypt, that he said unto Sarai his wife, Behold now, I know that thou art a fair woman to look upon: therefore it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see thee, that they shall say, This is his wife: and they will kill me, but they will save thee alive. Say, I pray thee, thou art my sister: that it may be well with me for thy sake; and my soul shall live because of thee.

2.) ***[Genesis 20:1-2]- And Abraham journeyed from thence toward the south country, and dwelt between Kadesh and Shur, and sojourned in Gerar. And Abraham said of Sarah his wife, She is my sister: and Abimelech king of Gerar sent, and took Sarah.***

3.) ***[Genesis 22:12]- And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me.***

b. David

1.) ***[Psalm 56:3-4]- What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee. In God I will praise his word, in God I have put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.***

D. Fear Wins and a Generation Loses

1. Moses' plea not to be afraid unheeded.

a. [Numbers 13:27-28, 31,33]- And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it. Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there. But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we. And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.

b. [Numbers 14:9,11-12]- Only rebel not ye against the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their defense is departed from them, and the Lord is with us: fear them not. And the Lord said unto Moses, How long will this people provoke me? and how long will it be ere they believe me, for all the signs which I have showed among them? I will smite them with the pestilence, and disinherit them, and will make of thee a greater nation and mightier than they.

2. Moses' exhortation for absolute allegiance to God and warning of covenant disobedience.

a. [Deuteronomy 1:21,29]- Behold, the Lord thy God hath set the land before thee: go up and possess it, as the Lord God of thy fathers hath said unto thee; fear not, neither be discouraged. Then I said unto you, Dread not, neither be afraid of them.

b. [Deuteronomy 3:2]- And the Lord said unto me, Fear him not: for I will deliver him, and all his people, and his land, into thy hand; and thou shalt do unto him as thou didst unto Sihon king of the Amorites, which dwelt at Heshbon

c. [Deuteronomy 3:22]- Ye shall not fear them: for the Lord your God he shall fight for you.

d. [Deuteronomy 4:10]- specially the day that thou stoodest before the Lord thy God in Horeb, when the Lord said unto me, Gather me the people together, and I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to fear me all the days that they shall live upon the earth, and that they may teach their children.

e. [Deuteronomy 5:29]- Oh that there were such a heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!

f. [Deuteronomy 6:2,13]- that thou mightest fear the Lord thy God, to keep all his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son's son, all the days of thy life; and that thy days may be prolonged. Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve him, and shalt swear by his name.

g. [Deuteronomy 7:17-18]- If thou shalt say in thine heart, These nations are more than I; how can I dispossess them? Thou shalt not be afraid of them: but shalt well remember what the Lord thy God did unto Pharaoh, and unto all Egypt;

h. [Deuteronomy 31:6,8]- Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the Lord thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. And the Lord, he it is that doth go before thee; he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed.

E. Two Faith-Filled Leaders

1. Joshua-*'Be strong and courageous'*
   - ***a. [Joshua 1:9]- Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.***
   - ***b. [Joshua 10:25]- And Joshua said unto them, Fear not, nor be dismayed, be strong and of good courage: for thus shall the Lord do to all your enemies against whom ye fight.***
   - ***c. [Joshua 24:31]- And Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that overlived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the Lord, that he had done for Israel.***

2. David- *'Whom will I fear, God or people?'*
   a. The Lord's reign.
      - ***1.) [Psalm 146:10]- The Lord shall reign for ever, even thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye the Lord.***

   b. Mortal men.
      - ***1.) [Psalm 146:4]- His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.***

   c. God as a shield.
      - ***1.) [Psalm 3:3]- But thou, O Lord, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head.***
      - ***2.) [Psalm 5:12]- For thou, Lord, wilt bless the righteous; with favor wilt thou compass him as with a shield.***
      - ***3.) [Psalm 7:10]- My defense is of God, which saveth the upright in heart.***

   d. God as a refuge.
      - ***1.) [Psalm 5:11]- But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee.***
      - ***2.) [Psalm 9:9]- The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble.***

   e. God as strength.
      - ***1.) [Psalm 118:14]- The Lord is my strength and song, and is become my salvation.***

   f. God as a rock, fortress, and deliverer.
      - ***1.) [Psalm 18:2]- The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.***

   g. Being afraid not exactly the fear of man.
      1.) The fear of man is the sinful exaggeration of a normal experience.
      2.) Fear must be within God's parameters, and consistently turning to Him.
      - ***3.) [Psalm 27:1-4]- The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell. Though a host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident. One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple.***

F. Janet-A Case Study
   1. Is God powerful or loving or both.
   2. The dangers of excessive self-focus.
      a. Take them away from people
      b. Inability to grow in the fear of the Lord.

G. The Trail of the Fear of Man
   1. Shame-fear, the result of our sins, sins of others or both.
   2. Reasons sense of unforgiveness persists.
      a. Holding onto fantasy relationship.
      b. Confusion between shame from sin and shame from victimization.
      c. Unbiblical response to shame
         1.) Must repent of own sin
         2.) Must avoid responsibility for others' sin.
         3.) Shame from victimization is more stubborn. Confession of others' sins can't release it.

H. A Biblical Structure to Overcome Shame and Threat.
   1. Shame is something we do to ourselves and done to us.
      a. [Genesis 34:5]- And Jacob heard that he had defiled Dinah his daughter: now his sons were with his cattle in the field: and Jacob held his peace until they were come.
      b. [Leviticus 11:24]- And for these ye shall be unclean: whosoever toucheth the carcass of them shall be unclean until the even.
      c. [Psalm 79:1]- O God, the heathen are come into thine inheritance; thy holy temple have they defiled; they have laid Jerusalem on heaps.

   2. God's response to victims.
      a. [Hebrew 12:2]- looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.
      b. [Psalm 22:24]- For he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; neither hath he hid his face from him; but when he cried unto him, he heard.
      c. [Isaiah 54:4-5]- Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more. For thy Maker is thine husband; The Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called.

   3. Our response to God.
      a. Hope in the attributes of God.
      b. Believe in the words of Christ.
      c. Meditate on the promises of God.
      d. Meditate on the cross of Christ.

I. The Choice Before Us
   1. Will you trust in man or in the Lord?
      a. [Jeremiah 17:5-8]- Thus saith the Lord; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord. For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.

J. For Further Thought
1. Think upon the exhortations of Jesus.
a. [Matthew 10:28-33]- And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows. Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

V. "The World Wants Me to Fear People."

A. <u>Step Three: Identify where your fear of man has been intensified by the assumptions of the world.</u>
1. A quiet, sub-biblical pattern begging us to conform to it.
2. Jewish culture constantly pulling the gospel message into works-righteousness and leagalism.
a. [Colossians 2:8]- Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

3. Examples of the world encouraging the fear of man.
a. A culture of victimization and blame shifting.
b. The emphasis on self-esteem.
c. Encouragement to think individually not corporately.
1.) [Ephesians 4:27]- neither give place to the devil.
a.) Passage actually to Satan's influence on the body of Christ, not the individual.

B. Some Modern Assumptions
1. Assumptions about God.
a. The general belief in God, an afterlife, and even angels.
1.) [Colossians 2:18-19]-Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God. ***
2.) [Romans 8:38-39]- For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. ***
3.) [1 Corinthians 15:3-5]- For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures: and that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve:

b. God in nature.
1.) God was all peace and goodness, and he moved people to a feeling of worship.

c. God less than holy and sovereign. Self is sovereign.
1.) *'Divine as the life of Jesus is, what an outrage to represent it as tantamount to the Universe! To seize one accidental good man that happened to exist somewhere at some time and say to the newborn soul, "Behold they pattern…go into the harness of the past individual, assume his manners, speak his speech, "-this is the madness of Christendom…I turn my back on these usurpers. The soul always believes in itself.'* - Ralph Waldo Emerson

d. An increase in depression as self increased.

e. Anything that erodes the fear of God will intensify the fear of man.

2. Assumptions about Ourselves.
   a. We are morally good.
      1.) The child, according to Schlegel, was *"the clean mirror in which we gaze upon the secrets of divine love."*
      2.) *'We begin with the I KNOW MYSELF, in order to end with the absolute I AM. We proceed from the SELF, in order to lose and find all self in GOD.'* – Samuel Coleridge
      3.) *'to honor the self is to practice selfishness in the highest, noblest, and least understood sense of that word.'* - Nathaniel Branden
      4.) [Matthew 19:19]- Honor thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.
         a.) The culture would interpret the verse, as *'we must love ourselves in order to love other people.'*

      5.) The Bible assumes that we have more than enough self-concern.
         a.) [Matthew 6:25-30]- Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? ***
         b.) [Philippians 4:6-7]- Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. ***

   b. Emotions are the way to truth.
      1.) Personal relationships.
      2.) Corporate worship.
      3.) Pain and suffering.
      4.) When feelings become more important than faith, people will become more important and God will become less important.

   c. All people are spiritual.
      1.) Spirituality reduced to a felling of the infinite.
      2.) Modern spirituality has no hell, no doctrine, and no substance.
      3.) Spirituality divorced from a personal God. Instead, "spiritual" simply meant ineffable, a feeling of wholeness and wonder.
      4.) God and spirituality reduced to our standards or our feelings.

C. Psychology: The Caretaker of Cultural Assumptions
   1. The inevitable rise of psychological needs.
      a. The exalting of individual and making emotions the path of truth.
         1.) Whatever you feel most strongly will be considered both good and necessary for growth.
         2.) Whatever you feel most strongly is seen as your God-given needs.

      b. Our culture encourages the fear of man.

1.) "Needs" or "rights" lead irresistibly into the fear of man.
2.) Therapeutic acceptance, unconditional love, and constant affirmation.
a.) Such therapy rehabilitates fear of man rather than eliminate it.

D. The Influence of Christian Psychology
1. A need to be loved doesn't mean this desire is a "God-given need," a "legitimate need," or a "primal need."
2. "Jesus meets all our needs"
a. Christ our friend.
b. God our loving Father.
c. Meaningfulness and confidence in knowing God's love.
d. Danger of using the term "needs" ambiguously and extending the meaning to include selfish desires, then there will me some situations where we should say that Jesus does not intend to meet our needs, but that he intends to change our needs.

E. The Emerging Backlash
1. Absorption with neediness and emptiness is seen as unhealthy, both for individuals and society.
2. Challenge to the idea that the modern person should be defined as an empty cup.

F. For Further Thought
1. Where do you find the assumptions of the world (in literature, art, movies, conversations)? Consider browsing through the self-help or psychology section of your local bookstore.
2. Where do you see these assumptions in you? Remember, these assumptions might not agree with your official theology, but they might be revealed in the way you live.
3. Ask missionaries from your church about what they see in the American church, not just the foreign church

Part Two: Overcoming the Fear of Others.

VI. Know the Fear of the Lord.
A. Proof text
1. [Isaiah 33:3]- At the noise of the tumult the people fled; at the lifting up of thyself the nations were scattered.

B. <u>Step Four: Understand and grow in the fear of the Lord. The person who fears God will fear nothing else.</u>

C. What is the Fear of the Lord?
1. Not terror of God-leads to avoidance.
2. The fear spectrum or continuum.
a. Terror→dread→trembling→astonishment→awe→reverence→devotion→trust→worship
b. We hide form God----------We seek, draw near, and submit to God
c. We know of God's holy justice----------We know of God's holy justice *and* holy love

3. Knowing these two fears clarifies.
a. Love
1.) [1 John 4:18]- There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

b. Holy
1.) Separate, set apart, distinct, uncontaminated.
2.) Not just one of many attributes of God, but His essential nature and seen in His other qualities.

a.) 'His holiness adds glory, luster, and harmony to all His other perfections.'

b.) [Isaiah 40:25]- To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One.

c.) [Psalm 77:13]- Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary: who is so great a God as our God?

d.) [Hosea 11:9]- I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim: for I am God, and not man; the Holy One in the midst of thee: and I will not enter into the city.

3.) Holiness-Otherness.

a.) [Isaiah 57:15]- For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

4.) God's glorious transcendent yet immanent or pervasive.

a.) [Leviticus 26:12]- And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people.

b.) [Hebrews 13:5]- Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

c.) [John 15:14]- Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

d.) [Colossians 1:27]- to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

D. What opposes the Fear of the Lord?

1. Three prominent adversaries.

a. Resistance in our heart with several strategies to avoid the fear of God.

1.) Downgrade obedience into appearance.

2.) Concentrate on actions and overlook attitudes.

3.) If we think we are good, then God is usually irrelevant.

b. The World's rationalization.

1.) Sin rides on the back of many good things.

2.) Sin is rationalized by the world.

c. The Devil's subtlety.

1.) Basks in the darkness created whenever we fear anything other than God.

2.) By deception, he minimizes our sin, maximizes God's distance and minimizes the trustworthiness of God's Word.

3.) He suggests God is holding out on us, keeping us from good things.

E. Learning the Fear of the Lord

1. Proof texts.

a. [Deuteronomy 4:10]- specially the day that thou stoodest before the Lord thy God in Horeb, when the Lord said unto me, Gather me the people together, and I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to fear me all the days that they shall live upon the earth, and that they may teach their children.

b. [Psalm 34:9,11]- O fear the Lord, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him. Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the Lord.

c. [Deuteronomy 17:18-19]- And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levites: and it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of

his life; that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them:

d. [Deuteronomy 31:13]- and that their children, which have not known any thing, may hear, and learn to fear the Lord your God, as long as ye live in the land whither ye go over Jordan to possess it.

2. God's resources and power to teach of the Fear of the Lord.
   a. God's Wisdom in His Word.
      1.) [James 1:25]- But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

   b. God's Love and Justice in His Word.
      1.) [Romans 11:22]- Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.
      2.) [Psalm 118:4]- Let them now that fear the Lord say, that his mercy endureth for ever.
      3.) [Psalm 76:7]- Thou, even thou, art to be feared: and who may stand in thy sight when once thou art angry?
      4.) [Exodus 34:6-7]- And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.

3. Learning the Fear of the Lord the Creator.
   a. The Expression of Power and Love.
      1.) [Psalm 33:8-9]- Let all the earth fear the Lord: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.

   b. Creation as God's servant.
      1.) [Psalm 93:3-4]- The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves. The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea.
      2.) [Exodus 19:9]- And the Lord said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever. And Moses told the words of the people unto the Lord.
      3.) [Psalm 104:3-4,14]- who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters: who maketh the clouds his chariot: who walketh upon the wings of the wind: who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire: He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth;
      4.) [Psalm 135:7]- He causeth the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings for the rain; he bringeth the wind out of his treasuries.
      5.) [Psalm 19:1,5]- The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork. which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race.
      6.) [Psalm 89:5]- And the heavens shall praise thy wonders, O Lord: thy faithfulness also in the congregation of the saints.
      7.) [Psalm 95:4]- In his hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is his also.

8.) [Psalm 8:3-4]- When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

4. Jacob and Moses Learn the Fear of the Lord.
   a. Jacob reveals God by the name "Fear."
      1.) [Genesis 31:53]- The God of Abraham, and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge betwixt us. And Jacob sware by the fear of his father Isaac.
      2.) [Genesis 28:21-22]- so that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God: and this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.
      3.) [Philippians 2:10]- that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;
      4.) [Ephesians 1:17]- that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:

   b. Moses learns on the run.
      1.) [Exodus 3:2-6]- And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet; for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.

   c. Jacob's and Moses' terror and worship.
      1.) From dread of judgment to worship motivated by love.
      2.) Fear of incurring God's displeasure.
      3.) Fear (reverence) in seeing God's glory.
      4.) Fear while sensitive to the demands of holiness.
      5.) [Psalm 119:120]- My flesh trembleth for fear of thee; and I am afraid of thy judgments.

   d. The Lessons of Exodus. Fear of the Lord as Redeemer. The Expression of Power and Judgment.
      1.) Deliverance and Law-giving.
         a.) He alone was God in power and judgment.
         b.) He alone was God in love and faithfulness.

      2.) The Law revealing the character of God.
      3.) The Law as a document of holy love.
      4.) The Law as a guide for holy conformity.
         a.) [Leviticus 11:44]- For I am the Lord your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy: neither shall ye defile yourselves with any manner of creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.
         b.) [Leviticus 19:2]- Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, Ye shall be holy: for I the Lord your God am holy.
         c.) [Leviticus 20:7]- Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I am the Lord your God.
         d.) [Leviticus 20:26]- And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the Lord am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine.

F. Application.
1. How will the people of God become holy? How will they love and glorify God? In reverence they will submit to God's authority and obey Him.

VII. Grow the Fear of the Lord.
A. Fear of the Lord: Its Beauty
1. The heart of Proverbs is the fear of the Lord: the gateway, the path, and the end of wisdom.
a. [Proverbs 9:10]- The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the Holy is understanding.
b. [Proverbs 19:23]- The fear of the Lord tendeth to life: and he that hath it shall abide satisfied; he shall not be visited with evil.
c. [Proverbs 10:27]- The fear of the Lord prolongeth days: but the years of the wicked shall be shortened.
d. [Proverbs 14:26]- In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence: and his children shall have a place of refuge.
e. [Proverbs 15:16]- Better is little with the fear of the Lord, than great treasure and trouble therewith.
f. [Proverbs 22:4]- By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, and honor, and life.
g. [Proverbs 31:30]- Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.

2. What does the fear of the Lord look like?
a. [Proverbs 8:13]- The fear of the Lord is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate.
b. [Matthew 7:3-5]- And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

B. Fear of the Lord: God's Questions
1. To Satan.
a. [Job 1:8]- And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?

2. From Job.
a. [Job 1:21]- and said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.
b. [Job 2:10]- But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips.
c. [Job 28:28]- And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.

3. To Job.
a. [Job 38:12]- Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days; and caused the dayspring to know his place;
b. [Job 38:17-18]- Have the gates of death been opened unto thee? Or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death? Hast thou perceived the breadth of the earth? Declare if thou knowest it all.
c. [Job 38:35]- Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go, and say unto thee, Here we are?

4. The relentless pace of God's questions had its desired effect on Job.
   a. [Job 42:5-6]- I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee: wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.

C. Fear of the Lord: Face to Face
1. Isaiah's fear of other men.
   a. [Isaiah 6:9-13]- And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed. Then said I, Lord, how long? And he answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate, and the Lord have removed men far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land. But yet in it shall be a tenth, and it shall return, and shall be eaten: as a teil tree, and as an oak, whose substance is in them, when they cast their leaves: so the holy seed shall be the substance thereof.

2. Isaiah's audience and occasion.
   a. The subjects of Good King Uzziah.
      1.) [Isaiah 6:1]- In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.
      2.) [2 Chronicles 26:3-5]- Sixteen years old was Uzziah when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty and two years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also was Jecoliah of Jerusalem. And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father Amaziah did. And he sought God in the days of Zechariah, who had understanding in the visions of God: and as long as he sought the Lord, God made him to prosper.

   b. The seraphs calling out about the holiness of the Lord.
      1.) [Isaiah 6:1-3]- In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphim: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.
      2.) [Isaiah 6:6-7]- Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.

   c. Isaiah's mission after lessons on fearing God.
      1.) 'Oppression will not last, but My compassion will.'
         a.) [Isaiah 40:1,6,11]- Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.
         b.) [Isaiah 40:12,18]- Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity. To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?

      2.) A message to all mankind.

a.) [Isaiah 41:1]- The isles saw it, and feared; the ends of the earth were afraid, drew near, and came.

b.) [Isaiah 40:5]- and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

d. God's ultimate message.

1.) The ugly, suffering servant.

a.) [Isaiah 52:13-15]- Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high. As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men: so shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider.

2.) Glory through suffering and death.

a.) [Isaiah 53:12]- Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors: and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

3.) Jesus' invitation and our hiding.

a.) [Isaiah 55:1]- Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

D. Fear of the Lord: God's Wrath

1. God's wrath revealed.

a. [Romans 2:5]- but, after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;

2. Jesus, the scare preacher.

a. [Matthew 5:22]- but I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

b. [Matthew 7:19]- Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

c. [Mark 9:43-44]- And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

d. [John 3:18]- He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

e. [Matthew 25:41]- Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

f. [Matthew 10:28]- And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

3. The truth of hell.

a. No deliverance for eternity.

1.) [Matthew 25:46]- And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

b. No relief from torment.

1.) ***[Romans 2:4]- Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?***

c. Holy wrath poured out.
   1.) ***[John 3:36]- He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.***

d. Continued attempts to persuade until then.
   1.) ***[2 Corinthians 5:11]- Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.***
   2.) ***[Matthew 25:34]- Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:***

E. Fear of the Lord: Amazement
   1. The Gospel of Mark's emphasis on amazement of God.
      a. Jesus' teaching
         1.) ***[Mark 1:22,27]- And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes. And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him.***
         2.) ***[Mark 6:22]- and when the daughter of the said Herodias came in, and danced, and pleased Herod and them that sat with him, the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee.***
         3.) ***[Mark 12:17]- And Jesus answering said unto them, Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's. And they marveled at him.***

      b. Jesus' miracles
         1.) ***[Mark 2:12]- And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.***
         2.) ***[Mark 4:39]- And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.***
         3.) ***[Mark 6:51]- And he went up unto them into the ship; and the wind ceased: and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered.***

      c. Jesus' healings
         1.) ***[Mark 5:20]- And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all men did marvel.***
         2.) ***[Mark 5:42]- And straightway the damsel arose, and walked; for she was of the age of twelve years. And they were astonished with a great astonishment.***
         3.) ***[Mark 7:37]- and were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.***

      d. Jesus' effect on people
         1.) ***[Mark 9:15]- And straightway all the people, when they beheld him, were greatly amazed, and running to him saluted him.***

      e. Jesus' salvation
         1.) ***[Mark 5:25-34]- And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years, and had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, when she had heard of Jesus, came***

in the press behind, and touched his garment. For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole. And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague. And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes? And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing. But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth. And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.

F. Fear of the Lord: "Fear Not"
   1. Jesus' Transfiguration.
      a. [Mark 9:1-8]- And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power. And after six days Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into a high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them. And his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them. And there appeared unto them Elijah with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus. And Peter answered and said to Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah. For he wist not what to say; for they were sore afraid. And there was a cloud that overshadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him. And suddenly, when they had looked round about, they saw no man any more, save Jesus only with themselves.
      b. [Judges 13:21-22]- But the angel of the Lord did no more appear to Manoah and to his wife. Then Manoah knew that he was an angel of the Lord. And Manoah said unto his wife, We shall surely die, because we have seen God.

G. Fear of the Lord and the Gospel
   1. Holy Love-Holy Justice
      a. [Romans 5:8]- But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.
      b. [Mark 15:34]- And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

   2. Jesus' unassuming death and its effect on others.
      a. His teaching, miracles, and His very presence caused amazement.
      b. He had transgressors, chief priests and others nearby that would mock him.
         1.) [Mark 15:29-32,35-36]- And they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself, and come down from the cross. Likewise also the chief priests mocking said among themselves with the scribes, He saved others; himself he cannot save. Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe. And they that were crucified with him reviled him. And some of them that stood by, when they heard it, said, Behold, he calleth Elijah. And one ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink, saying, Let alone; let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down.

      c. Jesus gave no sermons from the cross and no apparent miracles yet it was the words of the Roman centurion that testified of amazement.
         1.) [Mark 15:39]- And when the centurion, which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God.

3. Jesus' Resurrection.
    a. The women ministering to him and their trembling and bewilderment turned to reverential fear and confidence.
        1.) [Mark 16:8]- And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled and were amazed: neither said they any thing to any man; for they were afraid.

H. For Further Thought

The key to learning the fear of the Lord is to stay in the Scripture.

1. Review the creation psalms: Psalm 8; 19; 29; 65; 104.
2. Meditate on the enthronement psalms: Psalm 95-97; 99.
3. Memorize Psalm 139 and it's extensive details of our lives and God's providence.
4. Go through a hymnbook and highlight songs that express God's majesty and holiness.
5. Read the book of Habakkuk and note its similarity to Job in that God addresses a man directly when questioning God and the resolution once Habakkuk was schooled in the fear of the Lord.
6. Read the Holiness of God, by R. C. Sproul.
7. Review the New Testament passages on hell. Consider 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10; 2 Peter 2:6; Revelation 14:9-11.
8. Begin a 'fear of the Lord' or 'knowing God' prayer group.
9. Take time to confess your fear of people and lack of fear of the Lord.

VIII. Biblically Examine Your Felt Needs.

A. Proof text

1. [Psalm 34:9]- O fear the Lord, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him.

B. Step Five: Examine where your desires have been too big. When we fear people, people are big, our desires are even bigger, and God is small.

1. What is our basic, God-given shape or identity?
2. We tend to see ourselves as people who need something from somebody if we are going to change.

C. The Popular View of People

1. The popular view.
    a. Our basic shape is that of a receptacle that holds psychic needs.
    b. We have a long list of psychic needs, but these needs tend to cluster around the basic needs for love and significance.
    c. When these needs are not met, we are in a deficit, and so we feel empty
    d. We must be careful who fills these needs. Either we can look to people, or we can look to Christ.

2. What are needs?
    a. Biological needs.
        1.) Needed for physical like.
        2.) [Matthew 6:32]- (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

    b. Spiritual needs.
        1.) Needed for spiritual life, faith, and obedience.
        2.) [2 Peter 1:3]- According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:

    c. Psychological needs.

1.) Needed for happiness and acceptance.

3. Needs: An Experience in Search of a Proof Text.
   a. The person as two or three substances.
      1.) Physical and spiritual.
         a.) [2 Corinthians 4:16]- For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.
         b.) [Matthew 10:28]- And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.
         c.) [1 Corinthians 7:34]- There is difference also between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit: but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband.
         d.) [James 2:26]- For as the body without the spirit [or, breath] is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

      2.) Body, soul, and spirit.
         a.) [Hebrews 4:12]- For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.
         b.) [1 Thessalonians 5:23]- And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
         c.) [Mark 12:30]- and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.
         d.) 'Soul' emphasizes the person in a weak, earthly existence.
         e.) 'Spirit' highlights that our life is derived by God.

   b. The image of God in man.
      1.) [Genesis 1:27]- So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.
      2.) A passion for relationship.
         a.) God exists in joyous relationship with Himself-Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
         b.) God has a longing for restoration of relationship with His children.
         c.) As image-bearers, we long for what God designed us to enjoy.

      3.) How do we deal with our longings?
         a.) Independently of God, looking to fill ourselves with other objects or people.
         b.) We look to Christ and find relationship needs met in Him.

      4.) The need-base theory suggestions.
         a.) God's 'longings' does not suggest desperate want or need. God does not need us to love us but His glory is even greater when He does.
         b.) It suggests that we have a longings problem that is at least as deep as our sin problem.
            1.) A needs-theory suggests that the gospel is, most deeply, intended to meet psychological needs
            2.) Actually, the gospel is not meant to make us feel good about ourselves but the humble us.
               a.) [Isaiah 6:5-7]- Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. Then flew one of the

seraphim unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.

3.) Christ did not die to increase our self-esteem but to increase glory to the Father by redeeming people from the curse of sin.
4.) Scripture emphasis on self-denial not self-esteem or respect.
   a.) [Philippians 2:3]- Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

D. Where Do Psychological Needs Come From?
   1. After Adam's fall into sin.
      a. Man continued to be image-bearers of God.
      b. The direction of the human heart changed from God to self.
      c. Commonality of longings and lust. They start out good but end up enslaving us.
      d. Christ not enough for our psychological needs.
         1.) Lusts are boundless by their very nature and cannot be filled.
         2.) Jesus does not intend to satisfy our selfish desires.
         3.) To look to Christ for our perceived psychological needs is to Christianize our lusts.

      e. Because of our remaining sin, one of our deepest needs is forgiveness.
         1.) [Matthew 6:12]- And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

      f. Because of being in God's debt, one of our greatest responses is gratitude.
         1.) In debt due to forgiveness.
         2.) In debt due being made children of God.
         3.) In debt due to our inheritance in Heaven.
         4.) In debt due to eternal life.
         5.) In debt due to making us rich in spiritual blessings.

      g. The epidemic of emptiness due to creating and multiplying our needs, not God.

E. For Further Thought
   1. Take time and consider how many of your 'psychological needs' have really been wants and demands in disguise.

IX. Know Your Real Needs
A. Who is God and What Are His 'Needs'?
   1. We must begin with God, as we are image-bearers of Him.
      a. [Genesis 1:26-27]- And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. ***
      b. [Genesis 3:5]- for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

   2. The Triune God, the Holy One of Israel has no needs and is completely fulfilled.
   3. God's goal is to exalt Himself and His own glory.
      a. [Romans 11:36]- For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

b. [Acts 7:2]- And he said, Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran,

c. [Exodus 15:11]- Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?

4. The images of God's love and justice.
   a. The loving bridegroom expecting a spotless bride.
   b. The feast-giver inviting everyone to a feast wearing the garment given them.
   c. The loving redeemer redeeming Zion with justice.
      1.) [Ruth 4:7]- Now this was the manner in former time in Israel concerning redeeming and concerning changing, for to confirm all things; a man plucked off his shoe, and gave it to his neighbor: and this was a testimony in Israel.
      2.) [Isaiah 1:27]- Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness

   d. The Judge over all yet His Son becomes the Advocate and Representative of His people
   e. The father, the mother, the submissive son, the suffering servant, the friend, the shepherd, the physician, the meaning-maker, the creator, and the potter.
   f. All pictures merge into one when witnessing the glory or holiness of Jesus Christ.
      1.) [Hebrews 1:3]- who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;
      2.) [John 1:14]- And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.
      3.) [Mark 1:24]- saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.
      4.) [John 6:69]- And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.
      5.) [John 12:28]- Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.
      6.) [John 17:11]- And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.
      7.) [John 17:25]- O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.

B. Who Are We?
   1. Image bearers of God.
      a. The image-bearers not empty cups of longing but reflections of God's glory.
         1.) [Exodus 34:29-32]- And it came to pass, when Moses came down from mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in Moses' hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with him. And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone; and they were afraid to come nigh him. And Moses called unto them; and Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation returned unto him: and Moses talked with them. And afterward all the children of Israel came nigh: and he gave them in commandment all that the Lord had spoken with him in mount Sinai.
         2.) [2 Corinthians 3:18]- But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

      b. The image-bearers not hollow cores, passive and easily damaged.

1.) [Ephesians 5:1]- Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;
2.) [2 Corinthians 5:20]- Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

c. The awesome responsibility and glorious privilege of image bearing is expressed in simple acts of obedience that have eternal implications.

2. You are a Priest
   a. A latter-day Moses living in the presence of the Lord.
      1.) Face shining with the presence of Jesus.
      2.) [1 Peter 2:9]- But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light:
      3.) As priests, we witness Jesus our High Priest.

   b. An Old Testament history of Levitical priests.
      1.) Called by God to represent Him in a unique way serving Him before the tabernacle.
      2.) Like Adam and Eve, they were spiritually naked.
      3.) God made them garments and giving them dignity and honor.
         a.) [Exodus 28:2]- And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, for glory and for beauty.

      4.) Robes had accessories made for with purpose.
         a.) Ephod with the names of the twelve tribes.
            1.) A reminder we do not stand alone.
            2.) Solidarity with other Christians while serving before the Lord.

         b.) The breast piece used to make decisions.
            1.) A reminder that all our decisions are done by consulting God's Word.

         c.) The turban and the engraved seal.
            1.) A reminder of our need of God's thorough covering.
            2.) Seal a summary of the entire garment, as well as our lives.
               a.) [Exodus 28:36]- And thou shalt make a plate of pure gold, and grave upon it, like the engravings of a signet, Holiness to the Lord.

         d.) Robes are given freely but they must be worn.
         e.) Robes double as a wedding garment that God's people wear at the consummation.

3. You are a Christian.
   a. Of God's family.
   b. Christ's betrothed.
   c. Christ's heralds and ambassadors.
      1.) [2 Corinthians 5:20]- Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

   d. Adoption brought glory to the person who adopts not the one who is adopted.

4. Other Pictures of God's People.
   a. As children.
      1.) [1 John 3:1]- Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

b. As slaves.
   1.) [Romans 6:22]- But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

c. As friends.
   1.) [John 15:14]- Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

d. As fellow workers.
   1.) [Ephesians 6:1]- Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.
   2.) [1 Corinthians 3:9]- For we are laborers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building. ***

e. As brides.
   1.) [Revelation 21:3]- And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

f. As warriors.
   1.) [Ephesians 6:10-18]- Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

g. As living stones.
   1.) [1 Peter 2:5]- ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

h. As evangelists, prophets, pastors, and teachers.
   1.) [Ephesians 4:11]- And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

i. As husbands.
   1.) [Isaiah 54:5]- For thy Maker is thine husband; The Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called.

j. All theses identities are ways we bring glory to God.

C. What Do We Really Need?
   1. Imaging God could not be done alone; it is done in partnership.
      a. The image of God is corporate.
      b. To reproduce and subdue the earth the forerunners of the Great Commission.
      c. The panoply of gifts is essential to the church to function.
         1.) [1 Corinthians 12:12-27]- For as the body is one, and hath many members and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether

we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: and those members of the body, which we think to be less honorable, upon these we bestow more abundant honor; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honor to that part which lacked: that there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

2. We are a needy people.
   a. We were created with biological needs.
   b. We are sinners who have spiritual needs.
   c. We were created as people with limited gifts and abilities.
   d. Prayers are the call of the needy heart.
      1.) God's name to be regarded as holy.
         a.) [Matthew 6:9-13]- After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

      2.) God be glorified.
         a.) [John 17:1]- These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee:

      3.) God's people grow in obedience.
         a.) [John 17:15,17]- I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

      4.) Our cup of spiritual needs will be filled.
         a.) [Ephesians 3:14-19]- For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.
         b.) [Ephesians 4:13]- till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:
         c.) [Ephesians 2:19-22]- Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built

upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit.

d.) 'We need to be a corporate body, smitten with the glory of God, committed to the unity of the church, deluged by His love, and faithful as we walk together in obedience to Him, evening our suffering.'

D. For Further Thought
   1. To be created in the image of God means that we are like God in every way a creature can be like Him, to the praise of His glorious grace.
      a. [Ephesians 1:6,12,14]- to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved: that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

   2. Write thirty applications of the petition, "Hallowed be Thy Name." How can you hallow God's name as work? At rest? With your family? At church?
   3. Begin reading some of the prayers in Scripture through the lens of "That is what I need."
   4. Consider how this knowledge of God and knowledge of yourself can encourage you to take small steps of obedience in your work and relationships.

X. Delight in the God Who Fills Us

A. A Recap.
   1. *'No man can take a survey of himself but he must immediately turn to the contemplation of God in whom he lives and moves.'* – Institutes of Christian Religion by John Calvin
   2. When we listen to God after difficult self-examination, God reveals Himself as the Welcoming One.
      a. [Ezekiel 18:22]- All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him: in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live.

   3. God's Word, not feelings, is our standard.
   4. The Three aspects of the fear of man.
      a. We fear people because they can expose and humiliate us.
      b. We fear people because they can reject, ridicule, or despise us.
      c. We fear people because they can hunt, attack, or threaten us.

   5. Fearing God more than man.
      a. Our sinful hearts will intensify our shame but He has not left us to our shame, threatenings, and rejection.
      b. We have the privilege of being controlled by a loving and just Savior rather than other people.
      c. We have the privilege of fearing God because of His immense, forgiving love.
      d. God's overwhelming blessings.
         1.) To the shamed and humiliated, He covers and glorifies.
         2.) To the rejected, He accepts and glorifies.
         3.) To the threatened, He protects and glorifies.

B. <u>Step Six: Rejoice the God has covered your shame, protected you from danger, and accepted you. He has filled you with His love.</u>
   1. [Romans 5:5]- and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.
   2. God showering us with Himself.
      a. The cup of our own desires is never able to catch the flood of God's love and blessing.

b. Our 'broken cup' leaves us with a number of identities that God has given us.
   1.) Priests.
   2.) Ambassadors.
   3.) Children of God.
   4.) Christians.

c. Lust and selfish desire is not the only explanation for our desire for love.
   1.) The love that we desire, however, can only be found in the living God.

C. Hosea's Love Story
1. Two love stories that run parallel.
   a. The earthly analogy of Hosea and Gomer.
   b. God's comfort and pursuing love for the shamed, threatened, and rejected.

2. God's lessons for Hosea and us.
   a. Why did God tell Hosea to marry a woman like Gomer?
   b. Because God gave his heart completely to someone who will utterly reject Him.
   c. Hosea will understand God's faithful love to him and His people.
   d. Hosea's pain will point to God's own pain and Hosea's faithfulness will be a replica of God's faithfulness.
      1.) Hosea's marriage and children.
         a.) [Hosea 1:2-3]- The beginning of the word of the Lord by Hosea. And the Lord said to Hosea, Go, take unto thee a wife of whoredoms and children of whoredoms: for the land hath committed great whoredom, departing from the Lord. So he went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim; which conceived, and bare him a son.
         b.) [Hosea 1:6,9]- And she conceived again, and bare a daughter. And God said unto him, Call her name Lo-ruhamah [not having obtained mercy]: for I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel; but I will utterly take them away. Then said God, Call his name Lo-ammi [not my people]: for ye are not my people, and I will not be your God.

      2.) Gomer throws off marriage, forgetting both Hosea and God.
         a.) [Hosea 2:5,8]- For their mother hath played the harlot: she that conceived them hath done shamefully; for she said, I will go after my lovers, that give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, mine oil and my drink. For she did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold, which they prepared for Baal.

      3.) Hosea's return to Gomer.
         a.) [Hosea 3:1]- Then said the Lord unto me, Go yet, love a woman beloved of her friend, yet an adulteress, according to the love of the Lord toward the children of Israel, who look to other gods, and love flagons of wine.

      4.) Hosea's submission and obeying the Lord.
      5.) God's own heart towards His people in contrast to His enemies.
         a.) [Hosea 11:8-9]- How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together. I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim: for I am God, and not man; the Holy One in the midst of thee: and I will not enter into the city.
         b.) [Deuteronomy 29:23]- and that the whole land thereof is brimstone, and salt, and burning, that it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth therein, like

the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim, which the Lord overthrew in his anger, and in his wrath:

c.) [2 Timothy 2:13]- For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

d.) [Romans 8:30]- Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

e.) [Jude 24]- Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,

f.) [John 14:27-28]- Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I.

g.) [Hebrews 13:5-6]- Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.

h.) [2 Corinthians 1:3-7]- Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation. And our hope of you is steadfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation.

D. For Further Thought
1. How can you really know God's love when it feels so distant? Repent of seeking God so that you can fell better about yourself.
2. Think of Jesus through the story of Hosea.
3. Ask God to teach you about this love, so you can both know it and give it.
4. Ask other people to pray that God will teach you as you read God's promises.

XI. Love Your Enemies and Your Enemies

A. The Shapes given to others
1. Gas pumps to fill us.
2. Sought after tickets to acceptance and fame.
3. Priests to cleanse us.
4. Terrorists to strike at us.
5. Dictators to control us.
6. Cherished idols.

B. <u>Step Seven: Need other people less, love other people more. Out of obedience to Christ, and as a response to His love toward you, pursue others in love.</u>

C. Enemies
1. God Responds to Our Enemies.
a. Judas

1.) [Psalm 55:12-13]- For it was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it: neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I

would have hid myself from him: but it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance.

b. Haman
   1.) [Esther 3:6]- And he thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone; for they had showed him the people of Mordecai: wherefore Haman sought to destroy all the Jews that were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus, even the people of Mordecai.
   2.) [Esther 7:6,10]- And Esther said, The adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman. Then Haman was afraid before the king and the queen. So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then was the king's wrath pacified.

c. Our response to enemies.
   1.) God hears the voice of the oppressed.
   2.) God blesses victims with the knowledge that He is bigger than our enemies.

d. God will never allow enemies to ultimately triumph.
   1.) [Proverbs 1:18-19]- And they lay wait for their own blood; they lurk privily for their own lives. So are the ways of every one that is greedy of gain; which taketh away the life of the owners thereof.
   2.) [Proverbs 12:7]- The wicked are overthrown, and are not: but the house of the righteous shall stand.
   3.) [Proverbs 24:16,19-20]- for a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again: but the wicked shall fall into mischief. Fret not thyself because of evil men, neither be thou envious at the wicked; for there shall be no reward to the evil man; the candle of the wicked shall be put out.
   4.) [Proverbs 10:27]- The fear of the Lord prolongeth days: but the years of the wicked shall be shortened.
   5.) [Proverbs 11:2,7]- When pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly is wisdom. When a wicked man dieth, his expectation shall perish: and the hope of unjust men perisheth.
   6.) [Proverbs 13:21]- Evil pursueth sinners: but to the righteous good shall be repaid.
   7.) [Proverbs 16:5,18,25]- Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord: though hand join in hand, he shall not be unpunished. Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall. There is a way that seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death.
   8.) [Proverbs 18:12]- Before destruction the heart of man is haughty; and before honor is humility.
   9.) [Proverbs 14:11]- The house of the wicked shall be overthrown: but the tabernacle of the upright shall flourish.
   10.) [Proverbs 19:9]- A false witness shall not be unpunished; and he that speaketh lies shall perish.
   11.) [Proverbs 21:28]- A false witness shall perish: but the man that heareth speaketh constantly.
   12.) [Psalm 146:3-4]- Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.
   13.) [Isaiah 51:7-8]- Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings. For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool: but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation.

e. Does not mean…

1.) Our response is to gloat.
   a.) [Proverbs 24:17]- Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth:

2.) We should expect immediate, personal vindication.
   a.) Enemies will not restrain the growth of God's kingdom.
      1.) [Psalm 126:1-6]- When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them. The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad. Turn again our captivity, O Lord, as the streams in the south. They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.

2. The Comfort of Jesus in the Psalms.
   a. The Psalms lean against some of our natural instincts.
   b. The Psalms teach us to trust God.
      1.) When we are inclined to take matters in our own hands.
      2.) When we would insulate ourselves from pain.
      3.) When we would vow to never be close to another person.
      4.) When we would extinguish hope.

   c. The Psalms teach us about our Great King Jesus.
      1.) The enemies of David's were the enemies of Jesus.
      2.) The sufferings of David's were the enemies of Jesus.
      3.) *"What happens to the sinful creatures of God, however tragic, is less monstrous than what happened to the Son of God."* – P.J. Forsyth

3. If your Enemy is Hungry, Feed Him.
   a. We are to treat enemies as friends.
   b. We are to serve them in a way to point them to Jesus and repent of their sins.
   c. Steps in knowing other people.
      1.) Knowing that we have been disobedient.
      2.) Knowing that we were once God's enemies.
      3.) We will begin to treat our enemies as God treated us.

   d. An understanding of 'the burning coals'.
      1.) [Romans 12:20]- Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.
      2.) A holy intent of the burning coals is to bring the offender to repentance and faith.
      3.) We must pray that we would have Jesus' love for the offender.
      4.) We must invite others to pray with us and for us too.

4. Love your Enemies.
   a. Feeding enemies is an application of the larger principle of loving enemies.
   b. The impossibility of treating enemies the same as friends and family?
      1.) We have the fear of Lord.
      2.) God's power is greater than that of our enemies.
      3.) We know He is just.
      4.) We know He loved us while we were His enemies.
      5.) We know that He blesses the righteous and the unrighteous with rain and food.

a.) [Matthew 5:45]- that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

c. Misinterpretations of loving our enemies.
   1.) Not a license to give them whatever they want.
   2.) Taking justice out of the equation when wronged.
   3.) Compromising in the sin of others.
   4.) Love to enemies is not self-punishment or foolishness.
      a.) There is always blessing in obedience.
      b.) The blessing might not be reconciliation with your enemy.
      c.) The blessing may be the privilege of not being controlled that enemy.
      d.) The blessing may be the joy of becoming more like Jesus.

D. Neighbors and Foreigners
   1. Love Based on Kinship.
      a. The Old Testament laws protecting foreigners living in the land.
         1.) The prayers for foreigners.
            a.) [1 Kings 8:43]- hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to thee for: that all people of the earth may know thy name, to fear thee, as do thy people Israel; and that they may know that this house, which I have builded, is called by thy name.
            b.) [Exodus 22:21]- Thou shalt neither vex a stranger, nor oppress him: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.
            c.) [Malachi 3:5]- And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the Lord of hosts.
            d.) [Ezekiel 47:22]- And it shall come to pass, that ye shall divide it by lot for an inheritance unto you, and to the strangers that sojourn among you, which shall beget children among you: and they shall be unto you as born in the country among the children of Israel; they shall have inheritance with you among the tribes of Israel.
            e.) [Deuteronomy 10:19]- Love ye therefore the stranger: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.

         2.) An imitation of God's love to Israel.
            a.) [Exodus 22:21]- Thou shalt neither vex a stranger, nor oppress him: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.
            b.) [Exodus 23:9]- Also thou shalt not oppress a stranger: for ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.
            c.) [Leviticus 19:34]- But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God.
            d.) [Leviticus 25:23]- The land shall not be sold for ever: for the land is mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with me.

      b. The New Testament commands of love to our neighbor.
         1.) [Matthew 22:39]- And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.
         2.) [James 2:8]- If ye fulfil the royal law according to the Scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well:

3.) [Luke 10:29-37]- But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbor? And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him: and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee. Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that showed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

4.) [Matthew 7:12]- Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

2. Evangelism, the application for love to enemies.
   a. [Romans 2:11-16]- for there is no respect of persons with God. For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law; (for not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;) in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.

E. For Further Thought
   1. The command to love enemies and neighbors is an unavoidable implication of knowing God and ourselves.
   2. Pick one enemy and one neighbor and begin to pray for them.
   3. Look for opportunities to surprise someone outside the body of Christ with love.

XII. Love Your Brothers and Sisters

A. Proof text
   1. [Galatians 6:10]- As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

B. The Dangers while showing Love to Brethren.
   1. The flesh has a sinful bent toward self-interest.
   2. Satan is a liar and divider.
   3. The world tries to institutionalize these tendencies.
      a. [Acts 2:38-42]- Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. ***

   4. Church not viewed as Family.

a. For many, church, as family doesn't exist.
b. Church seen by many as an enemy.
c. Isolation and the fear of man are close companions.
d. Some have bad family experiences and have corrupt understandings of God's family.
e. We are people as much as individual persons.
f. The importance of biblical community.
   1.) [Matthew 28:18]- And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.
   2.) [1 Thessalonians 5:17]- Pray without ceasing.
   3.) [1 Timothy 5:3]- Honor widows that are widows indeed.
   4.) [Titus 2:1-8]- But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine: that the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience. The aged women likewise, that they be in behavior as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; that they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed. Young men likewise exhort to be soberminded. In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.

C. The Corporate Image of God.
1. God's teaching on oneness, love, and family goes back to the image of God in man.
2. To image God.
   a. To imitate and represent God for the sake of His glory.
   b. To be like Him in every way that creatures can be like the Creator.
   c. To remotely imitate such immense glory demands a large group of people because of their limits and God's unlimited glory.
   d. [Deuteronomy 6:4]- Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord:
   e. [Psalm 48:12-13]- Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following.

3. The promises of God were promises to a people as much as to the individual.
   a. [Leviticus 16:34]- And this shall be an everlasting statute unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins once a year. And he did as the Lord commanded Moses.
   b. [Deuteronomy 6:1-2]- Now these are the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which the Lord your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go to possess it: that thou mightest fear the Lord thy God, to keep all his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son's son, all the days of thy life; and that thy days may be prolonged.

4. The curses for individual disobedience were often curses on all the people.
   a. [Joshua 7:1]- But the children of Israel committed a trespass in the accursed thing: for Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took of the accursed thing: and the anger of the Lord was kindled against the children of Israel.
   b. [Daniel 9:4-8]- and I prayed unto the Lord my God, and made my confession, and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments; we have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments: neither have we hearkened unto thy servants the prophets, which spake in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people

of the land. O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day; to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and unto all Israel, that are near, and that are far off, through all the countries whither thou hast driven them, because of their trespass that they have trespassed against thee. O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee.

5. The blessings of unity.
   a. [Psalm 133:1-3]- Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.

D. Unity and Love-A Biblical Priority
   1. The church-Jew and Gentile, sworn enemies, clean and unclean.
   2. Unity, God's grandest statement to both the world and heavenly beings.
      a. [Ephesians 3:10]- to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God,

   3. Unity, a gift to the body of Christ.
      a. [Ephesians 4:13]- till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

   4. Unity, our need for people.
      a. [Romans 1:11-12]- For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established; that is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me.

   5. Unity among leadership.
      a. Seven challenges and one encouragement.
         1.) Have you been with a woman this past week that might be seen as compromising?
         2.) Have any of your financial dealings lacked integrity?
         3.) Have you exposed yourself to any sexually explicit material?
         4.) Have you spent adequate time in Bible study and prayer?
         5.) Have you given priority time to your family?
         6.) Have you fulfilled the mandates of your calling?
         7.) Have you just lied to me?
         8.) After asking these questions, let me tell you that you are a blessing to me.

   6. The natural outward direction of God's remedy for the fear of man.
      a. Biblical guided self-reflection
      b. Love for God and love for other people.
      c. The appeal for unity.
         1.) [1 Corinthians 1:10]- Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.
         2.) [1 Corinthians 3:3-4]- For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?
         3.) [1 Corinthians 6:7]- Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? Why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?

4.) [Judges 17:6]- In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

5.) [1 Corinthians 11:28]- But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

d. Pursuing unity.

1.) [Matthew 5:23-24]- Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

2.) [Mark 11:25]- And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any; that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.

3.) [Ephesians 4:25-26]- Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another. Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:

4.) [1 Corinthians 13:1-13]- Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly, but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

E. Jesus Prayer for Our Unity

1. We need to bring glory to God.
2. We need to grow in our sanctification or obedience to the Father.
3. We need oneness.

a. [John 17:11,20-21,23,26]- And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it; that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.

4. Unity and love mean:

a. Confess our sins to each other.

1.) [James 5:16]- Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

b. Share with brethren in need.

1.) ***[Romans 12:13]- distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.***
2.) ***[1 John 3:17]- But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?***

c. Be vulnerable with others.
1.) ***[Hosea 3:1-3]- Then said the Lord unto me, Go yet, love a woman beloved of her friend, yet an adulteress, according to the love of the Lord toward the children of Israel, who look to other gods, and love flagons of wine. So I bought her to me for fifteen pieces of silver, and for a homer of barley, and a half homer of barley: and I said unto her, Thou shalt abide for me many days; thou shalt not play the harlot, and thou shalt not be for another man: so will I also be for thee.***

d. Associate with people of low position.
1.) ***[Romans 12:16]- Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.***

e. Creatively consider ways to honor others.
1.) ***[Romans 12:10]- Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another;***

f. Discern when to confront sin and when to overlook it.
1.) ***[Matthew 18:15]- Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.***
2.) ***[Proverbs 17:9]- He that covereth a transgression seeketh love; but he that repeateth a matter separateth very friends.***
3.) ***[Proverbs 19:11]- The discretion of a man deferreth his anger; and it is his glory to pass over a transgression.***

g. Patience towards others.
1.) ***[1 Corinthians 13:4]- Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,***

h. Willingness to sacrifice.
1.) ***[John 15:12-13]- This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.***

i. The practice of church discipline.
1.) ***[Matthew 18:15-19]- Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.***
2.) ***[1 Corinthians 5:1-5]- It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you. For I verily,***

as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

5. Biblical love is never satisfied unless it is growing.
   a. [1 Peter 1:22]- Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:

6. Biblical love must be witnessed.
   a. [John 13:35]- By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

F. You (Plural) Are God's Tabernacle
   1. The awe of God's Tabernacle.
      a. God's earthly home.
      b. His very presence with His people.
      c. [1 Samuel 6:20]- And the men of Beth-shemesh said, Who is able to stand before this holy Lord God? and to whom shall he go up from us?
      d. [2 Samuel 6:6-7]- And when they came to Nachon's threshingfloor, Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen shook it. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah, and God smote him there for his error; and there he died by the ark of God.

   2. Our identity as God's Tabernacle.
      a. [1 Corinthians 3:16]- Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?
      b. [Colossians 1:27]- to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

G. Enemies, Neighbors, and the Body of Christ: In Their Debt
   1. [Romans 13:8-9]- Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.
   2. The Debt of Love.
      a. Will hurt us.
      b. Will set us up for manipulation.
      c. Will tempt us into people pleasing.

H. Uniqueness in Unity
   1. The peculiar change when you begin thinking less about yourself and pursue oneness in the body of Christ.
      a. The members of the church don't become the same but more unique.
      b. Oneness is not sameness.
      c. 'How can I fell better about myself?' becomes 'How can I love Christ and love my neighbor?

I. For Further Thought.
   1. Unless there is a radical change in which we see God, ourselves, and others, community will become just another strategy to feel better about ourselves.

2. How can your church encourage community How can you encourage community?
3. Review Daniel's 'we' prayer, and study Nehemiah's corporate prayer (Nehemiah 1:4-11). Allow them to structure a corporate prayer time.
4. How can you honor other people in the body of Christ (Romans 12:10)?
5. Recall the people who have pointed you to Christ recently. Write a letter to one of them, and make a point to tell the others.

XIII. "The Conclusion of the Matter: Fear God and Keep His Commandments"

A. Proof Text

1. [Ecclesiastes 12:13]- Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.

B. A Teenager

1. "Should I fear God or men?"
2. Obvious answer, "Fear God and discern my duty."

C. A Monk: Martin Luther

1. "St. Anne, help me! I will become a monk."

2. Martin Luther's first Mass-the reenactment of Calvary.
   a. "With what tongue shall I address such Majesty"
   b. "Who am I, that I should lift up mine eyes to raise my hands to the divine majesty"
   c. "For I am dust and ashes and full of sin and I am speaking to the living, eternal and true God."
   d. [2 Samuel 7:27]- For thou, O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, hast revealed to thy servant, saying, I will build thee a house: therefore hath thy servant found in his heart to pray this prayer unto thee.

3. Teaching on Psalms, Romans, Galatians, and Hebrews.
   a. The Gospel became clearer.
   b. Saw Christ as the All-Merciful One in the Psalms.
   c. He understood Justification by Faith Alone in Romans.
   d. In Christ, God was All-Just and All-Merciful.

4. Reaction to Indulgences.
   a. Ninety-five Theses and subsequent publications posted.
   b. Demands to recant.
   c. Speaking before the assembly of Worms. *"I must walk in the fear of the Lord. My conscience is captive to the Word of God."*

D. A Hebrew Prophet and His Friends-Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego

1. Learned the fear of the Lord in the ways of King Josiah.
2. Refusal to eat the king's assigned food.
   a. [Daniel 1:8]- But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.

3. Disregard for edict to worship the golden image of king.
   a. [Daniel 3:16-18]- Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

4. Prohibit prayer to any man or god other than King Darius.

a. [Daniel 6:26-27]- I make a decree, That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: for he is the living God, and steadfast for ever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end. He delivereth and rescueth, and he worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions.

E. A Housewife: Nancy
   1. A sense of worthlessness and emptiness.
   2. Teaching of God's love to those who have been sinned against by others.
   3. A need to be listened to and emotional needs met.
   4. Three questions.
      a. Have you noticed we tend to be controlled by things you need?
      b. What or who controls you?
      c. Where do you put your trust?

   5. Distinction between shame from being sinned against and the shame of own sin.
   6. Remedies for the fear of man.
      a. [Jeremiah 17:5-10]- Thus saith the Lord; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord. For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit. The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.
      b. [Matthew 6:12]- And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
      c. [Romans 5:5,8]- and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

F. A Counselor-Teacher
   1. Feeling of failure to students.
      a. "Stop that, you have responsibilities to the students."
      b. "Why are you so consumed with yourself?"

   2. God's forgiveness is a holy forgiveness, so holy that He is to be feared.
   3. We live under God's gaze.
      a. No longer a gaze exposing nakedness and uncleanness.
      b. Now a gaze of acceptance.
      c. Now a gaze seeing covering from guilt and shame.
      d. Now a gaze of protection and power.
         1.) [Luke 12:32]- Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

      e. Now a gaze of the bridegroom who gives the best gifts, the Holy Spirit.
         1.) [Luke 11:13]- If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

      f. Now a gaze that transforms.
         1.) [Numbers 6:24-26]- The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: the Lord lift up his countenance upon

thee, and give thee peace. And they shall put my name upon the children of Israel, and I will bless them.

Step One: Recognize Fear of Man is a major theme in the Bible and life

Step Two: Identify when your fear of man has been intensified by people in your past.

Step Three: Identify where your fear of man has been intensified by the assumptions of the world.

Step Four: Understand and grow in the fear of the Lord. The person who fears God will fear nothing else.

Step Five: Examine where your desires have been too big. When we fear people, people are big, our desires are even bigger, and God is small.

Step Six: Rejoice the God has covered your shame, protected you from danger, and accepted you. He has filled you with His love.

Step Seven: Need other people less, love other people more. Out of obedience to Christ, and as a response to His love toward you, pursue others in love.