



Life Together

From the Pastor's Desk....

How to Pray for a Breakthrough of the Fear of the Lord

In his book *Seeing God*, college professor Gerald McDermott describes the spiritual experience of a student named Mike. Mike's story is similar to multitudes of people:

It was the summer after Mike's sophomore year in college. He was intrigued by the new preacher who had come to his country church. This earnest man had a deep faith in God and preached from the Bible as if he believed every word. For the first time in his life, Mike was afraid for his soul. But he was also relieved when he heard this preacher say that belief in Christ would save from damnation. Mike felt that he was safe because he believed that Jesus had died for his sins. He didn't think that he needed to make any drastic changes in life, as long as he believed.

When Mike returned to college in the Fall, he paid less attention to the state of his soul. He didn't think much about whether he was committing sin, and he rarely read the Bible. When he did, he found it difficult to understand; frankly, it bored him. He didn't go to church very often because he stayed out so late on Saturday night and often woke up the next morning with a hangover. When he was able to drag himself into church, he was sermon-proof. The pastor always seemed to be preaching about someone else's sin. If the sermon sometimes bothered his conscience, Mike figured it must be the devil. Occasionally he felt guilty because he had fallen back into his old habit of reading pornography. But then he reassured himself that he was saved because he still believed.

Mike believes facts about the gospel, but it is questionable whether he has truly repented of his sin. He doesn't want to be a disciple of Jesus. He doesn't want to deny himself and take up Christ's cross. He insists on continuing to indulge his favorite lusts. For Mike, grace is an antidote to sin's penalty — but grace is not clothing him with power to do what is right. In the words of the college professor, Christ became for Mike "a spiritual narcotic that allows [him] to sin in good conscience, without fear of God." In the new covenant, God assures his people: "I will make with them an everlasting covenant, that I will not turn away from doing good to them. And I will put the fear of me in their hearts, that they may not turn from me" (Jer. 32:40). Therefore, it cannot be said any longer of

(Continued on page 2)

Sanctity of Life Sunday

One of our elders, Justin Taylor, will be preaching this Sunday on the sanctity of human life. One way to prepare your heart for Sanctity of Life Sunday is to read Psalm 139. Because this is a sensitive subject, discretion will be used in the sermon regarding details about the abortion practice itself. At the same time, the elders believe that this difficult issue needs to be addressed frankly. The elders wanted to make sure that parents are aware of the subject matter before the sermon itself.

Pray for Justin as he prepares to bring this message from God's Word to us.



**To bring glory to God
through Spirit-transformed lives
by the beauty and power of the gospel of Jesus Christ**

New Covenant Bible Church
4N780 Randall Road
St. Charles, IL 60175

630.584.2611

Pastor's Desk continued.....

Spirit-indwelt Christians that “there is no fear of God before their eyes” (Rom. 3:18). When God makes us new creations in Christ Jesus, he gives us the mind of Christ — and “His delight is in the fear of the LORD” (Isa. 11:3).

We are praying this month for more delight in the fear of the Lord. Let me give you three specific ways to pray for a breakthrough in the fear of the Lord this week.

First, pray that God would make you conscious of His awesome presence.

In Jeremiah 16:17, God says of His people: “My eyes are on all their ways; they are not hidden from me, nor is their sin concealed from my eyes.” And Proverbs 15:3 says, “The eyes of the LORD are everywhere, keeping watch on the wicked and the good.”

If we were more continually aware of God's presence, we would think more clearly about the heinousness of sin and the beauty of holiness. As J.I. Packer has written, “Living becomes an awesome business when you realize that you spend every moment of your life in the sight and company of an omniscient, omnipresent Creator.”

Second, pray that God would make you more conscious of your utter dependence on Him.

Acts 17:25 makes it clear that we depend on God for everything: “God is not served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything.” Truly, apart from him we can do nothing (John 15:5).

In Jeremiah 5:24, God laments the fact that His people who are so dependent on Him do not recognize their dependence: “They do not say in their hearts, ‘Let us fear the LORD our God, who gives the rain in its season, the autumn rain and the spring rain, and

keeps for us the weeks appointed for the harvest.’”

John Calvin correctly observes that without a consciousness of our dependence on God, we'll never serve him truly and sincerely: “Until men recognize that they owe everything to God, that they are nourished by his fatherly care, that He is the Author of their every good, that they should seek nothing beyond Him — they will never yield Him willing service. Nay, unless they establish their complete happiness in Him, they will never give themselves truly and sincerely to Him.”

Third, pray that God would bring every area of your life into alignment with His authority.

The world teaches us, “Question authority.” Jesus teaches us to pray, “Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”

This is what discipleship is all about: it's bringing every area of our lives under the sway of Christ's authority, and teaching others to do the same. This is why Jesus died: “to redeem us from all lawlessness [that is, from all rebellion against His authority] and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works” (Titus 2:14).

My life is lived before the presence of God

My life is lived in utter dependence on God

My life is lived under the authority of God

Meditate on this. Pray about this. Ask God to impress these truths on your heart, so that you will grow in the fear of the Lord and enjoy the friendship of the Lord which belongs only to those who fear Him (Psalm 25:14).

Your brother in Christ our All,

Pastor David Sunday

Announcements

Day of Prayer & Fasting: January 26

5:30 p.m.: Praise, worship, & scriptural meditation on the fear of God

6:30 p.m.: Focused intercession on the fear of God

7:30 p.m.: Testimonies & prayer requests

Sunday Evening Service January 30 at 5:00 p.m.

Coming Events

Youth Winter Camp:

February 18-20 at Camp Wild Rose in St. Charles. Please visit the table in the foyer for more information and to register. Deadline for registration is January 30.

Marriage Retreat:

Our first NCBC marriage retreat will be on March 4 & 5, and the deadline for registration and payment is February 6. The cost is \$125 per couple. The location has been upgraded to Naperville for the same great price! Visit the table in the foyer for additional information.