



CAPITOL[®] COMMISSION

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CAPITOL SQUARE COMMUNITY MID-WEEK BIBLE STUDY

THE GREATEST FEAR – LUKE 12:4-7

Christ never missed a teaching moment with His disciples. The thinly veiled hypocrisy of the Pharisees was now shedding, and their antagonism towards God and artificial righteousness was shamefully showing—like “The Emperor’s New Robes.” Their hypocrisy was, in fact, humanism—the worship of themselves as greater than God. This, Jesus pointed out, is a snare for every soul. Human nature is repulsed by the thought that there must be total submission to God. Therefore, our default mode is to put on pretense and appear to be god-like in character so that we can try to preserve others’ image of how we would like for them to think of us.

Hypocrisy rejects the notion that God can see all. There is no reverential fear of God in the heart of the hypocrite. One of the greatest fears of a hypocrite is being exposed. They hypocrite is driven by what others think of him—how others perceive him. And if he would ever be exposed for who he really is the hypocrite will be devastated.

*"And I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear Him who, after He has killed, has power to cast into hell; yes, I say to you, fear Him!"
"Are not five sparrows sold for two copper coins? And not one of them is forgotten before God. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows. NKJV Luke 12:4-7"*

The power a man can wield against another is only known in this life. One can raise a sword and slay the body, but no man can touch the soul. Christ is not unaware that in a short time these disciples will face imprisonment, beatings and torture and even martyrdom. His instruction is meant to not only steel their backbone and faith but also shepherd their hearts into a right and true perspective of God.

Fear itself is not improper. But it can be improperly placed. **There ought to be a weighty sobered way of living that is forged in the crucible of repentance of sin and humble submission to God’s grace.** The truth that our soul may be destroyed in Hell is terrifying but it is not meant to paralyze us. This reality is meant to be the sternest of warnings of the end of one who refuses to be exposed in their sinfulness before a holy God believing on His appropriation of righteousness through Jesus Christ for their salvation. Jesus is not saying that we ought to live “fearless” lives. He is saying that we ought to place fear where it belongs: not in the judging eyes of men but upon the judgment bar of God.

Improperly placed fear magnifies anxieties and diminishes God. Christ smashes these idols of our lives (what others think of us) and brings God into the right perspective. When living our lives as genuine followers of Christ, we are reminded that in the midst of suffering that may be brought on by God’s enemies He will not forget us.

We have God's attention. Even to the extent that we are more precious to Him than something worth less than a penny! We do not slip from God's mind. He is the One Who takes responsibility to preserve our soul.

Because of His gentle, tender and unfaltering care for us, it is He Who we need to fear. We need a rightful fear that we would dishonor Him or live without an awareness of such infinitely caring actions and concern.

There is no greater Lover for your soul than God.

If you struggle with fear of man, beware. It is an indication that you consider what people think of you greater than what God thinks of you. You can never please everyone and your good works cannot even come close to impressing God in themselves, but in the gracious work of God through Jesus Christ you are completely acceptable and pleasing to God. **The greatest way to have victory over your fear of man is to have a right fear of God.**

Proverbs 29:25

The fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord will be safe.

Isaiah 33:6

He will be the sure foundation for your times, a rich store of salvation and wisdom and knowledge; the fear of the Lord is the key to this treasure.

QUESTIONS FOR LIFE APPLICATION:

- 1. Do you understand the ways and motivations of how you live disingenuously before God and others at times?**
- 2. What makes hypocrisy *seemingly* more comfortable than grace?**
- 3. Is it clear to those who peer into your life that you are a follower of Christ?**
- 4. How can you develop a greater understanding of your true position in Jesus Christ before a patient, gentle and loving God?**



BIBLE STUDY

STAFF, LOBBYISTS AND CAPITOL SQUARE COMMUNITY: WEDNESDAYS AT NOON, STATEHOUSE RM.44