

The Lamplighter



What Does Proverbs 1:7 Mean?

God's Holiness

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.—Proverbs 1:17

Let's begin by considering these two memorable scenes from the Old Testament:

In the first, Moses is shepherding Jethro's flocks in the desert when he turns aside to behold a burning bush. There Moses hears God say: "Do not come near; take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground" (Ex. 3:5).

In the second, Isaiah sees a vision of the Lord gloriously seated on his throne and surrounded by a host of seraphim. Isaiah cries out, "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!" (Isa. 6:5).

Both scenes put us face to face with the utter holiness and otherness of God. They are also a window into its opening phrase, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge." In fact, this phrase, "the fear of the Lord" is repeated fourteen times in Proverbs and is the motto of the book, reminding readers of the preeminent condition for getting wisdom.

But what does it mean to "fear the Lord"? To answer this, we break down the verse into three parts.

The Fear of the Lord

We have all heard it said that "fearing God" is more about "reverence" than "shaking and trembling" before God. Sorry to be the bearer of bad news, but that does not fit with what we read in Scripture.

Consider another scene from Exodus where Israel stands beneath Mt. Sinai to receive the law:

"Now when all the people saw the thunder and the flashes of lightning and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, the people *were afraid and trembled*, and they stood far off and said to Moses, "You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, *lest we die*."—Ex. 20: 18-19

"Lest we die." Now that is a genuine, knee-knocking, on-the-precipice-of-death kind of fear.

Yes, but that's the Old Testament, some might say. The New Testament gives us a loving and gentle God. Not so fast. Think, for example, about the scene when Jesus addresses his disciples after calming the storm in Mark 4.

"Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?" And they were *filled with great fear* and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"—Mark 4:40-41.

Mark's Gospel is full of people trembling before Jesus's words and works. And Mark is not alone, as we can see in Paul's letter to the Philippians:

"Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with *fear and trembling*, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure". —Phil 2:12-23

The point here is not to make Christianity into a religion of being terrified by God. Rather, the picture of "fearing God" in both Old and New Testaments has rightly been described as a paradox that combines adoring fascination of God with trembling before his holiness and power. Indeed, Deuteronomy 10:12 things just like that, commanding us to "fear God" and "love God" in the same sentence. (Continued on page 3)





Schedules

Sunday Morning Nursery:

May 7: Norma Stump, Donna Fleming, Grant & Sara Walker
 May 14: Norma Stump, Stephanie Walton, Patrick & Jill Hancock
 May 21: Norma Stump, Abby Pankhurst, Amy Jewell, Katie Lusk
 May 28: Norma Stump, Eli Hancock, Jill Hancock, Fran Wright

Greeter Schedule:

May 7: Nick Papanicolas, Paul Dillon
 May 14: Darrell Linville, Andy Gibson
 May 21: Glenn Miller, Patrick Hancock
 May 28: Nick Papanicolas, Billy Moore

Sermon Topics:

May 7:
 AM *Discipline* Mth 18:15-17
 PM *Balaam Part 1* Num 22:1-6
 May 14:
 AM *Mother Elizabeth* Luke 1:5-7
 PM No Evening Service
 May 21:
 AM TBD
 PM TBD
 May 28:
 AM *Remember* Luke 23:42
 PM *Balaam Part II* Num 22: 1-6

Sunday Morning Security Team:

8:30 AM

May 7: Marion Simpson, Dillon Edelen
 May 14: Norma Stump, Kevin Guiffre
 May 21: Courtney Harbin, Marion Simpson
 May 28: Dillon Edelen, Norma Stump

SS & 11:00 AM

Jennifer Miller, Jerry Pruitt
 Jim Miller, Melvin King
 Patrick Hancock, Robert Hicks
 Terry Mathews, Al Law

Children's Worship:

May 7: Stephanie Walton, Ruth Dillon, Adrielle Law
 May 14: Jennifer Cooke, Jessica Miller, Camden Cooke
 May 21: Ellen Nupson, Alison Bode, Laura Dillon
 May 28: Hannah Pankhurst, Katie Lusk, Abby Pankhurst

Tellers for May:

Sharon Bruce &
 Rosa Minehan



(Continued from page 1)

In short, biblical fear is real fear, but a fear that combines love and obedience. Wisdom starts there.

The First Thing and the Best Thing

Second, we are told that the fear of the Lord is the “beginning” (Hebrew *rēšit*) of knowledge (or, “the beginning of wisdom” in Proverbs 9:10). This Hebrew word *rēšit* is ambiguous and could mean something like “the first thing” or “the best thing.” Some scholars believe that the ambiguity is probably intentional. This makes wisdom the starting point on the road to wisdom. You cannot enter the journey anywhere else but the fear of the Lord.

Biblical fear is real fear, but a fear that combines love and obedience. Wisdom starts there.

But *rēšit* is also the best thing. The fear of the Lord is the principal virtue that *keeps you on the wisdom journey* after you have begun. This counters the idea that wisdom is about being a smart, savvy, and skillful person. Wisdom is not about what you can do, but about how you live your life *before the Lord*. And that, as we saw above, is with awe and adoration.

Humility and Discipline

Finally, we look at the second line in our verse:

“...fools despise wisdom and instruction.”—Proverbs 1:7b

Proverbs 1:7 is what we call an “antithetical saying,” where the first line (Prov. 1:7a) is opposed by, or contrasted to, the second (Prov. 1:7b). Thus we see that the opposite of the fear of the Lord is the rejection of instruction and humility. In essence, those who cannot or will not be taught will never attain wisdom. To appreciate this point, we look at one of the other “fear of the Lord” sayings in Proverbs 15:33:

“The fear of the Lord is instruction in wisdom, and humility comes before honor.”

This verse is a “synonymous saying” where line 33b agrees with, or expands upon, line 33a. Notice that we have our same word “instruction” from Proverbs 1:7 in line a, but now set alongside “humility” in line b. Do you want wisdom? Then you must love instruction, which means being humble. Or as we read elsewhere in Proverbs 26: 12:

Do you see a man who is wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

In sum, Proverbs 1:7 seeks to instill in us the indispensable virtues for becoming wise. We must tremble at the Lord’s holiness, just as we are drawn to him in love. We must warmly accept instruction. And we must always resist the pride that will take us off our path.

Ryan Patrick O'Dowd is a contributor to the ESV Expository Commentary Series: Psalms--Song of Solomon (Volume 5) edited by Iain M. Duguid, James M. Hamilton Jr., and Jay Sklar.

This article is part of the What Does It Mean? series.

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National Day of Prayer

In observance of National Day of Prayer, on May 4th from 10-10:30AM, Women on Mission will host a time of prayer.

ALL are welcome (men too). We will meet in the sanctuary and pray for our nation.

The regular WOM meeting will begin after this, at 10:45AM, in the fellowship hall.



*Monday,
May
29th*



*"When you go home, tell them
of us and say, for their tomorrow
we gave our today."*



Visitation Ministry to the homebound will begin May 18th. Any ladies that are interested in visiting church members that can't get out and about, meet at the church @ 9:45 AM. We will go out in small groups.
Contact: Carol Gill
(301-751-4674)



Brotherhood--1st Saturday of the month @ 9 AM
(Contact Dean Irwin 240-682-5397)
ROMEO'S--1st Tuesday of the month (Foster's Grill @ 11:30 AM) (Contact Dale Gordon 301-542-4842)



Ladies of the Light Bible Study--every Tues @ 10 AM
(Contact: Carolyn Shaffer 301-392-3882)

Women on Mission--1st Thurs of every month @ 9:45 AM
(Contact: Carol Gill 301-934-9615)

Visitation Ministry--Every 3rd Thurs of the month @ 9:45 AM. (Contact Carol Gill 301-934-9615)

Connect Bible Study--1st & 3rd Thurs of the month @ 6 PM
(Contact: Karen Law 301-893-3515)

Widow's Support Group--Every 3rd Fri of the month @ 12 PM (Contact: Diane Sheffe (240-901-2982) or Sally Sexton (301-934-9317) or Lucy Bowie (301-643-7877)

All About Operation Christmas Child

It's never too early to start thinking about items for OCC boxes! You can donate money using your tithing envelope (write "OCC items" in memo) or you can pay Jennifer Miller directly (electronically, cash or check).

Below is the link for our Amazon wish list which will also be available on the Welcome Center and on the FBC website under Ministries/Missions.

https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/5K4S2KKYJBM6?ref=wl_share

**Box filler ideas
for "joyful noise
makers" and
"outside fun"!**

Please be collecting these items for OCC shoeboxes/crafts:

- empty icing container (no labels)
- empty medicine pill bottles (no labels)
- old tee-shirts (they can be stained)
- yarn
- buttons
- Scotch tape
- Christmas wrapping paper (not Santa)
- empty shoeboxes

noisemakers
party blowers
whistles
harmonicas
tambourines
kid xylophones
maracas
toys with bells
horns
jump rope
balls (soccer, tennis, etc.)
small Frisbees
small kites
sidewalk chalk
sand toys & shovels
garden/work gloves
flashlights w/batteries

Build a Shoebox Online:

- anytime of the year
- scan this QR code:



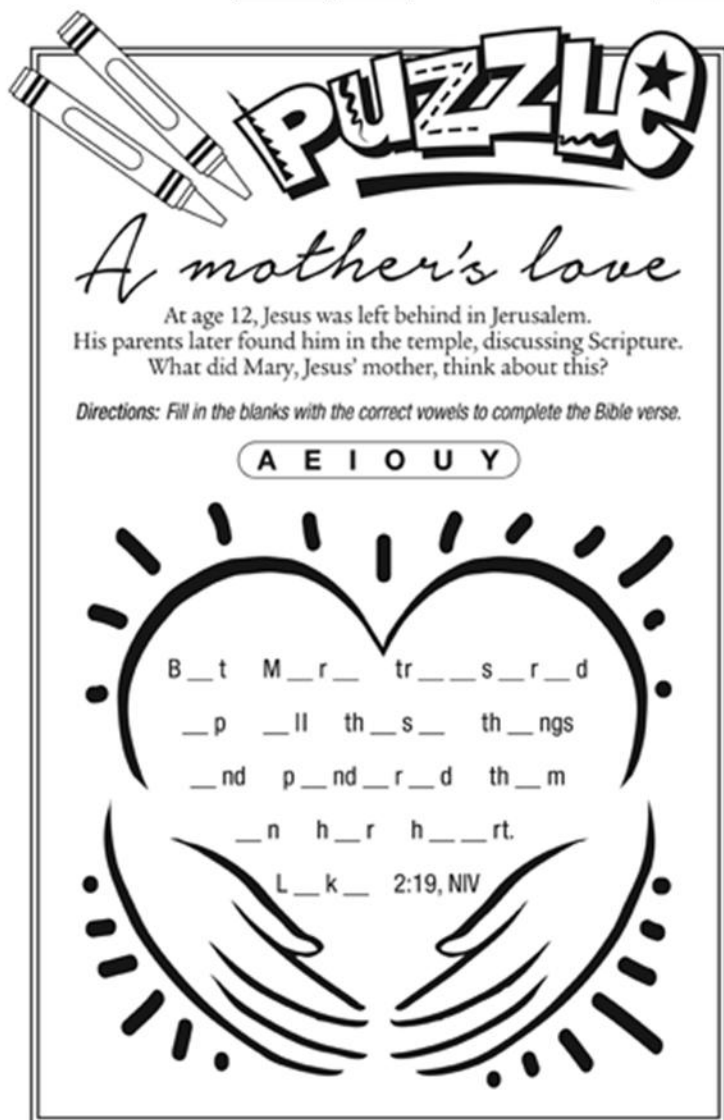
or use this link: <http://tinyurl.com/5n8dfnkj>

- there is a desperate need for more of these "filled online" boxes because Samaritan's Purse has more control of what goes in them
- this allows you to build a box from the comfort of your home
- total cost of building a box is \$25.00

**Our church goal is
100 online boxes!**



K i d s C o r n e r



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

is scheduled for July 17-21!!

9AM-12PM for Pre-K to 5th grade

6-8PM for 6th-12th grade

Contact Hannah Pankhurst 240-681-1132,
pankhurstpatsy@gmail.com

THEME:

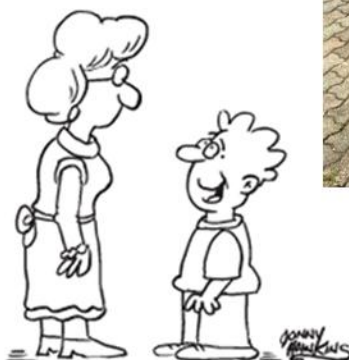


Easter Egg Hunt on 4/23



May's Bible Memory Verse

Psalm 119:105:
Your word is a
lamp for my
feet, a light on
my path.



"Mom — you deserve a
raise for raising me."

Choosing Contentment

Living in the past and wishing for the future could easily define discontentment. You hear people all the time wishing for something different....'I wish it was Summer', 'I wish it was cooler', 'I wish it was Christmas'. Retrospection of the good times or anticipation of better times may cause us to miss the very thing God is working in our lives today. Contentment is not based on circumstances or a date on the calendar. It's a learned skill, a choice for any date and under any circumstances. Paul preaches this with his words and his life in Philippians Chapter 4. Take a look at Paul's lengthy list of sufferings for the sake of the gospel. Outward circumstances do not offer contentment. Sometimes we are discontented while in a state of plenty, even as we may be in a time of need. Paul learned to be content in all circumstances. Learning to be content is also an excise in learning to trust God. We all have faith challenges; sometimes we pass, and sometimes we fail. We learn from both. Believing we can stand alone and not need anyone or anything is not only futile; it is unbiblical. When we try on our own, we fail, we need to depend on His sufficiency.

In the United States we have faced very little persecution related to our faith. We may be challenged for our beliefs and convictions, but not true persecution. We may faithfully pray for those who are suffering around the world.

--Jennifer Miller

April in Review

This year, to have something we can enjoy *all year* long, the flowers & plants in the flower bed were purchased for Easter.



Everything is starting to bloom around the church--thank you Buddy & Melvin for your hard work around the property!



The *Chosen People Ministries* presentation was held the evening of April 16th in our sanctuary.





A Mother's Love

Helen Steiner Rice

*A Mother's love is something
that no one can explain,
It is made of deep devotion
and of sacrifice and pain,
It is endless and unselfish
and enduring come what may
For nothing can destroy it
or take that love away...
It is patient and forgiving
when all others are forsaking,
And it never fails or falters
even though the heart is breaking...
It believes beyond believing
when the world around condemns,
And it glows with all the beauty
of the rarest, brightest gems...
It is far beyond defining,
it defies all explanation,
And it still remains a secret
like the mysteries of creation...
A many splendoured miracle
man cannot understand
And another wondrous evidence
of God's tender guiding hand!*

"She is clothed with strength
and dignity,
and she laughs without
fear of the future."

Proverbs 31:25



Upcoming Mission Opportunities:

- contribute baked goods to sell at UPWARD games--proceeds help cover OCC shipping costs
- pray for SD missions trip in June; a special offering will be taken to help offset costs



Fiction

The Witness by Linda Byler (F BYL)

Nonfiction

Praying the Bible by Donald Whitney (NF 248.32)

Gentle and Lowly by Diane Ortland (NF 31.7)

Juvenile Fiction

Changes for Molly by Valerie Tripp (JF TRI)

Children's Fiction

The Good, the Bad, and the Silly by Doug Peterson (CF PET)

The Clumsiest Cowboy by Doug Peterson (CF PET)

Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Mop? by Doug Peterson (CF PET)

The Chicken Noodle Souper Bowl by Doug Peterson (CF PET)

Three Pirates and You! By Lisa Vischer (CF VIS)

Three Pirates and a Duck by Doug Peterson (CF PET)

The Fastest Dodge Ball in the West by Doug Peterson (CF PET)

DVD

Steve McQueen: An American Icon

OCC Impact Story

We thank God for 200 million shoebox gifts around the world. Boxes have been delivered to 175 countries and territories in the 30 years that Operation Christmas Child has been in existence. This would never have been possible without faithful shoebox packers lovingly and prayerfully preparing boxes in Jesus' name. These simple gifts continue to open doors for our local church partners in remote and impoverished communities to share the Gospel with children—many who have never heard about God's love for them.

Elizabeth Groff went on a special journey to help pack the symbolic 200 millionth shoebox gift. Elizabeth, who received a shoebox years ago in an orphanage in Ukraine, traveled to different drop-off locations and processing centers with the shoebox gift to encourage people to continue packing boxes. She wants people to know that God is using shoebox gifts to demonstrate His love to children who are in desperate need. Along her cross-country route, volunteers prayed and placed an item in the shoebox....a koala toy, jump rope, doll, pencil sharpener, flashlight, and a yo-yo. Elizabeth recalls that the yo-yo was her favorite item in the box she received so long ago.



She describes receiving her box at a time when she felt broken and unloved. Her mother had turned to alcohol and her father died when she was only 1. Elizabeth also took care of her younger sister. When she was 7, she decided that they needed to run away to an orphanage. She recalls that the shoebox she received was packed with love and taught her that she was not an orphan, but the daughter of Jesus. Elizabeth was adopted by an American family when she was 13 and now packs shoeboxes with her family.

Elizabeth's journey culminated in war-torn Ukraine. Dozens of children arrived for the outreach event. Displaced and orphaned, they wore the emotional scars of war on their faces. Many had left all of their possessions behind. After her church partner led a special program, the Gospel was presented. Elizabeth gave the 200 millionth gift to 8-year-old named Natalya. She was most excited about the flashlight inside of her box. She said that she was excited to have a light to help her not be afraid when she has to run to the basement during air raids.

9/2: Day trip to see Moses at the Sight and Sound Theater. Have you signed up at the Welcome Center yet? A partial payment of \$50 is due to Jennifer by 5/28.



May 2023

MAY

Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays

02- Judy Moore
 06- Chloe Cooke
 07 -Rachel Jewell
 07- Hannah Hepner
 09- Cookie Wilsey
 11 Anthony Guiffre
 19 Michelle Simpson
 25 Samuel Jewell
 26 Al Law
 26. Dakota Parker
 27-Courtney Harbin
 29-Rebecca (Kay) Hancock
 30-Kayla Hepner
 31- Camden Cooke

Anniversaries

25--Ron & Thelma McConkey
 26--Dean & Jeni Irwin

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 *Ladies of the Light Bible Study @ 10 AM *ROMEO's @ 11:30 AM--Foster's Grille *Deacon's meeting @ 7 PM	3 FREE Food Distribution 5:00-6:30 PM	4 National Day of Prayer Service @ 10AM, WOM @ 10:45AM Connect-Ladies' Bible Study 6 PM	5	6 Brotherhood Fellowship @ 9 AM
7	8	9 Ladies of the Light Bible Study @ 10 AM	10 FREE Food Distribution 5-6:30 PM	11	12	13
14	15	16 Ladies of the Light Bible Study @ 10 AM	17 FREE Food Distribution 5:00-6:30 PM	18 Visitation Ministry begins @ 9:45 AM Connect-Ladies' Bible Study 6 PM	19 Widow's Support Group @ 12 PM	20
21	22	23 Ladies of the Light Bible Study @ 10 AM	24 FREE Food Distribution 5:00-6:30 PM	25	26	27
28 Youth Potluck	29 	30	31			


 HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY