

Perfected Worship Characteristics

Jeremiah 17:9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

14 Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved: for thou art my praise.

A lax environment makes it easy for us to mask ourselves and think nothing of it. A tender heart with God is only a primary level. The aim is wholeness, fellowship and peace with God. When the devil is put out of your "house" he leaves things broken and in disrepair. Like rebellious entertainers that trash hotel rooms or a disgruntled tenant evicted from a rental premises.

Psalm 24:3-4; Matt. 5:8 - Prerequisite for approaching God is purity of heart.

Ps 19:12-13 - Only God knows enough about the human heart to examine it. Inward sickness is the principle cause for failing God. A pure heart or a whole heart, is strong enough to fight off any suggestion of evil practice. Illness within will result in outward manifestation of gross sin or misconduct.

Ps. 139:23-24- It is recommended that one continuously submits their heart to inspection of God. When we submit to God's scrutiny, things will be discovered in private, removing the possibility of it becoming a public matter. A request for God to search the heart is not a prayer befitting a hypocrite, because he already knows more than he is willing to do. We need a heart that hears the Lord and is honest toward life, with a good conscience toward God and man.

Matt. 23:27 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. 28 Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

1 Sam. 16:7; **Prov. 15:11** Hell and destruction are before the Lord: how much more then the hearts of the children of men? God reads our heart before we open our mouths...

Psalm 37:31 – A Christian will not backslide; if the Law of God is in his heart. Psalm 119:9;11 God's word keeps us from suffering defeat.

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Godly Fear

Romans 10:1-4 - Standards observed for their own sake become legalistic and Pharisaical. However, Godly standards of dress, behavior, music, church order, separation, etc., observed to please the Lord, and, formulated on the basis of scriptural principle, effectively set us apart as a peculiar people that live lives considered inscrutable by our peers.

Proverbs 22:28; 23:10 - We must concern ourselves with obtaining God's approval, and not that of society, on our standards. Godless Israel persecuted and stoned the prophets who tried to call them back to standards of decency, morality, and God's order. Most will be irritated with prophetic calls for repentance and a return to the ancient landmarks established by our fathers;

Considering the Greek language; the word *phobos* came from the word *phobomai*, meaning to flee, or to be startled. Thus *phobos* meant flight or terror and was connected with fear of the unknown, fear of the future, and fear of authorities. It also took on the meaning of fear or reverence for God.

Reverential fear is the trademark of the Old Testament. Israel is commanded to fear Jehovah. The fear we hold toward the Lord should be a wholesome dread of not pleasing him. It is a love and honor with a desire not to want to do anything that will cause Him additional hurt.

Romans 3:18; 3:9-18 – No respect for God. One cannot rightly honor their fellow man. In the congregation of the righteous, sin and sinning will run rampant when men lose their reverence for God. Absence of Godly fear can be listed as the chief cause of outright sinning in the church and crime in the streets.

Psalms 19:9 – Fear of God is clean. Reverence for the Lord will operate and give power to honor God's presence and stop letting sin control your life. Only a few will tremble at God's Word and pay the price of ostracism, rejection, scorn, and ridicule heaped on them for following standards considered old-fashioned and out-of-date. Popularity and social acceptance by their very nature cannot be the criteria of right or wrong standards, but rather; what saith the scriptures? ... what will please the Lord; not, what will please the world around me (1 John 2:15-17).

Psalms 10:4 – When men are filled with pride, God is aborted from their thoughts.
Psalm 12:1-8

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Psalm 10:11 – When men lose the fear of God in their minds, they reduce God to their level. This leaves no one above to respect or honor. Note the “God is dead” philosophy that arose in the sixties. Inferring whether God is dead or alive opens the door to questioning everything else about Him and His will.

Genesis 3:5; The historical deception of Satan is to induce men to believe that God’s level can be reached by humanity. The fear of God will help us remember that God’s presence of being is more than just in a building.

Isaiah 58:1 – Many of our forefathers preached hell-hot and heaven sure. Some areas named as sins may not have been clearly defined by Scripture, nevertheless their warnings served as a strong restraint against open sin.

2 Timothy 4:1-4; Preaching strong meat to a present weak generation is an insult to them. It seems at times to upset the leaders more than the followers. Weak teaching and preaching is a breeding ground for all manner of wickedness.

2 Timothy 4:3; “...having itching ears...” are people going around looking for teachers who will tell them just what they want to hear.

“Sin lurks deep in the hearts of the wicked, forever urging them on to evil deeds. They have no fear of God to hold them back.” Psalm 36:1, The Living Bible (TLB).

Proverbs 8:13 – The fear of God is not horror or dread that God is going to strike us down for failing; but rather, respect or reverence, love and devotion with a strong desire not to hurt Him anymore. We have learned how evil entered into this world and what it cost the Savior to free us from its control. We love him too much to continue practicing the evil that caused His death. Proverbs 3:7; 16:6

Proverbs 23:17 says, “Be zealous [passionate] for the fear of the Lord all the day.” NKJV We cannot become too passionate with its fire.

Prov. 29:25 - The fear of man opposes the fear of God. The fear of man ensnares. To fear man is to stand in alarm, anxiety, awe, dread, suspicion, or cowering before mortal men. Those entrapped by this type of fear will live on the run, hiding from harm or reproach, constantly avoiding rejection and confrontation. They become so busy safeguarding themselves that they are soon ineffective in their service for God. Afraid of what man can do, **they deny God what He deserves.**

Acts 4:36-37 Cyprus was an island abundantly blessed with natural resources, famous for its flowers and fruits. Wine and oil were produced in abundance. There was a store of a variety of precious stones. But its chief source of wealth lay in its mines and forests. There were extensive silver, copper, and iron mines. It was a country overflowing in natural wealth. If you owned land on Cyprus, you were probably wealthy.

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A wealthy Levite named Barnabas from another land brings the total amount he received of the sale of his land, which was probably a very large sum, and places it at the apostles' disposal.

Acts 5:1-4 - Now let's look at the next verse: **But** a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession (Acts 5:1).

Notice usage of the word **but**, it is obvious that what had just happened in the fourth chapter of Acts is tied to the record of Ananias and Sapphira in the fifth chapter. In fact, you cannot fully understand what is about to take place without taking into account what previously happened. It would explain the reason for the word **but** at the beginning of the sentence.

Together, Ananias and his wife agreed to withhold some of the profit for themselves. But they still wanted to appear as if they had given the entire amount. Deception was their sin. It was not wrong to keep some of the proceeds from the sale. The money was theirs to do with as they wished. But it was wrong to say they had given all they had received, when in fact that was a lie. They wanted the praises of man more than truth and integrity. Their reputations were important to them.

Acts 5:5-6 - If you desire the praise of man, you will fear man. If you fear man, you will serve him—for you will serve what you fear. Ananias and Sapphira feared man more than God. This caused them to reason away their actions and stand in the presence of God void of holy fear. If they were afraid of God, they never would have lied in His presence.

Acts 5:7-11 - It is quite possible that Ananias and his wife were some of the first to receive salvation through grace. They may have been the biggest givers in the church. They may have sacrificed their social standing and financial security in service to God. But sacrifices are useless when unaccompanied by hearts that love and fear God.

Verse 11; "So great fear came upon all the church." The Bible doesn't say great fear came upon the city, but rather great fear came upon the church (Proverbs 27:5,6). Men over the passage of time can become too familiar with the presence of God (1Chron 13:10; 15:13). Possibly his presence became common to some of them. Even Jesus said men could speak against Him and it would be forgiven, but **not** against the Holy Spirit (Matthew 12:31-32). Jesus was letting them know ahead of time that a holy divine order was about to be restored (Leviticus 10:3).