

Barry G. Johnson, Sr. / www.bgjsr22.com

Bible Paradoxes / The Fear of the Lord; Joy; Paradox



The Joyful Fear of the Lord

Bible Paradoxes

Ps. 2:11; 112:1; 128:1; Prov. 9:10

A paradox is a statement that attracts attention because it seems to be contradictory. This arouses curiosity and we are puzzled. But as we meditate on the statement, we go deeper into some important facet of life and learn something new. Paradoxes are marvelous instructors.

If our faith is to grow and become stronger, it must be tested; and so temptations and trials confront us as the _____, the _____, and the _____ oppose us ([Eph. 2:1-3](#); [1 John 2:15-17](#)).

Ephesians 2:1-3 ESV

¹ And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— ³ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our

flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

1 John 2:15–17 ESV

¹⁵ Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. ¹⁷ And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.

But the enemy doesn't want us to be joyful so he begins to _____ us ([Zech. 3:1–5](#); [Rev. 12:10](#)).

The joy of the Lord and the fear of the Lord must be replaced by *the joyful fear of the Lord*.

The Joy of the Lord

Isaiah 53:3 ESV

³ He was despised and rejected by men,
a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;
and as one from whom men hide their faces
he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

John 15:11 ESV

¹¹ These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

- Strangely some have to be shown that Jesus had joy.
 - They believe it is wrong to have joy in your Christian walk.
 - The thinking is that religion is too serious to have joy. [John 15:11](#) and [John 16:20–24](#), plus [Luke 10:17–24](#).
- “If Jesus had no joy, how could He give it to His disciples and to us?”

Galatians 5:22 ESV

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

- Besides our own salvation and the joy of leading others to Christ, we have so many good causes for rejoicing!
 - We “rejoice in hope of the glory of God” ([Rom. 5:1-2](#); see Rom. 12:12)
 - Sin ultimately brings sorrow and regret, which is one reason why Jesus died for sinners.
 - Faith in Jesus Christ not only gives us the forgiveness of our sins but also the joys of _____ God’s will, the _____ to obey His will, and the _____ of knowing we are pleasing the sovereign God.
 - All that the Father and Son and Spirit have said and done has but one goal: that we might possess eternal life and abundant life and rejoice in doing God’s will.

The Fear of the Lord

- The fear of the Lord is that reverent respect for God that is born, not of terror, but of _____, _____, and _____.

In the spiritual life, joy without fear can be _____ and _____,

while fear without joy can be _____.

Terror paralyzes us but godly fear _____ us.

- Mingled with joy, godly fear is a great source of power.
- The phrases “the fear of the Lord” and “the fear of God” are used more than _____ times in Scripture.
- The believers in the early church walked in the fear of the Lord, and so should we—and be happy about it ([Acts 9:31](#); [Heb. 12:28-29](#)).
- If there is one thing needed in our churches today it is reverence for the sovereign Lord, a holy awe, a genuine fear of God.
 - When Israel came to Mount Sinai, God demonstrated His majesty and His glory, and Moses and the people trembled ([Exod. 19](#)).

- Just as children must learn to respect their parents, students their teachers, and military men and women their officers, so God’s children must learn to respect and honor God *so they might grow into the love of God!*
- “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding” ([Prov. 9:10](#)).
- *Knowing and respecting the instructors is as important as knowing and receiving the lessons they teach.*
- Knowledge deals primarily with people, places, things, facts, and events; but wisdom pulls it all together and reveals values, principles, and truths.
- God blesses and uses those who understand the fear of the Lord, for it is “by the fear of the LORD [that] one departs from evil” ([Prov. 16:6](#)).

The Joyful Fear of the Lord

- Thanks to paradox, reverent fear and joyful blessing can be friends and work together to make each believer a maturing and faithful child of God.
- [Psalm 95](#) begins with rejoicing (vv. 1–5) and ends with worship and the fear of God (vv. 6–11).
- And [Isaiah 11:3](#) says, “His delight is in the fear of the LORD.”
- The Scriptures are rich with narratives about God’s people who experienced joyful fear of the Lord, beginning with Abraham’s offering of his son Isaac ([Gen. 22](#); [Heb. 11:17–19](#))
- and closing with the book of Revelation, where twenty-six times you find Jesus the Lamb but also Jesus the Lion ([Rev. 5:6](#); [Rev. 6:16–17](#)).
- The Lamb died for our sins, but those who oppose Him discover that the Lamb is also the Lion who brings judgment to rebellious sinners.
- At the transfiguration, Jesus was radiant with heavenly glory while discussing with Moses and Elijah His approaching death on the cross ([Luke 9:30–31](#)).

- Jesus suffered greatly on the cross, yet by faith He laid hold of “the joy that was set before Him” ([Heb. 12:2](#); see [Jude 24](#)).
- If we are not prepared for the fiery trial of [1 Peter 4:12–19](#), how can we experience the joy Jesus describes in [Matthew 5:11–12](#)?
- Our Lord’s disciples also demonstrate the balance between the joy and fear of the Lord.
 - When you read the book of Acts, you learn how the early Christians overcame persecution to the glory of God.
 - Their first aim in life was to magnify Jesus Christ and proclaim the gospel ([Acts 4:20](#)).
 - Can our “business as usual” ministries today, and the absence of prayer and courageous witnessing, all mitigate against overcoming the enemy and reaching the lost.
- We are not prepared for the fire ([1 Peter 4:12](#)).
- A Christian is “someone who shares the sufferings of God in this world.”
- Does that describe us?