

Parenting Fearful Children | the realities of good fear

I. Definitions

- Fear is the emotion that arises due to our belief that something is dangerous.
- The single most dangerous thing in the entire cosmos . . . is God.
- Therefore, if fear is an appropriate response for something that is legitimately dangerous, then nothing is to be feared more than God. In fact, biblically speaking, **the only thing we're allowed to fear is God Himself.**
- The best proof of this fact is the Bible repeatedly commands His people not to fear anything. And then the only thing we're commanded to fear in all of Scripture is God and the consequences that come from rebelling against Him.
- Yes, please understand that our relationship with God needs to be motivated by far more than *just* fear. But, my friends, if you don't fear God . . . you don't know God. If you don't fear God, you're not obeying Him. You're living in sin, and you have a lot about which to be afraid.

II. What Good Fear Produces in Our Children

- **Good Fear causes us to consider consequences.**
 - II Chronicles 17:10, 19:7; Proverbs 1:29-33
 - If your child is wisely considering the legitimate spiritual consequences of their choices, and if they are choosing to make better choices because they're afraid of the Primary and/or Secondary Consequences of their sin . . . that's a good fear to have.
- **Good Fear provides confidence.**
 - Isaiah 33:5-6; Proverbs 14:26
 - Does your child's fear produce confidence? If so, it's probably a good fear.
- **Good Fear drives us to learn, understand, and apply God's Truth to our lives.**
 - Job 28:28; Psalm 111:10; Proverbs 1:7; Proverbs 2:1-5; Proverbs 9:10; Proverbs 15:33
 - Does your child's fear motivate them to know more and be wiser? That's a good fear!
- **Good fear produces Christ-likeness.**
 - Isaiah 11:2-3
 - If your child's fear is the same fear that Jesus experienced . . . that is a wonderful fear! Encourage that kind of fear!
- **Good Fear motivates righteous living.**
 - Psalm 19:9; Psalm 34:11-14; Proverbs 15:16, 16:6, 8:13
 - If your child's fear is motivating them to live as God would have them live, that's a good fear.
- **Good Fear persuades us to admonish others.**
 - II Chronicles 19:9; Acts 9:31; II Corinthians 5:11.
 - If your child is sharing the Gospel because he's afraid for his peer's eternal destiny . . . that is an extremely mature fear.
- **The Fear of the Lord motivates us to do hard things.**
 - II Chronicles 14:14
 - If your child's fear of God and the consequences of displeasing Him empower them to flee evil, that is a fear worth engendering.
- **The Fear of the Lord produces Spiritual Success.**
 - Proverbs 10:27, 14:27, 19:23, 22:4, 23:17-18
 - Fear is a good fear when it's a godly fear.
 - We should teach our children to have a visceral, emotional dread of all things evil and wicked.