

SUBSTANCE OF THE FEAR OF THE LORD

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DAVIDS LAST WORDS

(2 Samuel 23:1-3 NKJV)

1 Now these are the last words of David.

Thus says David the son of Jesse;

Thus says the man raised up on high,

The anointed of the God of Jacob,

And the sweet psalmist of Israel:

2 "The Spirit of the Lord spoke by me,

And His word was on my tongue.

3 The God of Israel said,

The Rock of Israel spoke to me:

'He who rules over men must be just,

Ruling in the fear of God

The were the parting words of a son, a man that was raised to be above and not below, one anointed in the midst of his brethren, over his tribe and over the nation of Israel and one who was a psalmist. He functioned as prophet a priest and a king. He had skill, valour, prudent in speech and the Lord was with him. Jesus was born through his lineage, his tribe, his city and sat on his throne.

Last words always point to what will be first. Jesus' last words on the cross was:

(Matthew 27:46 NKJV)

46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"

This is quote from Psalm 22 which David wrote

(Psalms 22:1 NKJV)

1 My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?

Why are You so far from helping Me,

And from the words of My groaning

The context of the Psalm is one of trust and praise unto God and more importantly fear of the Lord. It was not that Jesus felt forsaken, it was that He trusted His Father to deliver him. His last words pointed to the eternal principle that He is the firstborn son of God and this made Him:

(Romans 8:29 NKJV)

29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

(Colossians 1:15 NKJV)

15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.

(Colossians 1:18 NKJV)

18 And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.

and those who accept Him as the firstborn will be part of the church of the firstborn

(Hebrews 12:23 NKJV)

23 to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect,

Israel prophesied his last words over his sons and then lifted up his feet and fell asleep.

Stephens last words pointed to the beginning of a man who witnessed his stoning and death

(Acts 7:59-60 NKJV)

59 And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on God and saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." 60 Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not charge them with this sin." And when he had said this, he fell asleep

Saul who would later become Paul was a witness to the death of Stephen. Paul would become a man of great wisdom and revelation.

Last words point to the beginning.

Dauids last words were:

(2 Samuel 23:1-3 NKJV)

*2 "The Spirit of the Lord spoke by me,
And His word was on my tongue.*

3 The God of Israel said,

The Rock of Israel spoke to me:

***'He who rules over men must be just,
Ruling in the fear of God***

The God of Israel - one who rules as God or the one who prevails. His last words were "Ruling in the fear of God"

To rule is to have dominion or power. Such rulership must be founded on the fear of God. Rulership must be established in the fear of God. Abrahams faith was established when he offered is only son and the Angel said "Now I know that you fear God"

This is not a FEAR FOR GOD it is a the FEAR OF GOD. This is a fear that is instilled into us. It is to know that you are IN HIM and HE is IN you. To be in denotes a fixed position in place, time or state

This fear is not a phobia but a reverential fear to be morally sound to have respect and reverence. A society of liberalism leads to a misunderstanding of liberty in Christ. Such liberty in Christ is to live as you should and not as you please. When the fear of God is absent this leads to liberalism wanting God to be democratic rather than theocratic. An absence of such fear leads to our Christology becoming distorted and ultimately a dysfunctional ecclesiology. We start to develop models of church on the basis of fear of man that is filled with relevance, popularity and being spectacular - temptations that Jesus faced when He was declared the the Beloved Son. We start to define our productivity and success on growth that has nothing to do with the fear of God. Ultimately all it produces is an orphan spirit.

This fear is an intense desire to be obedient to the will of Our Father so that we represent Him accurately. We live in a society that is overcome with fear. Fear of failure, death, crime, war, uncertainty etc. When we live in such an environment of fear we tend to serve God out of obligation rather than obedience. The iniquitous behavioural patterns of the world have become

fearless of God. Their evil desires and sinful practices indicate no fear for the Ancient of Days. Such is this environment of non compliance to the heart of God that the church has exhibited such behaviour even within the House of God. We are once again faced with the scene that Jesus saw when He came to the temple in Jerusalem.

(Matthew 21:12-13 NKJV)

12 Then Jesus went into the temple of God and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. 13 And He said to them, " It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you have made it a 'den of thieves. '"

David exhibited the fear of God when he:

- served Saul (1 Sam 16:21)
- heart was troubled when he cut the robe of Saul (1 Sam 24:5-7)
- lamented for Saul when he died (2 Sam 1:17)
- showed kindness to the grandson of Saul (2 Sam 9)
- collected the bones of Saul and Jonathan (2 Sam 21:12-14)
- confessed that he was a sinner (2 Sam 12:13)

Jehoshaphat appointed leaders for judgement and instructed them to act in the fear of the Lord
(2 Chronicles 19:8-9 NKJV)

8 Moreover in Jerusalem, for the judgment of the Lord and for controversies, Jehoshaphat appointed some of the Levites and priests, and some of the chief fathers of Israel, when they returned to Jerusalem. 9 And he commanded them, saying, "Thus you shall act in the fear of the Lord, faithfully and with a loyal heart

Nehemiah governed in the fear of God

(Nehemiah 5:15 NKJV)

15 But the former governors who were before me laid burdens on the people, and took from them bread and wine, besides forty shekels of silver. Yes, even their servants bore rule over the people, but I did not do so, because of the fear of God

Such fear for God was the beginning of wisdom

(Psalms 111:10 NKJV)

*10 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;
A good understanding have all those who do His commandments.
His praise endures forever.*

It is the wisdom of God

(Job 28:28 NKJV)

*28 And to man He said,
'Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom,
And to depart from evil is understanding. '"*

David's last words was the beginning for Solomon his son who was graced with wisdom. David's fear for God initiated, gave birth to or promoted his son Solomon to live by the wisdom of God. Solomon experienced all the benefits of that wisdom but it was his father who walked in the fear of the Lord. It was this fear that allowed David to rule in the midst of his enemies. He had victory over the lion, the bear, Goliath and several enemies because of the fear of the Lord.

The functions of spirit list the fear of the Lord last because it will give you a beginning
(Isaiah 11:1-3 NKJV)

1 There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse,
And a Branch shall grow out of his roots.

2 The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him,
The Spirit of wisdom and understanding,
The Spirit of counsel and might,
The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.

3 His delight is in the fear of the Lord,
And He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes,
Nor decide by the hearing of His ears

Jesus the Messiah delighted in the fear of the Lord

HEBREW: Delight/Understanding - rûah

h7306. רוּחַ rûah; a primitive root; properly, to blow, i. e. breathe; only (literally) to smell or (by implication, perceive (figuratively, to anticipate, enjoy): — accept, smell, x touch, make of quick understanding. AV (11)- smell 8, touch 1, quick understanding 1, accept 1; (Hiphil) to smell, scent, perceive odour, accept of horse of delight (STRONG)

To have the fear of the Lord is have a smell, an odour or an aroma. When Noah made an offering unto God it smelled of his obedience because he obeyed God and had the fear of the Lord within him. Such an aroma brought a covenant with Noah

(Genesis 8:21 NKJV)

21 And the Lord smelled a soothing aroma. Then the Lord said in His heart, "I will never again curse the ground for man's sake, although the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done.

The fear of the Lord gives of an aroma like fragrant oil. This is an aroma of total obedience to the Father. When our lives are a living sacrifice it is aroma of the fear of the Lord that is within us.

HOW TO UNDERSTAND THE FEAR OF THE LORD?

1 My son, if thou wilt **receive** my words,
and **hide** my commandments with thee;
2 So that thou **incline** thine ear unto wisdom,
and **apply** thine heart to understanding;
3 Yea, if thou **criest** after knowledge,
and **liftest** up thy voice for understanding;
4 If thou **seekest** her as silver,
and **searchest** for her as for hid treasures;
5 Then shalt thou **understand the fear of the Lord,**
and find the knowledge of God.
(Proverbs 2:1-5 KJVStrong's)

When such fear is installed in us it reveals the substance of who we are. It shows the essence, the heart, the inwardness of who really are. It is only a son that can receive the words. Sonship is a key principle to understanding the fear of the Lord. As a son we receive the words of a Father who is the mouth that dispenses wisdom. The fear of the Lord is too receive and live by these words.

Fear is a gripping term that brings tension and uncertainty. God has not given us a spirit of fear.

(2 Timothy 1:7 NKJV)

7 For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

God is a spirit just as fear is a spirit. God has given us the Holy Spirit because of the love that Jesus showed for us at the cross. While we have the person of the Holy Spirit we also need to have a sound mind. We need the mind of Christ which is the mind of the Spirit. Fear is overcome through power, love and a sound mind.

Such behaviour indicates a depraved mind. The principle of a sound mind is absent.

GREEK: Mind - sōphronismos

g4995. σωφρονισμός sōphronismos; from 4994; discipline, i. e. self- control:— sound mind.

AV (1)- sound mind 1;an admonishing or calling to soundness of mind, to moderation and self-control self- control, moderation (STRONG)

There is a lack of self control or discipline which leads to uncontrolled behaviour. A restoring of the mind is essential to the lifestyle change of individuals. Restoration of this mind requires an installation of divine wisdom. The world lives on wisdom that is from beneath while sons of God live on wisdom that is from above.

(James 3:15-17 NKJV)

15 This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. 16 For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there. 17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy

The wisdom from above is the spirit of wisdom which is the wisdom of Christ.

(Isaiah 11:2 NKJV)

*2 The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him,
The Spirit of wisdom*

(Ephesians 1:17 NKJV)

17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him

(1 Corinthians 1:24 NKJV)

24 but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God

The spirit of Christ is the spirit of wisdom and Christ is the wisdom of God. Wisdom has a beginning. In the beginning was the Word which was the wisdom to create the heavens and the earth.

(John 1:1 NKJV)

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God

Christ is the Word of God and He was in the beginning. Christ is the wisdom of God who was in the beginning. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom

(Psalms 111:10 NKJV)

10 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;

A good understanding have all those who do His commandments.

His praise endures forever.

HEBREW: Beginning - rê'siyt

h7225. ראשית rê'siyt; from the same as 7218; the first, in place, time, order or rank (specifically, a firstfruit):— beginning, chief (- est), first (- fruits, part, time), principal thing.

AV (51)- beginning 18, firstfruits 11, first 9, chief 8, misc 5; first, beginning, best, chief beginning first chief choice part (STRONG)

Fear or reverence for God is the principal or the first that initiates wisdom into our lives. This fear is not a phobia but it is to revere God for His greatness and power. It is also to be morally minded to do the right thing.

To be morally sound we must adhere to the moral law. We will not understand the fear of the Lord if we do not receive, hide, incline and apply God's word. We have to cry and search the word

To better understand the substance of the Fear of the Lord we will examine an individual called Cornelius.

1.) STRONG MAN

(Acts 10:1 NKJV)

1 There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of what was called the Italian Regiment

GREEK

g2883. Κορνήλιος Kornēlios; of Latin origin; Cornelius, a Roman:— Cornelius.

AV (10)- Cornelius 10; Cornelius = "of a horn" (STRONG)

His name means "of a horn". The horn is a symbol of strength for an animal.

Cornelius, a Roman centurion of the Italian cohort stationed at Caesarea Maritime. He was the first heathen convert to Christianity. He was a Gentile by birth but a God- fearing man, a half- proselyte leaning toward the Jewish religion, yet uncircumcised and hence considered unclean (CWSDict)

Cornelius revealed his strength when he converted to Christianity. This showed that he feared God. The substance of his strength was the fear of the Lord. While we hold strong positions within the world like Cornelius did, our inward substance of strength is determined by fear for God. The evidence of such strength is to repent, change your mind, convert, transition, migrate when our eyes are enlightened. Such ability reveals the fear of the Lord within an individual.

Jonathan the son of Saul did not possess such strength to join David and died with his father in battle. Samson strength was in his hair but he showed weakness in the flesh when he slept on the lap of Delilah. He had no fear in revealing the secret of his strength.

2.) DEVOUT MAN

(Acts 10:2 NKJV)

*2 a **devout** man and one who feared God with all his household, who gave alms generously to the people, and prayed to God always.*

Cornelius was a man of devotion. He worshipped God and was regarded as a religious man. When we are devoted then we spend time in devotion to God.

It was a devout man that anointed Saul who became Paul

(Acts 22:12-13 NKJV)

12 "Then a certain Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good testimony with all the Jews who dwelt there, 13 came to me; and he stood and said to me, 'Brother Saul, receive your sight.' And at that same hour I looked up at him

The substance of the fear of the Lord is devotion unto God. Such devotion is evident in our worship and reverence for God. Wisdom teaches us what is false devotion and true devotion

3.) FAMILY MAN

(Acts 10:2 NKJV)

*2 a devout man and one who feared God with all his **household**, who gave alms generously to the people, and prayed to God always.*

The substance of the fear of the Lord is when such fear is emulated and instilled to those within the household. He did not talk about the fear of the Lord but through his strength and devotion exemplified such fear to his family.

Achan and his household showed no such fear when they hid the spoils of war in their tent. Korah and his household showed no such fear when they challenged Moses who was God's appointed authority. Job served God as a righteous man but did not teach such fear to his children.

Apostolic culture must be practiced with devotion so that the household understands the fear of the Lord. Wisdom will come to the household when this fear is understood.

Abraham displayed this reverential fear to his son Isaac when he was willing to offer him on the altar.

(Genesis 22:10-12 NKJV)

10 And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son.

11 But the Angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!"

So he said, "Here I am."

12 And He said, "Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me

Wisdom teaches us how to manage our households. Such wisdom comes from doctrine which is released through a Father.

(Proverbs 4:1-2 NKJV)

1 Hear, my children, the instruction of a father,

And give attention to know understanding;

2 For I give you good doctrine:

Do not forsake my law

4.) GENEROUS MAN

(Acts 10:2 NKJV)

*2 a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, who gave alms **generously** to the people, and prayed to God always.*

When we fear the Lord the substance is generosity. It is moral to be generous to those who are less fortunate.

(Proverbs 19:17 NKJV)

*17 He who has pity on the poor lends to the Lord,
And He will pay back what he has given.*

(Proverbs 22:9 NKJV)

*9 He who has a generous eye will be blessed,
For he gives of his bread to the poor.*

(Proverbs 28:27 NKJV)

*27 He who gives to the poor will not lack,
But he who hides his eyes will have many curses.*

(2 Corinthians 9:8-9 NKJV)

6 But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. 7 So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. 8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work. 9 As it is written:

*“He has dispersed abroad,
He has given to the poor;
His righteousness endures forever*

Our righteousness endures by the generosity we show to those who are poor. The fear of the Lord within us causes us to be generous.

Wisdom teaches us who to be generous to

5.) PRAYERFUL MAN

(Acts 10:2 NKJV)

*2 a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, who gave alms generously to the people, and **prayed** to God always.*

The substance of the fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom is to seek the face of God. We pray because we know that without His direction, impartation and grace we cannot live righteously in an immoral world. Such prayer comes from knowing that we are sinful.

(Luke 18:13-14 NKJV)

13 And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me a sinner!’ 14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted

Our prayer must be in the secret place to the Father who is in secret. Jesus prayed regularly to the Father so that He would remain productive on the earth. A devoted, family, generous man is one who prays and seeks the face of God.

Wisdom teaches us how to pray

6.) SEASONAL MAN

(Acts 10:3-4 NKJV)

*3 About the **ninth hour** of the day he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God coming in and **saying** to him, "Cornelius!"*

4 And when he observed him, he was afraid, and said, "What is it, lord?"

So he said to him, "Your prayers and your alms have come up for a memorial before God

9th hour is regarded as the time of the evening sacrifice. This was a time when Jews would pray towards Jerusalem.

Daniel was praying at the time of the evening sacrifice

(Daniel 9:21 NKJV)

21 yes, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering.

Elijah prayed at the time of the evening sacrifice

(1 Kings 18:36 NKJV)

36 And it came to pass, at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near and said, " Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that You are God in Israel and I am Your servant, and that I have done all these things at Your word.

These times are regraded as a "kairos" in God's day.

(Acts 1:7-8 NKJV)

7 And He said to them, " It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. 8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth

It is the Holy Spirit within us that helps us to discern the seasons of God. The fear of God within us ensures that we are in God's times and seasons.

Wisdom gives us discernment to know the seasons of God.

7.) SEEING AND HEARING MAN

(Acts 10:3-4 NKJV)

*3 About the ninth hour of the day he **saw** clearly in a vision an angel of God coming in and **saying** to him, "Cornelius!"*

4 And when he observed him, he was afraid, and said, "What is it, lord?"

So he said to him, "Your prayers and your alms have come up for a memorial before God

When we have the fear of the Lord we are able to see and hear in the spirit. Cornelius prayed and gave generously because he feared God. This became a memorial to the Lord who revealed Himself to Cornelius. God knew that this is a man of strength who was not afraid to be obedient and carry out what is required. He knew that this man feared Him therefore He spoke to Him.

We must have sight and hearing in the spirit. It is a prudent man that forces evil. A prudent man is one of wisdom and the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

(Proverbs 22:3 NKJV)

*3 A prudent man foresees evil and hides himself,
But the simple pass on and are punished.*

We must have an ear to hear what the Spirit of God is saying to us

(Revelation 3:22 NKJV)

22 " He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." "

The multitudes hearts have grown dull

(Matthew 13:13-17 NKJV)

10 And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?"

11 He answered and said to them, " Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. 12 For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. 13 Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. 14 And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says:

*'Hearing you will hear and shall not understand,
And seeing you will see and not perceive;*

15 For the hearts of this people have grown dull.

*Their ears are hard of hearing,
And their eyes they have closed,*

*Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears,
Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn,
So that I should heal them. "'*

16 But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear; 17 for assuredly, I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it

The fear of God ensures that our hearts do not grow dull. To be dull is to grow fat or to become stupid. When oil stands it becomes thick and fatty. It loses its liquidity. It regains its liquidity through heat. Many times the anointing of the Holy Spirit becomes thick in our lives because it just stands. It is not being used. When we have no purpose in the Kingdom of God then we become dull of hearing and seeing. Just like the multitudes we seek for a sign when Jesus the bread of life is within us. The axe head grows dull because it is not sharpened. God allows the fiery trial to bring heat into our lives to revive the liquidity of His anointing upon us.

We can have a:

- heart of stone - Ezekiel 36
- dull heart - Isaiah 6:8
- hardened heart - Exd 9:7
- heart of men - Mark 7:21
- heart of unbelief - Heb 3:12

Our heart reflects our intentions. A pure heart sees all things pure. To the pure all things are pure. When there is no fear of God in our lives then our heart becomes hard.

David had a heart that was after the heart of God. Such a heart was controlled by the fear of God.

(2 Samuel 23:1-3 NKJV)

1 Now these are the last words of David.

Thus says David the son of Jesse;

Thus says the man raised up on high,

The anointed of the God of Jacob,

And the sweet psalmist of Israel:

2 "The Spirit of the Lord spoke by me, And His word was on my tongue.

3 The God of Israel said, The Rock of Israel spoke to me:

'He who rules over men must be just, Ruling in the fear of God

8.) OBSERVANT MAN

(Acts 10:4 NKJV)

4 And when he observed him, he was afraid, and said, "What is it, lord?"

So he said to him, "Your prayers and your alms have come up for a memorial before God.

Cornelius observed the angel of God. One who has the fear of the Lord observes the lifestyle of the messenger.

The Shunammite woman observed Elisha.

(2 Kings 4:8-9 NKJV)

8 Now it happened one day that Elisha went to Shunem, where there was a notable woman, and she persuaded him to eat some food. So it was, as often as he passed by, he would turn in there to eat some food. 9 And she said to her husband, "Look now, I know that this is a holy man of God, who passes by us regularly.

We must observe the message in the messenger and do likewise. We must not follow without discerning the grace that is packaged in the messenger.

(Psalms 37:37 NKJV)

37 Mark the blameless man, and observe the upright;

For the future of that man is peace.

The blameless and the upright are those who fear the Lord.

God observed the righteousness of Noah

(Genesis 7:1 NKJV)

1 Then the Lord said to Noah, "Come into the ark, you and all your household, because I have seen that you are righteous before Me in this generation.

The servant of Saul observed the qualities in David

(1 Samuel 16:18 NKJV)

18 Then one of the servants answered and said, "Look, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, who is skillful in playing, a mighty man of valor, a man of war, prudent in speech, and a handsome person; and the Lord is with him."

God saw the tears of Hezekiah

(Isaiah 38:4-6 NKJV)

4 And the word of the Lord came to Isaiah, saying, 5 "Go and tell Hezekiah, 'Thus says the Lord, the God of David your father: "I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; surely I will add to your days fifteen years. 6 I will deliver you and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria, and I will defend this city."'

Timothy as a faithful son observed the ways of Paul in Christ
(1 Corinthians 4:17 NKJV)

17 For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church.

We are unable to access grace and receive its impartation because we cannot discern it

The multitudes could not discern the grace in John the Baptist as the messenger of God
(Matthew 11:7-10 NKJV)

7 As they departed, Jesus began to say to the multitudes concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? 8 But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Indeed, those who wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. 9 But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet. 10 For this is he of whom it is written:

*'Behold, I send My messenger before Your face,
Who will prepare Your way before You.'*

The messenger might not have the right image or the right environment but they carry the word of the Lord. We access the grace because we observe and know how to receive the word they carry.

Paul's plea with the Corinthian church was not to receive the grace of God in vain
(2 Corinthians 6:1-2 NKJV)

1 We then, as workers together with Him also plead with you not to receive the grace of God in vain. 2 For He says:

*"In an acceptable time I have heard you,
And in the day of salvation I have helped you." Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation*

To receive is to know how to "handle". We must know how to handle the grace God places within a vessel. If we do not know how to receive it its effect will be lost. When it is received in vain then it becomes empty or fruitless this making it of no effect.

God hears at the appointed time and brings salvation to help through a vessel that carries grace. We must observe that grace and know how to access it. We access grace through:

B - Benediction
E - Espousal (Covenant)
N - Near
E - Employment of hands
D - Doctrine
I - Investing
C - Co-operation
T - Thanksgiving

9.) OBEDIENT MAN

(Acts 10:7-8 NKJV)

7 And when the angel who spoke to him had departed, Cornelius called two of his household servants and a devout soldier from among those who waited on him continually. 8 So when he had explained all these things to them, he sent them to Joppa

Cornelius obeyed what he saw and heard. He was obedient to the instruction he received from the angel of the Lord. An angel is a messenger from God.

The Galatian church received Paul as an angel of God
(Galatians 4:13-14 NKJV)

13 You know that because of physical infirmity I preached the gospel to you at the first. 14 And my trial which was in my flesh you did not despise or reject, but you received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus

How we receive a messenger determines how we will respond. The response is evidenced through obedience. As we grow from a child to a son in the Kingdom of God we listen to messengers that equip us to hear and see. When we hear the angel of the Lord we must have a heart to obey the word of the Lord. It is the fear of God that causes us to act upon the word we receive.

When we receive a messenger we receive Christ who is the Messenger of the Covenant
(Matthew 10:40 NKJV)

40 " He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.

Obedience precedes faith. Abraham obeyed God in faith
(Hebrews 11:8 NKJV)

8 By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.

Faith comes by hearing the word of God
(Romans 10:17 NKJV)

17 So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

We hear because there is a preacher
(Romans 10:14-15 NKJV)

14 How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? 15 And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written:

*"How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace,
Who bring glad tidings of good things!"*

We must obey in faith when we have heard. We once walked as the sons of disobedience.
(Ephesians 2:1-2 NKJV)

1 And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, 2 in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience

We are elected by the foreknowledge of God for obedience
(1 Peter 1:1-2 NKJV)

1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ,

To the pilgrims of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, 2 elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied

10.) JUST MAN

(Acts 10:22 NKJV)

22 And they said, "Cornelius the centurion, a **just man**, one who fears God and has a good reputation among all the nation of the Jews, was divinely instructed by a holy angel to summon you to his house, and to hear words from you."

The fear of God within us makes us just. Being just is to render what is due. It is to administer righteous judgement.

David feared God and administered justice to the people

(2 Samuel 8:15 NKJV)

15 So David reigned over all Israel; and David administered judgment and justice to all his people.

We are seated with Christ and He is seated on the throne with God. The foundation of this throne is righteousness and justice

(Psalms 89:14 NKJV)

14 Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne;
Mercy and truth go before Your face.

The Pharisees want to administer justice according to the law but Jesus according to mercy

(John 8:3-5 NKJV)

3 Then the scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman caught in adultery. And when they had set her in the midst, 4 they said to Him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act. 5 Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?"

(John 8:9-11 NKJV)

10 When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, "Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?"

11 She said, "No one, Lord."

And Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more

There are weightier matters of the law.

(Matthew 23:23 NKJV)

23 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithes of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone.

Our offerings and songs of worship will not affect God until justice and righteousness flows like a river.

(Amos 5:22-24 NKJV)

22 Though you offer Me burnt offerings and your grain offerings,
I will not accept them,

Nor will I regard your fattened peace offerings.

23 Take away from Me the noise of your songs,
For I will not hear the melody of your stringed instruments.

24 But let justice run down like water,
And righteousness like a mighty stream

We cannot continue in life trying to appease God through our offerings and songs thinking that this will move His heart. God is looking for a God fearer who will practice righteousness and dispense justice because He is righteous and He is the God who judges between the living and the dead.

11.) REPUTABLE MAN

(Acts 10:22 NKJV)

22 And they said, "Cornelius the centurion, a just man, one who fears God and has a good reputation among all the nation of the Jews, was divinely instructed by a holy angel to summon you to his house, and to hear words from you."

To have a good reputation is to have a good report or to be a witness. We are endowed with the power of the Holy Spirit to be witnesses of Christ.

(Acts 1:8 NKJV)

8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Our reputation is dependent on how we represent Christ. Christ made Himself of no reputation when He took the form of a bondservant to come in the likeness of men.

(Philippians 2:7 NKJV)

7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.

Christ emptied Himself to come in the likeness of men. We must fill ourselves to have the reputation of Christ.

Reputation is connected to a name. Jesus gave us His Name as authority. Our reputation as sons of God is connected to how we represent Jesus Christ the Son of God.

(Exodus 20:24 NKJV)

24 An altar of earth you shall make for Me, and you shall sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and your peace offerings, your sheep and your oxen. In every place where I record My name I will come to you, and I will bless you.

Wherever God's name is recorded His presence and blessing is there. This is dependent on how we represent His Name.

(Leviticus 19:12 NKJV)

12 And you shall not swear by My name falsely, nor shall you profane the name of your God: I am the Lord.

Moral and ceremonial laws were given to the people to represent God to each other and to strangers. We profane His name and His reputation when we behave immorally

(1 Samuel 25:5 NKJV)

5 David sent ten young men; and David said to the young men, "Go up to Carmel, go to Nabal, and greet him in my name.

David sent his men to greet Nabal in his name. David had a reputation but Nabal did not see him as a representative of God.

One of ten commandments remind us not to use the Name of the Lord in vain

(Exodus 20:7 NKJV)

7 "You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain.

To “take” is to bear, lift, support carry etc

We bear the Name of the Father on our foreheads as a first fruit people

(Revelation 14:1 NKJV)

1 Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on their foreheads

Our reputation must die like the grain of wheat that falls to the ground so that we can be a witness of Father’s heart toward others.

12.) EXPECTANT MAN

(Acts 10:24 NKJV)

*24 And the following day they entered Caesarea. Now Cornelius was **waiting** for them, and had called together his relatives and close friends.*

After Cornelius obeyed the messenger sent from God he was expectant. He was waiting enthusiastically for the return of those he sent.

When we obey God in the fear of the Lord we must be expectant that God will answer.

Ruth waited the whole night before receiving a reward for obedience to the instruction from Boaz

(Ruth 3:13-15 NKJV)

8 Now it happened at midnight that the man was startled, and turned himself; and there, a woman was lying at his feet. 9 And he said, “Who are you?”

So she answered, “I am Ruth, your maidservant. Take your maidservant under your wing, for you are a close relative.”

10 Then he said, “Blessed are you of the Lord, my daughter! For you have shown more kindness at the end than at the beginning, in that you did not go after young men, whether poor or rich. 11 And now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do for you all that you request, for all the people of my town know that you are a virtuous woman. 12 Now it is true that I am a close relative; however, there is a relative closer than I. 13 Stay this night, and in the morning it shall be that if he will perform the duty of a close relative for you—good; let him do it. But if he does not want to perform the duty for you, then I will perform the duty for you, as the Lord lives! Lie down until morning.”

14 So she lay at his feet until morning, and she arose before one could recognize another. Then he said, “Do not let it be known that the woman came to the threshing floor.” 15 Also he said, “Bring the shawl that is on you and hold it.” And when she held it, he measured six ephahs of barley, and laid it on her. Then she went into the city

We must be expectant in our waiting. When we operate in the fear of the Lord we remain expectant the God will perform His word.

David waited on the Lord and God delivered him from the pit

(Psalms 40:1-2 NKJV)

1 I waited patiently for the Lord;

And He inclined to me,

And heard my cry.

2 He also brought me up out of a horrible pit,

Out of the miry clay,

And set my feet upon a rock,

And established my steps

Abraham obeyed in faith and waited for the city
(Hebrews 11:8-10 NKJV)

8 By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. 9 By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; 10 for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God

13.) INFLUENTIAL MAN

(Acts 10:24 NKJV)

*24 And the following day they entered Caesarea. Now Cornelius was waiting for them, and had **called together his relatives and close friends.***

A God fearer is one who has influence over people to gather them to receive the word of God. While Cornelius had a spiritual encounter with the Lord they needed the word of God from an Apostle of God to shift them into a new season in God.

One who fears God has their family standing with them and therefore can exert influence. Such influence is not for social gatherings but to receive the present truth. While we might have influence to gather people for social events it requires grace to gather people to hear the word of God.

We must not use the wrong measurements to determine influence. To have influence is to affect generations to come.

EVIL INFLUENCE

Solomon was influenced by his wives

(1 Kings 11:3-4 NKJV)

3 And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines; and his wives turned away his heart. 4 For it was so, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned his heart after other gods; and his heart was not loyal to the Lord his God, as was the heart of his father David

Jeroboam influenced the nation of Israel

(2 Kings 17:21-22 NKJV)

21 For He tore Israel from the house of David, and they made Jeroboam the son of Nebat king. Then Jeroboam drove Israel from following the Lord, and made them commit a great sin. 22 For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they did not depart from them

Friendships can influence our soul

(Proverbs 22:24-25 NKJV)

*24 Make no friendship with an angry man,
And with a furious man do not go,
25 Lest you learn his ways
And set a snare for your soul*

Little leaven influences the whole lump

(1 Corinthians 5:6-7 NKJV)

6 Your glorying is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? 7 Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.

GOOD INFLUENCE

Ezra the scribe brought the people to repentance

(Ezra 10:1 NKJV)

1 Now while Ezra was praying, and while he was confessing, weeping, and bowing down before the house of God, a very large assembly of men, women, and children gathered to him from Israel; for the people wept very bitterly

We must be Kingdom leaven

(Matthew 13:33 NKJV)

33 Another parable He spoke to them: "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened."

How we see influences our Body

(Luke 11:34 NKJV)

34 The lamp of the body is the eye. Therefore, when your eye is good, your whole body also is full of light. But when your eye is bad, your body also is full of darkness

Abel's more excellent sacrifice still speaks

(Hebrews 11:4 NKJV)

4 By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks

Many Kings walked in the ways of David because he had a good influence on the nation of Israel

14.) HUMBLE MAN

(Acts 10:25 NKJV)

25 As Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshiped him.

The fear of the Lord expresses humility. God lifts us up when we humble ourselves in the sight of the Lord.

(James 4:10 NKJV)

10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.

The sight of the Lord is one who represents the Lord. Peter was a messenger of God who represented Christ.

To bow at the feet is to acknowledge the feet of the one that brings good news

(Romans 10:15 NKJV)

14 How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? 15 And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written:

*"How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace,
Who bring glad tidings of good things!"*

Cornelius ensured that judgement did come on his house by bowing at the feet of Peter

(Matthew 10:14-15 NKJV)

14 And whoever will not receive you nor hear your words, when you depart from that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet. 15 Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city

This is not a person who worships a man this is a person who fears God and acknowledges that God reveals His purpose, dispenses grace and releases the word of the Lord through His servants.

Such reception crafted an environment for the word and the spirit to move. It brought fulfilment to the scriptures that the Gentiles would see the light

(Isaiah 60:3 NKJV)

*3 The Gentiles shall come to your light,
And kings to the brightness of your rising.*

(Luke 2:29-32 NKJV)

*29 "Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace,
According to Your word;*

30 For my eyes have seen Your salvation

31 Which You have prepared before the face of all peoples,

*32 A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles,
And the glory of Your people Israel*

When we receive grace in humility we bring fulfilment to the word in our lives.

Within eastern cultures the bowing down at the feet was a symbol of honor and receptivity. Many cultures in the east still practice this tradition. To touch the feet is to receive what the feet carries. Jesus washed the feet of the disciples before He went to the cross to demonstrate humility and servanthood but also to prepare their feet to carry the good news of the Kingdom of God.

15.) RELATIONAL MAN

(Acts 10:27 NKJV)

27 And as he talked with him, he went in and found many who had come together.

Cornelius was a relational man. He talked with Peter and introduced Peter to all those he had influence over. The fear of the Lord capacitates us to be relational. Relationships are essential for the building of the Kingdom of God.

There are different kind of relationships:

Blood relations

These are biological relationships that can be built on sentiment and emotion. Such relationships can hinder the purpose of God because it is sometimes limited by emotion and feelings rather than grace discernment

(Numbers 12:1-2 NKJV)

1 Then Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married; for he had married an Ethiopian woman. 2 So they said, "Has the Lord indeed spoken only through Moses? Has He not spoken through us also?" And the Lord heard it

Because Moses married an Ethiopian woman and not one of their own the brother and sister began to question if Moses could hear God. They did not see what God did through Moses but saw their brother and not the chosen servant of God.

David understood that blood relations can stand in the way of what God wanted to accomplish through him

(1 Samuel 22:3-4 NKJV)

3 Then David went from there to Mizpah of Moab; and he said to the king of Moab, "Please let my father and mother come here with you, till I know what God will do for me." 4 So he brought them before the king of Moab, and they dwelt with him all the time that David was in the stronghold

David had to leave his mother and father behind so that he could continue in the purpose of God

Elisha had to disconnect from all sentiment to pursue grace

(1 Kings 19:20 NKJV)

20 And he left the oxen and ran after Elijah, and said, "Please let me kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow you."

And he said to him, "Go back again, for what have I done to you

Case Study - King Jehoshaphat

Marriage relations

Jehoshaphat allied himself through marriage

(2 Chronicles 18:1 NKJV)

1 Jehoshaphat had riches and honor in abundance; and by marriage he allied himself with Ahab

Such an alliance proved deadly for Jehoshaphat who entered into war through an alliance

(2 Chronicles 18:3 NKJV)

3 So Ahab king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat king of Judah, "Will you go with me against Ramoth Gilead?"

And he answered him, "I am as you are, and my people as your people; we will be with you in the war

Relationships of this nature cause people to act out of emotion and sentiment and not out of discernment.

Marriage relationships were arranged to advance territories and expand influence. When David married Michal she was the daughter of the King Saul. She remained the daughter of Saul but not the wife of David. Therefore she despised him when she saw him dancing before the ark when it was brought into Jerusalem

(2 Samuel 6:20 NKJV)

20 Then David returned to bless his household. And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, "How glorious was the king of Israel today, uncovering himself today in the eyes of the maids of his servants, as one of the base fellows shamelessly uncovers himself

King Ahab married Jezebel who was the daughter of the King of the Sidonians

(1 Kings 16:31 NKJV)

31 And it came to pass, as though it had been a trivial thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took as wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians; and he went and served Baal and worshiped him

This marriage brought great apostasy into the nation of Israel who was under the rule of Jezebel.

Business relations

Jehoshaphat allied with King Ahaziah for business relationships

(2 Chronicles 20:35-37 NKJV)

35 After this Jehoshaphat king of Judah allied himself with Ahaziah king of Israel, who acted very wickedly. 36 And he allied himself with him to make ships to go to Tarshish, and they made the ships in Ezion Geber. 37 But Eliezer the son of Dodavah of Mareshah prophesied against Jehoshaphat, saying, "Because you have allied yourself with Ahaziah, the Lord has destroyed your works." Then the ships were wrecked, so that they were not able to go to Tarshish

Business relations can advance the Kingdom when people have the same beliefs and values. When there is a conflict of beliefs it leads to strife and contention

Kingdom relations

King Jehoshaphat allied with the King of Israel and the King of Edom to make war against the Moabites

(2 Kings 3:5-9 NKJV)

5 But it happened, when Ahab died, that the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel.

6 So King Jehoram went out of Samaria at that time and mustered all Israel. 7 Then he went and sent to Jehoshaphat king of Judah, saying, "The king of Moab has rebelled against me. Will you go with me to fight against Moab?"

And he said, "I will go up; I am as you are, my people as your people, my horses as your horses." 8 Then he said, "Which way shall we go up?"

And he answered, "By way of the Wilderness of Edom."

9 So the king of Israel went with the king of Judah and the king of Edom, and they marched on that roundabout route seven days; and there was no water for the army, nor for the animals that followed them

Grace relations

King Jehoshaphat understood that to win battles you must have grace connections

(2 Kings 3:11-12 NKJV)

11 But Jehoshaphat said, "Is there no prophet of the Lord here, that we may inquire of the Lord by him?"

So one of the servants of the king of Israel answered and said, "Elisha the son of Shaphat is here, who poured water on the hands of Elijah."

12 And Jehoshaphat said, "The word of the Lord is with him." So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom went down to him

(1 Kings 22:7 NKJV)

7 And Jehoshaphat said, "Is there not still a prophet of the Lord here, that we may inquire of Him?"

A person who fears God must have great discernment with regards to relationships. We must engage relationships that develop, equip and make us more productive.

The early church continued steadfastly in Kingdom culture that produced common relations.

(Acts 2:42-45 NKJV)

42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. 43 Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. 44 Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, 45 and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need

To have such relations you need the intrinsic factor which is love.