

Fear of the Lord

A Family Study from Today in the Word

This Family Study is a companion to the *Today in the Word* devotional *The Fear of the Lord* (April 2024). The whole family can learn from God's Word together. In each of the four lessons, you will:



Read

Read a passage
in the Bible



Understand

Understand the biblical
text in a deeper way



Imagine

Imagine the lesson
with hands-on activities

About Our Great and Awesome God

The Bible tells us that we are to fear the Lord (Prov. 9:10). How do we explain this concept to our children? Even though it may be challenging, we believe teaching children to fear God is important. Fearing God means we are in awe of Him and recognize His greatness. He is all-powerful. But fear goes beyond just knowing about God, it demands a response. When we fear God, we not only are in awe of Him but also obey Him. We should explain to our children that fearing God is not the same as being scared. In fact, knowing God helps us not to be afraid.



This *Today in the Word* family study was written by Moody Bible Institute students Haylee Grindal and Ashleigh Hildebrandt under the direction of Elizabeth Smith, Program Head and Associate Professor of Moody's Children and Family Ministry program. Please visit moody.edu/academics/programs/children-family-ministry for more information.

TODAY IN THE **WORD**

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10 Verses to Help Us

Understand the Fear and Awe of God

1

To fear God means to revere or have deep respect for Him (Psalm 33:8).

2

We fear the Lord because He is powerful (Joshua 4:24).

3

Fearing God and keeping His commands is our main job (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

4

If we love God, we must obey Him (John 14:15).

5

Fearing God leads to wisdom (Psalm 111:10).

6

The more we know God, the more we hate evil (Proverbs 8:13).

7

God gives mercy to those who fear Him (Luke 1:50).

8

Knowing God takes away fear and gives us confidence (Proverbs 3:7).

9

We can overcome fear by trusting in our powerful God (Psalm 56:3).

10

We don't need to fear anyone if God is on our side (Psalm 27:1).

Why Should We Fear God?

Memory Verse

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom.—Psalm 111:10



Read Psalm 111

When you think of fear, you might think about scary things like the dark, thunderstorms, or maybe monsters. Fearing God is completely different! Instead of being afraid of God, fearing Him means to respect and obey Him, because we are in awe of Him. Being in awe of God is experiencing how amazing, wonderful, and beautiful God is. We can't help but say "WOW"! When we fear God by obeying Him and we are in awe of God, we worship Him. And that is the very best, most wonderful way to live, ever.



Understand

1. What makes you afraid?
2. What does it mean to fear God?
3. What does fearing God NOT mean?
4. Why does the Bible tell us it is important to fear God?
5. Read Psalm 111 again. What do we learn about God?
6. What does it look like for us to fear God? (See verse 10.)



Imagine

Parents, help explain the fear of God to your children by using a lighter or match and lighting a candle. Or, if you have an outdoor firepit, start a campfire and sit around it for this conversation. Show them the flame and let them admire it. Explain that while we might love to watch a flickering flame or a campfire, we also have to respect fire. If it is used in the wrong way, it could burn us or become dangerous. In a similar way, we admire and enjoy God, but we need to also respect Him. Not respecting and obeying His commands is harmful and dangerous. God made rules for our safety and protection.



Obeying God's Commands

Memory Verse

*Fear God and keep his commandments,
for this is the duty of all mankind.—Ecclesiastes 12:13*



Read Ecclesiastes 12:9-14

Our memory verse today, Ecclesiastes 12:13, tells us that we should fear God and keep His commandments. Obeying God is a response to fearing and being in awe of Him! We should obey God, just like we obey our parents or other people in authority. When we obey our parents, we show that we love and respect them. In the same way, obedience to God shows that we understand who He is. It shows that we love and respect Him!



Understand

1. What does it mean to obey? Why is it important to obey rules?
2. Why should we obey God's commands?
3. Read Ecclesiastes 12:13. What is the duty of all people?
4. What does it show God when we obey His commands?
5. Have you ever disobeyed your mom or dad? What happened?
6. Think of a time where you obeyed one of God's commands. What did you do? How do you think it made God feel?



Imagine

Parents, let's play a game of Simon Says with your children! You will play the role of "Simon." Explain that you will call out actions, such as patting their head or touching their knee. The catch is that they should *only* do the action if you say "Simon says" before the command. If they do the action without you saying "Simon says," they are out of the game and will sit down. For example, if you say, "Simon says touch your nose," they touch their nose and they get to continue playing. If you *only* say, "Touch your nose" (without "Simon says"), they should *not* touch their nose. If they touch their nose when they shouldn't, they are "out" and sit down. The last one standing is the winner. In the same way that we follow the rules of Simon Says, we are to follow the commands of God! When we obey God, we show that we respect and love Him.



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God Gives Us Wisdom

Memory Verse

*The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge,
but fools despise wisdom and instruction.—Proverbs 1:7*



Read 1 Kings 3:5–12; Proverbs 1:1–7

When you think of the word *wisdom*, what comes to mind? Wisdom does come from our prior knowledge and experience, but the Bible points us to something more! When God told King Solomon He would grant any request. Solomon asked God for wisdom. And God gave it to him! Later, Solomon wrote the book of Proverbs which was filled with wise advice. As Christians, we are told that “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge” (Prov. 1:7). When we ask God for wisdom, He promises to give it to us (James 1:5).



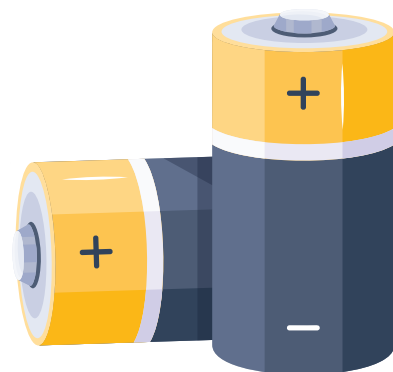
Understand

1. Who was Solomon?
2. What did Solomon ask God to give him? (See 1 Kings 3:5–12.)
3. What does it mean to have wisdom?
4. Why did Solomon write the book of Proverbs? (See Proverbs 1:1.)
5. What are wise people supposed to do?
6. What happens when we fear God in the right way?



Imagine

Parents, take batteries out of an item that would normally require batteries, such as a remote control or a flashlight. Have your child try to work the item. Ask them if it works (obviously, it will not). Allow the child to use their deductive reasoning skills and their prior experience to figure out why the object is not working. When they figure out there are no batteries, place the batteries back into the object and ask them to try to work the object again. Did it work this time? Ask them how they knew how to fix it. Did that ever happen before? Wisdom is using the knowledge that we already have. Encourage them to use their wisdom when they need to figure something out. And remind them that we can always ask God for wisdom!



God Helps Us Not to Fear

Memory Verse

When I am afraid, I put my trust in you.—Psalm 56:3



Read Mark 4:35-41

In this passage, we see how Jesus taught His disciples not to fear. The disciples and Jesus were sailing across a sea when a bad windstorm began. Water was crashing on the side of the boat, and the disciples thought they were going to drown. They were so scared that they woke up Jesus from His sleep. Jesus told the wind and the waves to stop, and they stopped! How cool is that? Even if we have a big storm in our lives, God is in control. We can always turn to Him. We can fear God (He created everything and commands His creation!), without being afraid of Him.



Understand

1. What were Jesus and His disciples doing when the storm began?
2. How would you have felt if you were in the boat?
3. What did Jesus tell the wind and the waves to do?
4. How did the disciples react when Jesus calmed the wind and the waves?
5. Have you ever been scared like that?
6. What are some ways that you can turn to God in your own life?



Imagine

Parents, let's make a pocket pal with your kids! Find a small object, like a small rock, that will fit easily into their pocket. Decorate it and write today's memory verse reference on it. Have them keep this object with them in their pocket every time they go somewhere new. Talk to them about times when they have felt afraid. Tell them that every time they see or feel the object in their pocket, they can be reminded that their powerful God is with them. No matter what happens, we can trust in God (Psalm 56:3). When God is with us, we never have to be afraid!

