

AN UNHOLY FEAR OF GOD TAKES PEOPLE TO HELL

Unholy fear causes people to run away from God due to untrust, guilt, fear of punishment, or resistance to God's will. Sin persists in unholy fear with desire to live in one's own strength and resources. Living in sin is the root issue. Transgressions of God's law for living is the fruit of sin. Sin is active unbelief in Jesus and distrust in God's provision. Brokenness is the resulting damage, pain, and separations caused by sin.

Holy fear is reverence for God's authority in which a person draws near to God in love and obedience. Through faith in Jesus, new birth in Christ allows for living in God's strength and resources which is the opposite of living in sin.

Perfect love casts out unholy fear.

Satan, the accuser, declares that God is not to be trusted. That God is holding back something good from humanity that can be experienced through our own independence and self-sufficiency. Believing Satan's lie and acting upon it is sin. Not trusting God, and belief that God is holding us back from something good is an unholy fear of God. Revelation 21:8 The fearful will have their part in the lake which burns with fire, which is the second death.

Satan's accusation and humanity believing it, leads people to run from God. But God designed our very body and soul and spirit to live in the design for love and trust in Him. Without Him we can do nothing of eternal value. God designed humanity to live in perfect trust and love in Him through which we are blessed by His resources, His strength, and His wisdom. John 15:5

Satan's accusation and humanity believing it, leads religious people to believe that God is a punisher and He uses retributive punishment to achieve restoration. Humanity is deceived into thinking that God punishes the innocent in order to restore the guilty and that Christ died to satisfy justice and mercy. But rather, Christ died a sinless death to defeat sin and death, arising with authority to defeat sin in the life of the believer. Romans 8:3,2,1

Humanity is deceived into thinking that God is so offended by our sin that He will torture the unrepentant broken sinner forever in the worst imaginable way. But love casts out fear.

Satan's accusation and humanity believing it, leads religious people to believe that God cannot forgive and restore a person without some payment for the offense against His Holiness and His Justice. But Scripture says that it is the goodness of God that leads a person to repentance. And that God first loved us while we were yet sinners. And that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself and not counting our sins against us. Scripture indicates that God freely forgives without any retribution and calls upon us to do likewise. Jesus forgave without retribution. Ephesians 4:32 2 Cor. 5 Rom. 5

Satan's accusation and humanity believing it, leads religious people to believe that our transgressions are more offensive to God than our sin. But sin is simply living outside God's design for life and outside of relationship with God. The result of this lifestyle of sin leads to lying, stealing, killing, and other transgressions. Sin is the root, and transgression is the fruit. So God is not nearly as concerned about the transgressions as He is about sin. God is declaring a transformation of life brought on by a new birth in Christ. Without being born again and made into a new creation, there is no hope for victory over living a lifestyle of transgressing against the laws of God's design. John 3:3 2 Cor. 5:17-21

The crucifixion of Jesus proves that Satan is a liar. Sinless Jesus willingly gave His physical life to prove that God's character is unflawed. God is love. God does not retaliate. God does not withhold from humanity what is good and what is best. God can be trusted to do what He says and God says that He will restore all things to Himself by defeating the accuser and by removing sin from His creation. Jesus came to take away the sin of the world. John 1:29 Revelation 20-22 Genesis 3:15; 12:3 Satan is cast down to earth because only humanity still believes his lies. Revelation 12

He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. 1 John 3:8

In Christ, you are complete, having been circumcised by Christ putting off the body of the flesh, having been buried with Him in baptism and raised to newness of life, having forgiven you of all your trespasses, having cancelled any condemnation against you, and having disarmed the powers and authorities, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

See Colossians 2:9-15

God sent His own Son in the likeness of sinful man as an offering for sin. And He condemned sin in the flesh [subdued it and overcame it in the person of His own Son], Romans 8:3b

Jesus declared that moral failure was not the greatest threat to humanity. A distorted view of God is the greatest threat to humanity. In a distorted view of God, unholy fear of God replaces trust and God is seen as unsafe and untrustworthy. Instead of trusting God, people often run from God and they run from those who teach this distorted and threatening view of God.

The judgment of God is often distorted. Sin condemns people. God's judgment is not condemnation imposed by God. God's judgment is simply truth revealed. God's light exposes reality and truth. When people see the truth His light reveals, and when they embrace truth, they are experiencing a judgment that sets them free. Those who reject the light of truth experience loss and damage. This damage is not God's punishment, but rather the consequences of sin. Jesus did not come to condemn the world.
John 3:17

God's grace is always poured out and available. Human response is crucial. God demonstrated His love while we were still sinners. Christ died for us. Romans 5:8

The cross was not designed to change God's attitude toward us. God never changes. The cross does not alter God. The cross reveals the God who loves, freely forgives, and does not retaliate. The resurrection validates what the cross revealed.

False theologies declare God uses violence in order to forgive, that God rules by coercion and fear, and that God enforces obedience by threats. Any penal substitutionary work of Christ should be rejected because the life and death of Christ refutes it. Christ did a non-penal substitutionary work at His death and resurrection. In Christ, sin was defeated for humanity and sin was condemned to its demise.

Romans 8:3

God must be understood as Jesus reveals Him. When Jesus is allowed to define God, the believer can have a relationship with Him grounded in truth, trust, and love. Trust can not flourish in fear. Love cannot flourish without trust. The light of truth and reality according to God's design produces judgment that is liberating. The light of truth abolishes evil from its presence. Jesus, the light of truth, made apparent at the cross, defeated sin and Satan. Satan has been cast down to earth and no longer has access to the courts of Heaven because the light of truth has judged him and condemned him.

The cross has proved that our unholy fear of God is unwarranted and that our trust in Him is warranted. God was in Christ on the cross, not counting our sins against us. God freely forgives and holds no one back from coming to Him for restoration.

The judgment of God is not defined as to God deciding how much pain to inflict or to where the pain is subjected. The judgment of God is the moment the light of truth confronts the reality of God's design for life. This is judgment, that the light has come into the world. John 3:19. Judgment is not an action that God takes against people. Judgment is what happens when truth is revealed and either welcomed or rejected by a person. In the Bible, judgment is always linked with unveiling truth rather than pronouncing punishment. Turning people over to their persistence in sin is not God punishing, but revelation of reality of sin's consequences. Romans 1:24,26,28 God is light, truth, and love. The wicked perish at the presence of the Lord. Psalm 68:2

This perishing is not God attacking or punishing, or retaliating. Evil simply cannot exist in harmony with truth and cannot survive the unveiling of truth. Salvation is the invitation to be healed by the truth. People are free to respond to the truth. Judgment is the consequence of how a person receives or rejects the truth. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. At the cross, judgment occurs but it is not God inflicting punishment on Jesus in our place. Rather, truth is fully revealed. Human violence and sin is revealed at its worst moment. Religious hypocrisy is revealed. The fear driven power of man is revealed. God's response is not retaliation, but forgiveness. Father, forgive them. Luke 23:34.

Judgment does not require punishment to satisfy justice. Judgment at the cross reveals the deepest contrast between human fear and Divine Love.

When believers stand before the judgment seat of Christ, those whose life was shaped by truth experience liberation in God's love. Those who stand at the great white throne judgment because they persistently rejected truth experience loss. Their outcome is not imposed by the anger of God, but rather the second death is the natural consequence of what that person chose.

When judgment is defined as a threat from God, fear becomes an obstacle to trust and faith. Fear does not yield trust and a transformed life. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. John 4:18

Jesus reveals a God who trusts truth to do its work. Judgment is not God acting against humanity. Judgment is reality being seen in all of its truth. God's design for life is that we give Him control of our life. If we don't give God control, then we are living in sin, and the consequences of sin are transgressions and death.