



Daily Verse and Comment

Psalm 34:11-14

(11) Come, you children, listen to me;
I will teach you the fear of the LORD.
(12) Who *is* the man *who* desires life,
And loves *many* days, that he may see good?
(13) Keep your tongue from evil,
And your lips from speaking deceit.
(14) Depart from evil and do good;
Seek peace and pursue it.

New King James Version

David makes an interesting statement here regarding the fear of [God](#). We must learn the fear of the Lord; it is not something we have by nature. We find the evidence of this in the conduct of all who have lived since Adam and Eve. [Romans 3:18](#) is just as true now as it always has been: "There is no fear of God before their eyes." The reason it must be taught becomes obvious once we understand that it arises and grows from one's relationship with God.

The relationship begins with God's calling. Before that, we may have sincerely believed that He exists, but we certainly did not know Him. Respect cannot exist between two parties—especially the quality of respect God desires—when they do not even know each other. Knowing *of* someone is far different from knowing him. This is certainly true of God, as [the world](#) has been flooded with misinformation about Him. Psalm 34:8 supports this: "Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man who trusts in Him!" David exhorts us to experience a relationship with Him, for only then will we know that He is indeed good.

David adds in verses 12-14: "Who is the man who desires life, and loves many days, that he may see good? Keep your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking guile. Depart from evil and do good; seek [peace](#) and pursue

it." He urges us to understand that the fear of the Lord grows as the relationship develops. The relationship develops when we follow through in submission to God in conforming to His way of life. As we do this, we begin to get a taste of what it would be like to spend eternity as His companion in marriage.

The desires to please Him, not to disappoint Him, and to strive to protect the relationship grow from abject self-concern to preserve one's life to reverential awe for His great [goodness](#) and zealous desire to preserve and glorify His name within an increasingly intimate relationship. We can see how this would motivate what we do with our life and time. It would drive and guide us in how we did things. If we truly respect someone, we try very hard to give him the best possible quality in all we do for him.

Consider this in light of the dating process and the feelings that bring couples together in marriage. As Christians, we are now in the courtship period preceding marriage to our Savior. Access to and fellowship with Him, coupled with submission within the relationship, feeds a growing respect for Him and His way. By this, we come to know Him, and we are motivated to reciprocate His loving respect and to produce growth and the fruit of God's Spirit.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

To learn more, see:

[The Elements of Motivation \(Part One\): Fear](#)

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