CHAPTER TEN - OUR PURPOSE:

TO SERVE GOD WITH REVERENT FEAR

“Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God: him shalt thou serve, and to him shalt thou cleave, and swear by his name.”
Deuteronomy 10:20 KJV

We who fear God recognize him as the ultimate reality, and we respond to him. Fear of God is called the “beginning of knowledge,” meaning that taking God into account is the foundation of a disciplined and holy life. To fear God means to reject every competing deity and to serve him only. Fear of the Lord is expressed by walking in all his ways, by loving him, and by serving him with all our heart and soul.

Lawrence O. Richards

It is necessary in our pursuit of wanting to become women of purpose to fully appreciate what it is to fear God. Without the deep respect and reverence one must give to the Lord, it is difficult to really be whole-hearted about allowing Him to conform us to the image of His Son. It is also difficult to think about serving God if He is not truly worthy of the sacrifice that serving demands. Peter wrote, “And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man’s work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear:” (1 Peter 1:17) We are not to be afraid of God, but live in wondrous awe of our heavenly Father and in so doing, we cannot help but want to serve Him obediently with all our heart.

Our Purpose: To Fear God

1. Peter tells us to conduct our lives in reverent fear. Read 1 Peter 1:13-21.
   a. Describe a life lived in reverent fear (verses 13-16).

   b. What is the basis for the reverent fear to which Peter calls us (verses 17-21)?

   God alone can declare His glory. He is One of whom man should not think without the deepest reverence flooding his heart. God is a terrible Enemy against those who repudiate Him; but to those - even the most sinful - who believe on His Son, He is their God, and all His limitless perfections are engaged in their behalf, and this guarantees that all shall work together for good. Lewis Sperry Chafer

2. “The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy.” (Psalms 147:11) How do the following Bible characters demonstrate the challenges and blessings of serving the Lord with reverent fear?
   a. The Hebrew midwives in Exodus 1:15-21

   b. Nehemiah in Nehemiah 5:14-15

   c. Peter in Luke 5:4-11
3. Can you identify in any way with these challenges and blessings of fearing God? If so, describe your experience.

Pay to him humble childlike reverence, walk in his laws, have respect to his will, tremble to offend him, hasten to serve him. Fear not the wrath of men, neither be tempted to sin through the virulence of their threats; fear God and fear nothing else.

Charles H. Spurgeon

4. Scripture abounds with the benefits of fearing God. Read these verses and write down the blessings God bestows on those who fear Him. (You might want to add other Scriptures.)

Psalms 25:12-15

Psalms 31:19

Psalms 34:7-9

Our Purpose: To Serve God

5. To serve is to “attend to, minister to, care for, help, be of use, assist, benefit, promote, support, make easy for, nourish, encourage.” Paul wrote to the Galatians, “For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.” (Gal. 5:13) But as we serve one another, what is our motivation and who are we really serving?

Study these Scriptures and write down your thoughts about where our eyes should be focused and what the attitude of our heart should be.

Psalms 123:1-2

Colossians 3:22-24

The psalm (123) has nothing in it about serving others. It concentrates on being a servant to God. Its position is that if the attitude of servanthood is learned, by attending to God as Lord, then serving others will develop as a very natural way of life. Commands will be heard to be hospitable, to be compassionate, to visit the sick, to help and to heal and carried out with ease and poise.

Eugene H. Peterson

6. Oswald Chambers observed that “Jesus Christ calls service what we are to Him, not what we do for Him.” Read Luke 10:38-42 and write down your thoughts about how Jesus defines service.
7. As you look at your own life, whom do you identify with more, Mary or Martha? Explain.

Beware of anything that competes with loyalty to Jesus Christ. The greatest competitor of devotion to Jesus is service for Him. . . . The one aim of the call of God is the satisfaction of God, not a call to do something for Him. We are not sent to battle for God, but to be used by God in His battlings. Are we being more devoted to service than to Jesus Christ?

Oswald Chambers

AUTHOR’S REFLECTION – Because I love and respect the Lord, and so want Him to consider me a faithful servant, I want to be confident that what I do, how I serve, pleases Him. As I have thought on the motivation of a true servant and the motivation of one who serves without fearing the Lord, these are my conclusions:

A SERVANT WHO

REVERENCES GOD:  
DOES NOT REVERENCE GOD:

Fixes her eyes on her Master.  
Fixes her eyes on herself and people.

Is secure because of the consistency of Christ.  
Is insecure because of the inconsistency of people.

Serves out of a desire to give.  
Serves out of a desire to receive.

Is free to serve, expecting nothing.  
Is in bondage to perform, demanding acceptance.

Asks: How can I show Jesus how much I love Him?  
Asks: How can I show people how lovable I am?

8. Over the next few days, think about your fear of God and the motivation you have to serve. To help your reflection and application, carefully consider the verses given below.

“Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire.”  
Hebrews 12:28-29 KJV

Use these questions to guide your meditation.

9. How does my fear of God influence my decisions?

10. Is my serving from a sincere heart to please God?

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE MEMORY: Hebrews 12:28-29
CHAPTER TEN - SCRIPTURE VERSES

1 Peter 1:13-21

13. Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; 14. As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: 15. But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; 16. Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy... 17. And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man’s work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear: 18. Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; 19. But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: 20. Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, 21. Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.

Exodus 1:15-21

15. And the king of Egypt spake to the Hebrew midwives, of which the name of the one was Shiphrah, and the name of the other Puah: 16. And he said, When ye do the office of a midwife to the Hebrew women, and see them upon the stools; if it be a son, then ye shall kill him: but if it be a daughter, then she shall live. 17. But the midwives feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the men children alive. 18. And the kind of Egypt called for the midwives, and said unto them, Why have ye done this thing, and have saved the men children alive? 19. And the midwives said unto Pharaoh, Because the Hebrew women are not as the Egyptian women; for they are lively, and are delivered ere the midwives come in unto them. 20. Therefore God dealt well with the midwives: and the people multiplied, and waxed very mighty. 21. And it came to pass, because the midwives feared God, that he made them houses.

Nehemiah 5: 14-15

14. Moreover from the time that I was appointed to be their governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year even unto the two and thirtieth year of Artaxerxes the king, that is, twelve years, I and my brethren have not eaten the bread of the governor. 15 But the former governors that had been before me were chargeable unto the people, and had taken of them bread and wine, beside forty shekels of silver; yea, even their servants bare rule over the people: but so did not I, because of the fear of God.

Luke 5:4-11

4. Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught. 5. And Simon answering said unto, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net. 6. And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake. 7. And they beckoned unto their partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink. 8. When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus’ knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord. 9. For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken: 10. And so was also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not;
from henceforth thou shalt catch men. 11. And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him.

Psalms 25:12-15
12. What man is he that feareth the Lord? Him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose. 13. His soul shall dwell at ease; and his seed shall inherit the earth. 14. The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant. 15. Mine eyes are ever toward the Lord; for he shall pluck my feet out of the net.

Psalms 31:19
19. Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!

Psalms 34:7-9
7. The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. 8. O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him. 9. O fear the Lord, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him.

Psalms 123:1-2
1. Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the heavens. 2. Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until that he have mercy upon us.

Colossians 3:22-24
22. Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God: 23. And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; 24. Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.

Luke 10:38-42
38. Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. 39. And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus’ feet, and heard his word. 40. But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? Bid her therefore that she help me. 41. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: 42. But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.