

Trying To Hack God:

1 Samuel 4

How A Nation Got It Wrong:

1 Samuel 4:1-22, 2:30, 7:2-4, Proverbs 3:5-6, Matthew 6:33, Proverbs 9:10, Psalm 111:10
Exodus 19:3-6, 2 Chronicles 7:14-15, Isaiah 59:1-2, Jeremiah 29:13, Proverbs 28:9, Micah 3:4

- ▶ Our God would rather be **feared** than **used**.

- ▶ God's **guidance** is based on our **obedience**.

How A Mom Got It Right:

1 Samuel 1, Mark 12:28-31, James 4:7-10, John 15:1-17, 21:1-19

- ▶ The right **heart** is more important than the right **words**.

- ▶ Instead of getting **religious**, we need to get **right** with God.

Growth Group Homework

For the week of October 8, 2017

QUICK REVIEW

Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or that caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

MY STORY

1. This weekend we heard about the importance of fearing God. How would you describe your understanding and experience of the fear of God over the years?

2. Would you say most people have a tendency to focus too much on the fear of God or the love of God?

DIGGING DEEPER

1. Fear is one of those responses/emotions that can be confusing to understand, especially when you begin talking about God's judgment. How do the following verses help us understand what it means to have a healthy fear of God as opposed to a fear that paralyzes us or causes us to live in worry or dread?

Proverbs 16:6 *New International Version (NIV)*

Through love and faithfulness sin is atoned for;
through the fear of the LORD evil is avoided.

Proverbs 1:32-33 *New International Version (NIV)*

For the waywardness of the simple will kill them,
and the complacency of fools will destroy them;
³³ but whoever listens to me will live in safety
and be at ease, without fear of harm."

Jeremiah 32:39-40 *New International Version (NIV)*

³⁹ I will give them singleness of heart and action, so that they will always fear me and that all will then go well for them and for their children after them. ⁴⁰ I will make an everlasting covenant with them: I will never stop doing good to them, and I will inspire them to fear me, so that they will never turn away from me.

What would it look like for someone to put too much emphasis on the fear of God? How about putting too much emphasis on his love and acceptance?

Which perspective might you get caught focusing on too much?

2. Most of us don't want to or plan on using God for just what we want, but all too often we get caught in that trap. One of the keys to avoiding this trap is understanding who we are, who God is, and what we're asking for. Looking at how another person handles this can be helpful. As you read David's prayer in Psalm 86, jot down how he describes God, himself and what he requests of God.

Can you think of any ways praying a prayer like this could help you keep the right heart in following God and not just looking for a hack?

Are there any parts of David's prayer that could be an important part of your regular communication with God and how you follow him? If so, explain.

How might David's perspective and response to God in this Psalm help you balance a healthy fear of God and the confidence to come before him?

3. A healthy “fear of God” moves us to action. How does the fear of God impact the people’s actions in the following verses?

Deuteronomy 6:1-3 *New International Version (NIV)*

Love the Lord Your God

These are the commands, decrees and laws the Lord your God directed me to teach you to observe in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess,² so that you, your children and their children after them may fear the Lord your God as long as you live by keeping all his decrees and commands that I give you, and so that you may enjoy long life.³ Hear, Israel, and be careful to obey so that it may go well with you and that you may increase greatly in a land flowing with milk and honey, just as the Lord, the God of your ancestors, promised you.

Nehemiah 5:15 *New International Version (NIV)*

¹⁵ But the earlier governors—those preceding me—placed a heavy burden on the people and took forty shekels[a] of silver from them in addition to food and wine. Their assistants also lorded it over the people. But out of reverence for God I did not act like that.

Exodus 20:18-20 *New International Version (NIV)*

¹⁸ When the people saw the thunder and lightning and heard the trumpet and saw the mountain in smoke, they trembled with fear. They stayed at a distance¹⁹ and said to Moses, “Speak to us yourself and we will listen. But do not have God speak to us or we will die.”

²⁰ Moses said to the people, “Do not be afraid. God has come to test you, so that the fear of God will be with you to keep you from sinning.”

Psalms 22:23 *New International Version (NIV)*

You who fear the Lord, praise him!

All you descendants of Jacob, honor him!

Revere him, all you descendants of Israel!

Proverbs 8:13 *New International Version (NIV)*

To fear the LORD is to hate evil;
I hate pride and arrogance,
evil behavior and perverse speech.

Looking back at what you wrote, can you think of any examples from your own life of how your fear of God resulted in similar outcomes or responses? If so, explain.

TAKING IT HOME

1. Satan would love to use fear to keep us from moving toward God. How does Romans 5:1-5 help us remain confident and experience God's love?

2. The Israelites realized they needed to make some changes to keep their hearts right with God (1 Samuel 7). Are there any adjustments you need to make, actions you need to stop, or situations you need to avoid to keep your heart humble and focused on God?

Praise/Prayer Requests:



REAL MAN WEEKEND – “The Palomar Experience”- Oct. 27-29

Lookin' for some crazy guy stuff to do? Want to kick back or get refocused on God? Join us for another epic man's weekend that will get you recharged and refreshed as Chris Brown leads us into a look at what a real man is and isn't! The weekend will also include plenty of man event options like paintball, high ropes course, skeet shooting, archery, zipline, horseback riding, etc. Space is limited so don't delay! Register online at northcoastchurch.com/real-man-weekend.