

# FEARING GOD: WES MARTIN

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## I. GOD IS HONEST

*"I know all that you've done for me—you have worked hard and persevered. I know that you don't tolerate evil. You have tested those who claimed to be apostles and proved they are not, for they were imposters. I also know how you have bravely endured trials and persecutions because of my name, yet you have not become discouraged. But I have this against you: you have abandoned the passionate love you had for me at the beginning." Revelation 2:2-4*

*I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead Revelation 3:1*

*...you say, "I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing" -- and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked...Revelation 3:17*

- A. The evaluation or judgment of God is clean and completely honest. In God's perfect love He gives us truth that has power to save us and bring us forth as His honorable and fruit-bearing people.

*The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, Yea, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb, moreover by them Your servant is warned, And in keeping them there is great reward Psalms 19:9-11*

- B. The letters from Jesus in Revelation 2-3 can be looked at as a picture of you and I standing before the Lord and offering up our works and lives. Jesus confronts (evaluates) them then and us now with honest truth in hope that there would be no confrontation with truth on the Day.

*For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. Knowing therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men. 2 Corinthians 5:10-11*

- C. The rich young ruler asked a wise question and we should all ask the same question. "What do I still lack?" (Matthew 19:20). Lord shock me now don't shock me then! We need to open up our lives and ministries to the Lord and soberly ask what His thoughts are.

## II. THE TWO SORTS

*For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building. According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire. Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are. Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you seems to be wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise. 1 Corinthians 3:9-18*

- A. There are two completely different sorts of elements mentioned in this passage. They symbolize the way we will "build" our lives in Christ. The first sort is gold, silver and precious stones. The second sort is wood, hay and straw. There are vast differences between the two and the way they respond to fire.

1. Gold, silver and precious stones are sought out and mined. You have to dig and search to find and get to them. It takes long, consistent, hard, and focused work. Think of the work of a miner. It takes time, money and planning to establish a successful mine.

***Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: He is like a man building a house, who dug deep Luke 6:47-48***

***Enter by the narrow gate...narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life and there are few who find it. Matthew 7:13-14***

***...having heard the Word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience (steadfast, perseverance) Luke 8:15***

2. Wood, hay and straw are natural elements that exist with no, or very little, effort to find and get to. These elements exist on the surface of the earth and are consumed by fire.

***these are the ones sown among thorns; they are the ones who hear the word and the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches and the desire for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. Mark 4:18-19***

***ones that fell among thorns are those...when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity. Luke 8:14***

***If anyone's work is burned he will suffer loss (wood, hay and straw are burned away in fire leaving nothing to show) 1 Corinthians 3:15***

3. The contrast is that of one who puts no work or focus upon building a life in God and one who does. Some are in a hurry because of too many things and take no time to go deep in God. They built on their foundation in haste and with little focus. Yet the other group resisted several things and gave priority to the difficulty of going deep to build their life in God.

***Listen to counsel and receive instruction, that you may be wise in your latter days. There are many plans in a man's heart, nevertheless the LORD's counsel -- that will stand (endure)...The fear of the LORD leads to life, And he who has it will abide in satisfaction; he will not be visited with evil. Proverbs 19:20-23***

- B. There is a day for all believers when the wisdom of the way we built our lives will be revealed by the fire of God to see what sort we built with.
  1. With what "sort" are we building our life in God?
  2. Asking ourselves these questions is similar to the young ruler asking what he still lacked. It's also how we "take heed" in how we build upon our foundation. We ask, wait upon the Lord and consider our ways soberly.
- C. 1 Corinthians 3:15 paraphrased could be ***saved but wasted***. Saved yet experience deep regret for squandering a chance to build something of great godly value on this side of time.
- D. The way we build our life matters to God.

***walk worthy of the Lord...pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work Colossians 1:10***

***I beseech you to walk worthy of the calling Ephesians 4:1***

***let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ Philippians 1:27***

***it is required in stewards that one be found faithful 1 Corinthians 4:2***

***we make it our aim...to be well pleasing to Him 2 Corinthians 5:9***

***And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence (courage, boldness) **and not be ashamed** (regretful) **before Him at His coming**. 1 John 2:28***

***Look to yourselves (carefully observe, be realistic), that we do not lose those things we worked for (attained spiritually), **but that we may receive a full reward**. 2 John 8***

### III. FAITHFULNESS (MATTHEW 25:15-29)

- A. God calls us to be grateful and faithful even in little even in the small things.
- B. Jesus delivered His goods to each. To one He gave five talents, to another two, and to another one. He gave to each according to their own ability. We are all entrusted with talents or specific capacities or abilities that include what has been given to us in our mind, emotions, body, soul, spirit, gifting, achievements, and ministry.
- C. The one with five talents traded or invested them and gained five more (Mt. 25:16-17). Those who value these talents invest time and energy to multiply them in righteousness, peace, and joy. God measures the quality (not the size) of our impact on others by the righteousness, peace, and joy that we help them walk in.
- D. We have been entrusted with only a few things (Mt. 25:21). God invites everyone to be great in His Kingdom without regard to our outward achievements or the size of our impact. Rather, it is based on the development of our inner life in love, meekness, and revelation or in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Spirit.
- E. We need to see the value of faithfulness in very little or in the day of small beginnings. Over 99% of the Body of Christ is given small things (very little) in terms of their sphere of accomplishments or impact.

***Well done...you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities. Luke 19:17***

***For who has despised the day of small things? Zechariah 4:10***

- F. In each season of our life it is critical to see what we've been given (grace upon our heart to pursue God and gifting to serve God) and give 100% at being faithful and whole-hearted.

- G. Faithfulness is follow through in our intentions to do good in the face of pressure, obstacles, difficulty, mundaneness, smallness, and temptation. Steadiness over the years is emphasized here. It takes a quality decision to sustain follow through. A superficial or sentimental decision will not sustain us. We can only do this with confidence that we know it matters to God.
- H. Diligence in the mundane – is important in the little areas in our secret life in God. Jesus leads His Kingdom as He promotes or demotes His people according to this principle.

***He who is faithful in what is least (small areas) is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least is unjust also in much. Luke 16:10***

- I. Acknowledging what you've been given from God awakens thanksgiving in our hearts and then fuels us to serve faithfully and wholeheartedly in that area.

***Bondservants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God. And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ. Colossians 3:22-24***

#### IV. WISDOM & THE FEAR OF THE LORD

***And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear 1 Peter 1:17***

- A. The fear of the Lord equips us to live in this age with the wisdom that enables us to build in a manner worthy of the next age. Fearing God begins the process of gaining godly wisdom.

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

***Then He saw wisdom and declared it; He prepared it, indeed, He searched it out. And to man He said, 'Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, And to depart from evil is understanding.' Job 28:27-28***

- B. As Divine wisdom settles in our hearts we begin to truly see our life and the bigger picture from God's perspective for the first time and our confidence in God grows. Confidence in making the right decisions and stewarding that which God has given to us in a noble and god-fearing way.
- C. We are thankful for Divine wisdom confronting us and challenging our ways. He is saving us from our own blindness and our own wisdom, producing a broken and contrite spirit within us.
- D. We must carefully move forward with things that consume our time. As we stay connected to the Vine, Jesus, we must be intentional to listen and obey. He will lead us perfectly.

***Listen to counsel and receive instruction, [that] you may be wise in your latter days. There are many plans in a man's heart, nevertheless the LORD's counsel -- that will stand...The fear of the LORD leads to life...Proverbs 19:20-23***

- E. We live in the land of many, many options and good ideas. Plans to grow in wealth, grow in ministry and grow in influence. Lots of good things. But only the Lord's counsel will stand. Only that which He blesses will prosper within our own lives. Therefore it's critical to "take heed" how we build our lives. Relationship is everything...to know His voice and leadership.