

The Beginning of Wisdom

📖 SCRIPTURE READING — PROVERBS 9:10-12

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.

— Proverbs 9:10

I tend to err on the side of caution. If there is risk involved, I will pause and evaluate the situation so that I can make a decision that will keep me as safe as possible. At an early age I learned that respecting things like the law of gravity and the authority of people in charge was better than disrespecting things that I cannot control.

That helps me understand what the author of Proverbs is saying here. Fearing the Lord does not mean being scared of God, as if he were a tyrant waiting to take his anger out on us. To fear the Lord is to give him respect and reverence. After all, God is the Creator who graciously made a covenant with his people. He deserves our respect. God has promised to provide his people with all that they need. He deserves our reverence.

Revering the Lord is the first step in developing a vibrant relationship with him. Revering God calls for us to submit ourselves humbly to him—seeking him, listening to him, and obeying him. Fearing the Lord puts us in the position of a servant who loves God and trusts God. That is where God wants us to be, and that is where we need to be.

Creator God, you are good, and you are great. Thank you for letting me know you, and thank you for always being willing to know me. Amen.



About the author — Evan Heerema

Evan Heerema is a retired pastor who served churches in Washington state and in Michigan. He was also on the teaching staff at Kuyper College in Grand Rapids, Michigan, for ten years. He and his wife are the parents of two daughters and the grandparents of two grandsons.