Introduction: The Fear of the Lord

Why a study on the Fear of the Lord?  I’ve long felt a need in my own heart and mind to truly understand it.  Proverbs says that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of both knowledge and wisdom.  I desire to grow in both knowledge and wisdom; and since the Bible says that the fear of the Lord is the beginning – well, that’s a very good place to start.  I’m sure we all know people who have a lot of knowledge but do not have the fear of the Lord.  We probably also know people – though fewer in number – who have at least a measure of wisdom yet do not fear the Lord.  So what exactly is it?  How does it work?  And what are its benefits?

To answer these questions I have embarked on a personal study of each verse in the Bible that contains the fear of the Lord.  From those verses I want to glean what God means when the phrase “the fear of the Lord” is used and what He has to say about it.  As I read these verses within their context and meditate on what each one tells me about the fear of the Lord, praying for God to teach me and guide my thoughts, I’m asking questions of the text and trying to put myself into the story; for these are real people with real experiences and real struggles, real fears, real failures, and real successes.

I want to know, not just for the sake of knowing, but know so that my whole way of thinking, being, and doing is changed by it:  Knowledge that is transformative and liberating and deeply, everlastingly true.  I have a hunch that this is what the fear of the Lord is intended to be and do within us.  So I am writing on the edge of what I myself am learning, hoping, praying that others can be pulled along with me in the journey of discovery.

I am trying to keep each day’s study relatively short (for those who know me, you know this is not an easy task for me!), so that it can be done one per day.  Everything about our lives seems to war against daily time alone with God.  Yet how desperately we need it – we need Him.  Sometimes we just don’t know where to start or what to do other than read, and then our minds wander, or we read without comprehension or without heart examination, and. . .well, not much is gained.  So as you travel with me on this journey into the Fear of the Lord, do it prayerfully, ask yourself the hard questions, open your heart to God, let Him know you.  Truly, He already does know you; let Him take you on the journey of discovering your own heart.  It would be helpful as you go through each day’s study to keep a journal beside you.  Write down the things you learn, what God is teaching you, and what you are learning about yourself.