

Keeping Ourselves Unspotted from the World
(Lesson 12)

Introduction:

1. According to James 1:27, "keeping ourselves unspotted from the world" is an important part of "pure and undefiled religion before God."
2. One key to keeping ourselves unspotted from the world is controlling the subject mentioned in 1 John 4:18 -- "fear."
3. In our lesson we are covering a number of passages that show us:
 - a. why we must control "fear"
 - 1) We will examine some Bible characters that struggled with "fear."
 - 2) We will also consider the consequences they faced because of "fear."
 - b. how to control "fear."
4. Let us begin by showing that . . .

Discussion:

- I. THE BIBLE ADDRESSES DIFFERENT TYPES OF "FEAR"
 - A. Positively, the Bible teaches us to "fear God" (Ecclesiastes 12:13).
 1. This type of "fear" involves respect, honor, and reverence.
 2. It will lead us to do God's will, as illustrated by Noah (Hebrews 11:7).
 - B. Negatively, the Bible teaches us not to allow our hearts to be filled with "fear" (John 14:27).
 1. This type of "fear" involves dread, apprehension, anxiety, etc.
 2. This type of "fear" must not be confused with "caution."
 - C. With these general matters before us, let us allow the Bible to show us . . .
- II. WHY WE MUST CONTROL "FEAR" [A number of Bible characters struggled with "fear," and they faced some serious consequences]
 - A. Abraham
 1. He demonstrated his "fear" in Genesis 20:1-2, 10-11.
 2. "Fear" led Abraham to practice deceit.
 - B. Moses
 1. He demonstrated his "fear" in Exodus 3:10-11, 13; 4:1, 10.
 2. "Fear" led Moses to offer excuses to God.
 - C. Elijah
 1. He demonstrated his "fear" in 1 Kings 19:1-4.
 2. "Fear" caused Elijah to become despondent.
 - D. Job
 1. He demonstrated his "fear" in Job 3:25.
 2. Job's "fear" became a reality.
 - E. Peter
 1. He demonstrated his "fear" in Matthew 14:30; Matthew 26:69-75.
 2. Peter's "fear" caused him to sink in the water and to deny Jesus.
 - F. The one-talent man
 1. He demonstrated his "fear" in Matthew 25:24-25.
 2. "Fear" prevented this man from using what he had been given.
 - G. These Bible characters show us why we must control "fear."
 - H. Let us turn our attention to passages that teach us . . .
- III. HOW TO CONTROL "FEAR"
 - A. We must remember that the Lord forbids "fear."
 - B. We must remember that "fear" does not come from God (2 Timothy 1:7).
 - C. We must remember what will happen to "the fearful" (Revelation 21:8).
 - D. We must place our trust in God, especially when it comes to things that are unknown (Proverbs 3:5-6).
 - E. We must live one day at a time (Matthew 6:34).
 - F. We must fill our hearts with love (1 John 4:18).