

# Living By Faith

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Proverbs 29: 25.



“The fear of man brings  
a snare, but whoever  
trusts in the LORD shall  
be safe.”  
Proverbs 29: 25.



# I. Introduction

The influence of the society is obvious. When other people have a positive impact on us, it is a true blessing. Sometimes, things are not going well, because of the fact that words, behaviour, and philosophy of some individuals are threatening. But, God's children don't need to be afraid of men.



“The only thing we have  
to fear is fear itself.”  
Franklin D. Roosevelt



"To him who is in fear everything rustles."  
Sophocles



“You are only afraid if you are not in harmony with yourself. People are afraid because they have never owned up to themselves.”

Hermann Hesse



“A man who fears suffering is already suffering from what he fears.”  
Montaigne, French philosopher.



“Fear has a large shadow, but he himself  
is quite small.”  
Ruth Gendler





“Nothing in life is to be feared, it is only to be understood. Now is the time to understand more, so that we may fear less.”  
Marie Curie



“Ultimately we know deeply that  
the other side of every fear  
is freedom.”

Marilyn Ferguson



# II. Context



## Book of Proverbs – Structure

<b>INTRO</b>	1: 1 – 1: 7	The Fear of the Lord for young man: Purpose of the Book, First lesson
<b>1</b>	1: 8 – 9: 18	Wisdom 101 (Introduction to Wisdom)
<b>2</b>	10: 1 – 24: 34	Wise Children (Proverbs for the Youth)
<b>3</b>	25: 1 – 29: 27	Wise People (Proverbs for general public)
<b>4</b>	30: 1 – 30: 33	Wisdom of Agur
<b>5</b>	31: 1 – 31: 9	Wisdom of King Lemuel's Mother
<b>CONCL</b>	31: 10 – 31: 31	Finding the Virtuous Wife with the Fear of the Lord Conclusion of the Book, Last lesson before marriage

Our verse belongs to the third part of the book and is included in the last collection of proverbs.

Ten verses give the closing statement, with the accent on the importance of keeping the Torah. (Torah = books of Moses, as well as 10 commandments)

# Book of Proverbs, Chapter 29: 18 – 27. Structure

## Conclusion of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Part of the Book.

29:18 HAPINNESS AND TORAH

29:21 Servant (EVED)

29:25 SAFETY from the LORD

29:19 Words

29:21 Son (MANOWN)

29:26 JUSTICE from the LORD

29:20 Words

29:22 Angry Man (ISH)

29:27 RIGHTEOUS AND WICKED

29:22 Furious Man (BAAL)

29:23 Proud Man (ADAM)

29:23 Humble in SPIRIT (SAPHAL RUAH)

29:24 Partner with thief (HALAKH)

After presenting three introductory verses (v. 18 – 20), mentioning the importance of the vision for the well being of the society, the collection of Proverbs talks about seven categories of individuals, with only one who retains honor: humble in spirit.

Jesus used a similar message in His sermon on the mountain. His first words were to reach those who are poor in spirit, and to give them hope and future (29: 23).

The last category (29: 27) mentions the opposition between the righteous and the wicked, inviting the reader of the book to pay attention to the message delivered by Salomon. It is obvious that there is no possible reconciliation for these groups of people. The righteous will always be an abomination for the wicked.

After presenting three introductory verses (v. 18 – 20), and after mentioning the importance of the vision for the well being of the society, the collection of Proverbs talks about seven categories of individuals, with only one of them who retains honor: HUMBLE IN SPIRIT.

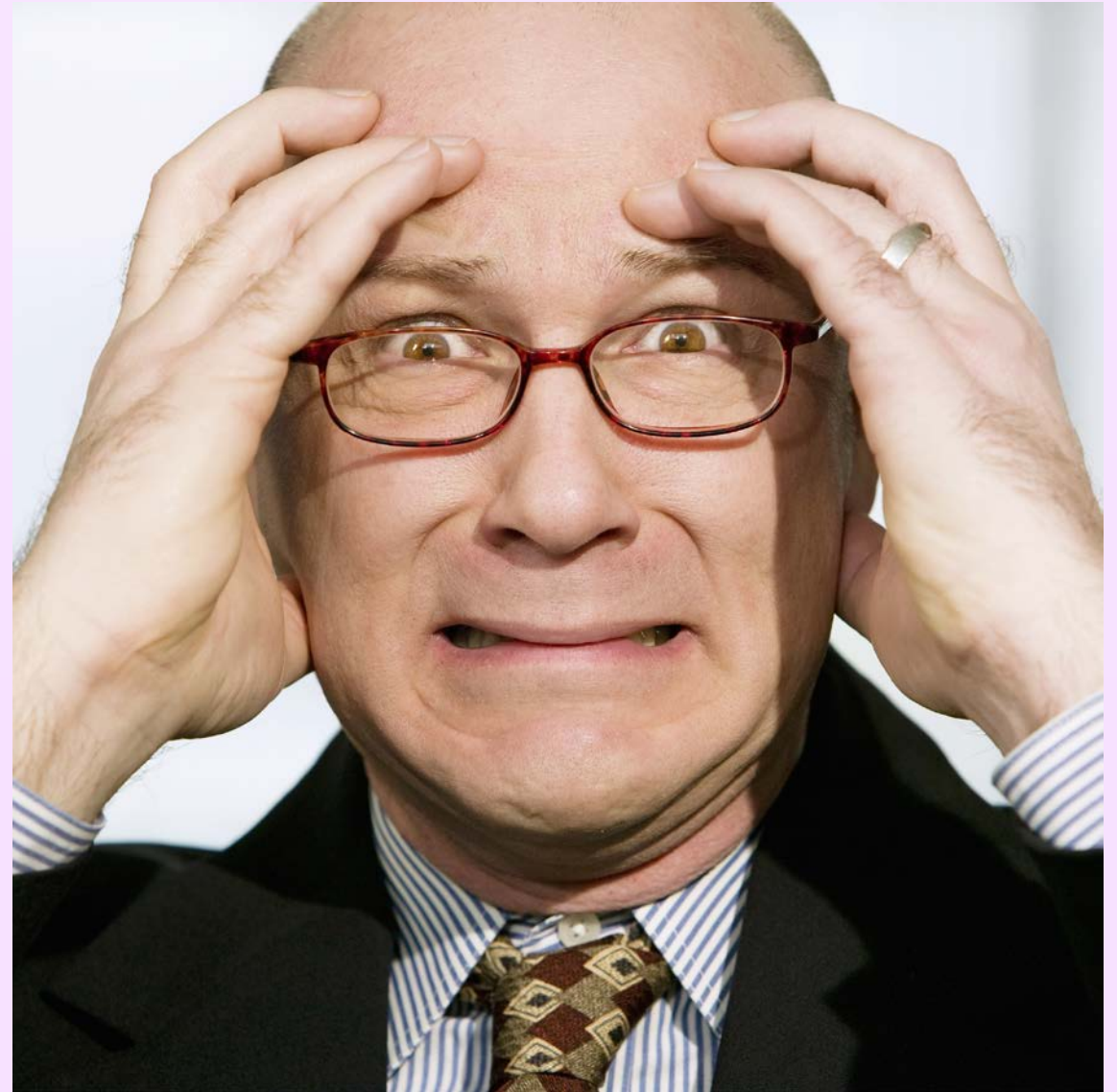
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# III. Fear, Snares, and Peace in God's Presence



1. Do not be afraid of men  
"The fear of man brings a snare"



“When David declares, “My heart shall not fear,” this does not imply that he would be entirely devoid of fear, for that would have been more worthy of the name of insensibility than of virtue; but lest his heart should faint under the terrors which he had to encounter, he opposed to them the shield of faith. Some transfer the word translated in this to the following verse, meaning that he was confident that he would dwell in God’s house; but I am of opinion that it belongs rather to the preceding doctrine. For then does faith bring forth its fruit in due season, when we remain firm and fearless in the midst of dangers. David, therefore, intimates, that when the trial comes, his faith will prove invincible, because it relies on the power of God.”

John Calvin, Calvin’s Commentaries, Volume 8, Part 1. Psalm 27.

We fear God, but we are not afraid of Him. He is our father. We have the fear of God, which means that we are afraid of hurting Him, of doing something against His will, His wisdom, and His pleasure. Why should we then be afraid of men?

“For the man who only fears the punishment is afraid not of sinning, but of being burned; but the man who hates sin as much as he hates hell is afraid to sin. This is the “fear of the Lord,” which “is pure, enduring for ever.” For the fear of punishment has torment, and is not in love; and love, when it is perfect, casts it out.”  
Augustine, Letter CXLV.



“Every passion is an effect due to the presence of an agent. But fear is not of something present, but of something future, as Damascene declares (De Fide Orth. ii, 12). Therefore fear is not a passion.

Further, every passion of the soul is a movement of the sensitive appetite, in consequence of an apprehension of the senses. But sense apprehends, not the future but the present. Since, then, fear is of future evil, it seems that it is not a passion of the soul.”

Thomas Aquinas

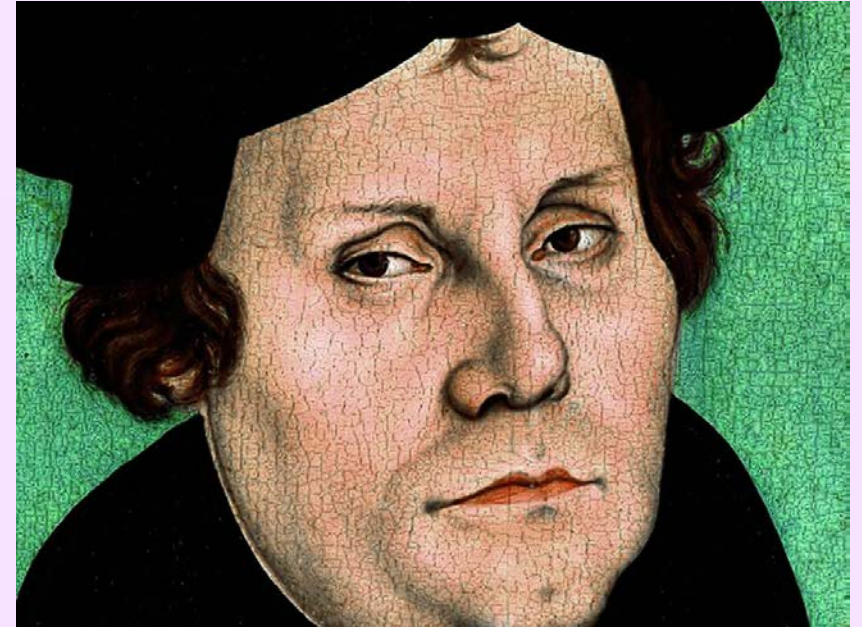


“The great problem facing modern man is that, that the means by which we live have outdistanced the spiritual ends for which we live. So we find ourselves caught in a messed-up world. The problem is with man himself and man’s soul. We haven’t learned how to be just and honest and kind and true and loving. And that is the basis of our problem. The real problem is that through our scientific genius we’ve made of the world a neighborhood, but through our moral and spiritual genius we’ve failed to make of it a brotherhood.”

Martin Luther King, Rediscovering Lost Values, Sermon delivered at Detroit’s Second Baptist Church (28 February 1954).

We should be more afraid of ourselves than of others.

“I am more afraid of my own heart than of the pope and all his cardinals. I have within me the great pope, Self.”  
Martin Luther



## 2. Be careful with the snares

The fear of man brings a snare”

“The bird alighteth not on the spread net when it beholds another bird in the snare. Take warning by the misfortunes of others, that others may not take example from you.” Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, 1749 – 1832





It is good to compare the fear of man and the fear of God.

“The fear of man brings a snare”  
(Pr. 29: 25.)

The fear of the LORD is **a fountain of life**, To turn one away from the snare of death.” (Pr. 14: 27.)

The fear of God is protecting us, and the fear of man is destroying us.



## TOUCH THEM NOT

“It is not the open and avowed enemies of the cause of God that are most to be feared. Those who, like the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin, come with smooth words and fair speeches, apparently seeking for friendly alliance with God’s children, have greater power to deceive. Against such every soul should be on the alert, lest some carefully concealed and masterly snare take him unaware. And especially today, while earth’s history is closing, the Lord requires of His children a vigilance that knows no relaxation. But though the conflict is a ceaseless one, none are left to struggle alone. Angels help and protect those who walk humbly before God. Never will our Lord betray one who trusts in Him. As His children draw near to Him for protection from evil, in pity and love He lifts up for them a standard against the enemy. Touch them not, He says; for they are Mine. I have graven them upon the palms of My hands.”

Ellen G. White, PK 570.

### 3. Search for the Presence of the Lord

“I want the presence of God Himself, or I don't want anything at all to do with religion. You would never get me interested in the old maids' social club with a little bit of Christianity thrown in to give it respectability. I want all that God has, or I don't want any.”

A. W. Tozer, *The Counselor*



“Security is not the  
absence of danger, but the  
presence of God, no  
matter what the danger.”  
Anonymous



"We only learn to behave ourselves in the presence of God."

C. S. Lewis



“Satan is ever at work endeavoring to pervert what God has spoken, to blind the mind and darken the understanding, and thus lead men into sin. This is why the Lord is so explicit, making His requirements so very plain that none need err. God is constantly seeking to draw men close under His protection, that Satan may not practice his cruel, deceptive power upon them. He has condescended to speak to them with His own voice, to write with His own hand the living oracles. And these blessed words, all instinct with life and luminous with truth, are committed to men as a perfect guide. Because Satan is so ready to catch away the mind and divert the affections from the Lord’s promises and requirements, the greater diligence is needed to fix them in the mind and impress them upon the heart.”

Ellen G. White, PP 503.

# V. Conclusion



“Our heavenly Father understands our disappointment, suffering, pain, fear, and doubt. He is always there to encourage our hearts and help us understand that He's sufficient for all of our needs. When I accepted this as an absolute truth in my life, I found that my worrying stopped.”  
Charles Stanley





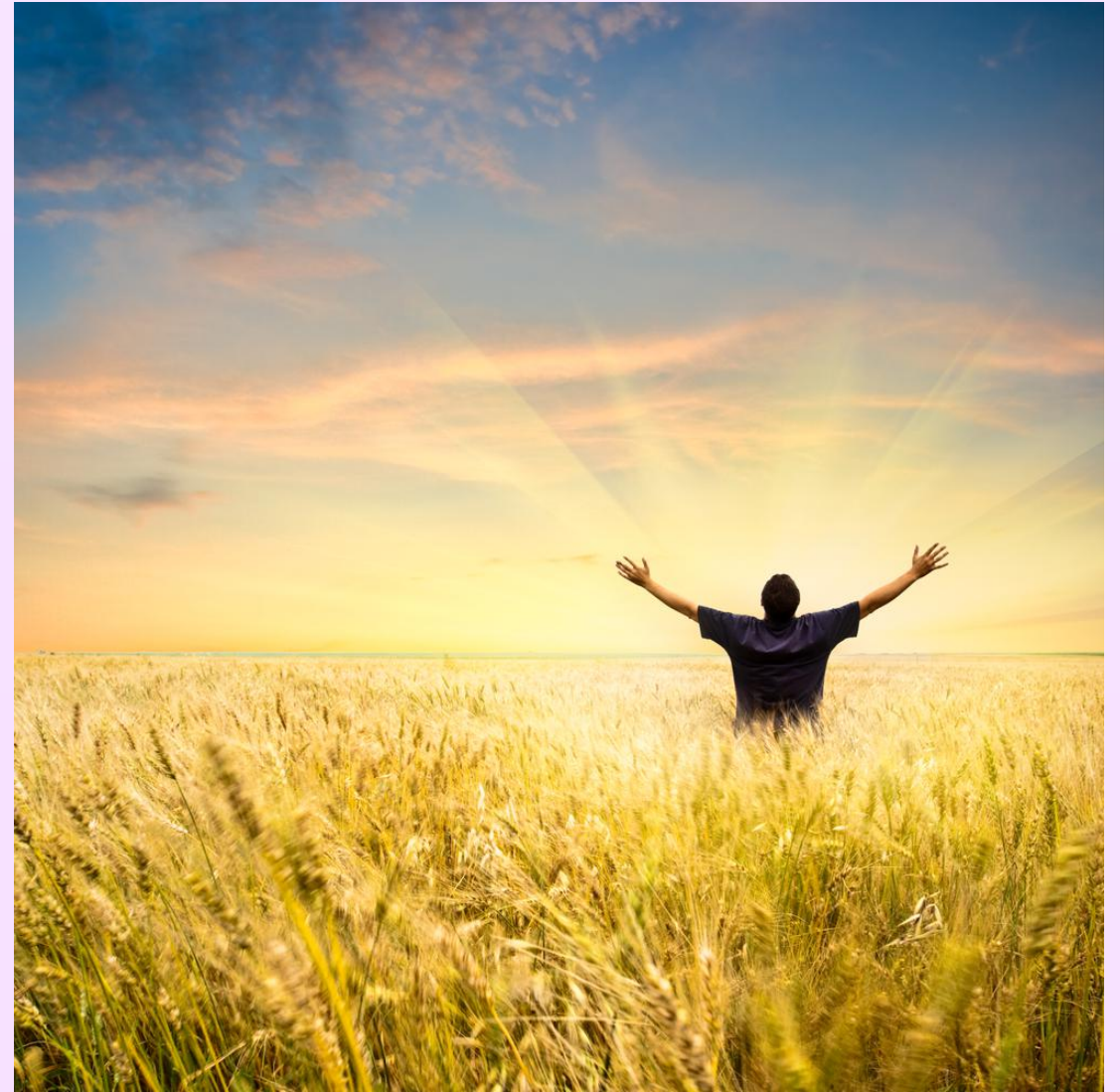
## No provision for imaginary trials

“The grace of tomorrow will not be given today. Men's necessity is God's opportunity. The grace of God is never given to be squandered, to be misapplied or perverted, or to be left to rust with disuse. While you are bearing daily responsibilities in the love and fear of God, as obedient children walking in all humility of mind, strength and wisdom from God will be given to meet every trying circumstance. We may be confident for the future only in the strength that is given for the present necessities. Do not borrow anxiety for the future. It is today that we are in need. Many are weighed down by the anticipation of future troubles. They are constantly seeking to bring tomorrow's burdens into today. Thus a large share of all their trials are imaginary. For these, Jesus has made no provision. He promises grace only for the day. He bids us not to burden ourselves with the cares and troubles of tomorrow.”

Ellen G. White, God's amazing grace, p. 261.

“If fear is cultivated, it would become stronger; if faith is cultivated, it would achieve mastery.”

John Jones



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