

This poem tells my greatest secret in staying on track with God through the ups and downs of life. It was on my father's lap, as he read to me from Proverbs, that I learned how "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." He told me, if I wanted to be smart, I had to have the...

## FEAR OF GOD

Dear love for God, I strive to let your staff  
Control my vision, be my forward call,  
But right behind me rips a doggish laugh,  
The fear of God, the Shepherd's faithful hound  
Who guards my steps against a backward fall.  
Familiar canine yelping taught me first  
Beginning wisdom, lessons pure and sound,  
When love for God was still an unknown face.  
While not the best, fear kept me from the worst,  
Until his nips and fearsome barking brought  
My trembling heart to cherish God's embrace.  
So now, if weakly gazing on the Shepherd's lead,  
I lag in faith or by the world am caught,  
That sheep dog, fear of God, is there to bite,  
While I, by grace, am tender still to bleed.  
I flee, afraid of loss, afraid of wrath,  
Afraid of being left to face the night,  
Or worse, of causing Christ the grief of tears.  
Oh yes, by love I try to keep the path,  
But godly fear has kept me through the years.

— *David L. Hatton, 5/12/1994*