

The Means to Godliness

1 Timothy 6:3-11

Introduction

Paul explains the principle of godliness in 1 Timothy 4:7-8. "Discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness." Discipline in the life of the believer is the means of developing godliness. The word discipline in this passage is based on the Greek word "gymnazō which means, "to exercise vigorously, in any way, either the body or the mind". The idea here is that becoming godly requires a workout! It requires training, the building of habits, and the development of endurance, strength, and ability.

Piety, another word for godliness demands spiritual exercise and demands a constant vigilance, a holy self-restraint, and a complete subjection to the revealed will of God. None of that comes easily and it all requires making your inner man a priority. You need a workout program to become godly and therefore must instigate a workout program for your soul.

If your workout program consists of an exercising your spiritual muscles once a week on Sunday, you will find that your program won't work. You won't develop the endurance, strength, and ability that you need for godliness on this limited regimen. You need a regular regimen - which means it has to be planned. Your exercise in spiritual things won't happen by accident. Many people intend to work out but never do. Many people plan to develop spiritually but without intention turning into action, the godliness they desire will remain out of reach.

You are not to come to church or study the Word of God just to learn. Your learning is designed to set the stage for what you do. You learn and then move forward, bathing your life with God in prayer and pursuing an intimate relationship with Him. Action is what will produce the growth of the soul, which will then produce a visible godliness in the life of the believer.

If you are not use to the spiritual workout, it will be uncomfortable until it becomes a habit. However, there is much joy for the believer who perseveres and makes spiritual exercise their consistent priority. While there are many spiritual disciplines available for pursuit, a good place to start is 1) time with the Lord, 2) time in the Word, and 3) time with others around the Word.

Getting Started

1. What is one message that resonated with you from today's sermon?
2. It's the beginning of the year when many people are focused on new resolutions for physical exercise. Have you set some goals or priorities for your physical health? If so, share those with your group!

Let's Get Personal

1. Godliness requires the exercise of spiritual disciplines. While there are many spiritual disciplines available for consideration, we will start with a focus on 1) time with the Lord personally and in prayer, 2) time in the Word, and 3) time with others around the Word. Share how you are doing in each one of those categories.
2. What makes disciplining yourself spiritually difficult?
3. Fill in the blank. "I will feel that I am improving in the area of godliness when I _____."

Take the Next Step

1. Remember the areas of spiritual discipline from the previous section? In which of those areas would you like to improve? What can you do to "exercise" or "workout" in that area(s)? Remember spiritual growth requires an intentional plan!
2. As we continue this series on "The Pursuit of Godliness", take time to pray (individually or in your group) and ask God to show you what areas of your life need to change as you seek and pursue a life that is pleasing to Him.

Renew Your Mind

"...pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness..." 1 Timothy 6:11