

The Meaning of Godliness

1 Timothy 6

Introduction

The pursuit of godliness should be the pursuit of every person who claims to love God and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. In order to have godliness as a goal, one must understand what godliness is. We can start by looking at what godliness is not. Godliness is not merely religion. Religion is the act of going through spiritual motions without any real transformation or change occurring on the inside. Religion can actually mask true godliness because religious traditions or practices have no real power in and of themselves to transform a person from the inside out. Religion without the transforming power of Jesus Christ doesn't work.

Godliness is found in a lifestyle that reflects an awareness of God. Godliness can take shape when a person chooses to live consistently in light of God's character and exercise conduct that is also consistent with who God is. Godliness is possible when a person operates with a consciousness of God's ever-present reality in their life and therefore makes the choice to have a lifestyle that agrees with God.

Godly people evaluate things from heaven's perspective – and do so as a normal way of operating. The contrast to godliness is worldliness where we leave God out in our decision-making or we "flip-flop" from living with God to living "without God". 2 Timothy 2:16 says, "...worldliness leads to ungodliness." While the world offers plenty of opinions on how life should be lived, the person serious about the pursuit of godliness must start with what God says about a matter.

Once we have received Jesus Christ as Savior, we have everything we need to attain godliness deposited in the divine nature that we receive when we believe (2 Peter 1:3.) This new nature is already positioned for godliness. That's what the new nature is birthed in us to do - develop and contain a heart that is in full pursuit of God. The important thing to remember is that godliness is not an option. It's a necessity if we want to experience God more in this life and enjoy the full benefit of a life lived for God in the life to come. A life lived with godliness benefits both the here and now as well as the life to come.

Getting Started

1. What is one message that resonated with you from today's sermon?
2. In your own words, describe what you understand godliness to be.
3. What kind of religious activities do people tend to take satisfaction in doing... whether or not they are experiencing real change or transformation on the inside?

Let's Get Personal

1. Take time to list the kinds of behaviors that represent the concept of godliness in the life of a believer.
2. Which of these behaviors represent an area of struggle for you? Which behaviors are areas of success?
3. We live in a culture where lines between godliness and worldliness blur very quickly. In your opinion, what types of worldly behavior or ways of thinking have become commonplace in the church today?

Take the Next Step

1. We cannot have an ever-present consciousness of God in our lives if we are not regularly spending time with Him. Make a commitment to spend time with Him everyday this week. If you have not previously been consistent with this time, start small... but start. Share your commitment with your group for accountability and encouragement.
2. As we embark upon this series on "The Pursuit of Godliness", take time to pray 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