

Facing the Facts: Godly Men are a Dying Breed!

“What fills the void when godly men fail to exist?”

11-21-20

“Godliness is the child of truth, and it must be nursed by its own mother. Desire the sincere milk of the Word that you may grow thereby.” William Gurnall

“If truth be told, most of us spend longer each day on personal cleanliness than on practical godliness.” Alister Begg

“Nearness to God brings likeness to God. The more you see God the more of God will be seen in you.” Charles Haddon Spurgeon

“Christ is so in love with holiness that at the price of his blood he will buy it for us.” John Flavel

“The evidence of genuine piety is to be found in real humility, self-distrust, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, sorrow for sin, and a continual effort to regulate your thoughts, feelings, and conduct by the Word of God.” John Angell James

“Urgently we do need a revival of personal godliness. This is, indeed: the secret of church prosperity. When individuals fall from their steadfastness, the church is tossed to and fro; when personal faith is steadfast, the church abides true to her Lord.” Charles Haddon Spurgeon

“The godly fear and do not offend [God] but the wicked offend and do not fear [God].” Thomas Watson

“The sins of the godly are worse than others, because they bring a greater reproach upon religion. For the wicked to sin, there is no other expected from them; swine will wallow in the mire; but when sheep do so, when the godly sin, that redounds to the dishonour of the Gospel: “By this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme.” Thomas Watson

“The way to be truly happy is to be truly human, and the way to be truly human is to be truly godly.” J.I. Packer

"Get your texts from God—your thoughts, your words, from God. In great measure, according to the purity and perfection's of the instrument, will be success. It is not great talents God blesses so much as great likeness to Jesus. A holy minister is an awful weapon in the hand of God. A word spoken by you when your conscience is clear, and your heart full of God's Spirit, is worth ten thousand words spoken in unbelief and sin." Robert Murray M'Cheyne

“Necessity is laid upon us. We must fight. There are no promises in the Lord Jesus Christ's epistles to the seven churches, except to those who 'overcome.' Where there is grace, there will be conflict. The believer is a soldier. There is no holiness without a warfare. Saved souls will always be found to have fought a fight.” J.C. Ryle

Intro: Is there any real hope of salvation without real holiness (Heb 12:14)?

~ Why a study on godliness?

- Consider the difference between a worldly man and a godly man
~ Joshua v/s Achan (Josh 1:1-9 cf. 24:14-15; Num 14:6-10; 32:11-12; 7:10-26)
- Consider the results and God's response to the godly man versus the ungodly man
~ Ps 1:1-6; 4:2-3; 32:10; 37:28; Prov 15:8-9; 1 Sam 2:9; Rom 1:18; Jude 14-15
- Consider the reality of godliness as a gift and fruit of the gospel
~ 1 Cor 1:30-31; 2 Cor 3:18-4:6; 5:21; Phil 2:12-14; Col 1:21-23; Titus 2:11-14; 2 Pet 1:3
- Consider the duty to pursue godliness as a believing man
~ 1 Tim 2:2; 4:7-8; 6:3-7; 6:11; Titus 1:1; 2:11-14; Col 3:5-17; 2 Pet 1:3-7; 3:11-12
- Consider the inseparable link between godliness and manhood, being a husband & father
~ Rom 8:28; 2 Pet 1:4; Col 3:10; Eph 4:13; 1 Cor 16:13-14; Gen 2:15; Eph 5:25-33; 6:4; 1 Pet 3:7
- Consider the foundational nature of godliness in leading the church
~ 1 Tim 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; Acts 6:1-6; 20:17-38; 1 Tim 4:11-16; 6:11; 1 Pet 5:1-5; Heb 13:7,17
- Consider the delight of being a godly man
~Ps 1:1-6; 16:1-11; Phil 3:7-14; Isa 66:2; 2 Pet 1:11; 1 Thess 2:1-12; 2:19; 2 Tim 2:15; Js 1:12; 2 Tim 4:6-8; 1 Tim 6:6
- Consider the difficulty of being a godly man
~ Jerm 17:9; Rom 7:13-25; Gal 5:16-17; Eph 6:10-18; Col 3:5-11; 2 Tim 3:1-9; Js 13-15; 1 Pet 5:6-9; 2 Pet 2:1-3; 1 Cor 11:1-15; Jn 2:15-17; 5:19
- Consider the urgent necessity for you to be a godly man
~ Mt 5:3-12; 1 Cor 4:1-2; 2 Cor 5:10; Heb 12:14; 1 Tim 4:7; 2 Tim 3:12

Seven Proofs for the Priority of Godliness in the Believer's Life from 1 Timothy

1. Godliness is the _____ of the believer's life (2:2,10)!
2. Godliness is the _____ for the believer's life (3:16)!
3. Godliness is a _____ for the believer's life (4:7)!
4. Godliness is a _____ in the believer's life (5:3)!
5. Godliness is a _____ through the believer's life (6:3)!
6. Godliness is a _____ satisfying the believer's life (6:6)!
7. Godliness is a _____ in the believer's life (6:11)!

Study Material for Future Lessons

1. Look up this verses and compare the difference between Cain and Abel marking down any helpful observations you might make: Gen 4:1-8; Heb 11:4; 1 Jn 3:8-15; Jn 8:42-44; 1 Jn 5:19; 2 Tim 2:26-3:9

2. Evaluate and articulate the massive generational impact of Cain versus Seth:

- Cain = Gen 4:17-24
- Seth = Gen 4:25-5:32

3. Below are a number of examples of godly men. Look up the Scriptures that describe these men and write down your observations of what marked them and made them men of God.

- Enoch (Gen 5:21-24; Heb 11:5-6; Jude 14-15)
- Noah (Gen 6:9; Heb 11:5-7; 2 Pet 2:5)
- Abraham (Gen 12:1-4; 15:1-6; 17:1-3; 22:1-18; Heb 11:8-10, 17-19)
- Zacharias (Luke 1:5-23, 57-79)

Godliness or Godlessness Which Will It Be?

“What one generation tolerates the next generation will propagate.”

1-30-21

“Where have the saints gone? There is no substitute for godliness. It is the best thing that can be said of any man when it can be said of him that he is ‘a man of God’. Great spiritual movements begin when men take seriously the claims of truth upon themselves and their churches. Truth has a chemistry all of its own. It has a way of transforming the ordinary mind and the average tongue into instruments of awful power for God. It is not only the geniuses of history whom God has used to begin a revival. It has been men of modest talent, yet men who had a surpassing personal knowledge of God, learned in the secret place and made molten with holy desire to do something which would make mountains tremble. Real holiness is not a pale and passive medieval kind but that which kindles with a consuming passion in the regenerate soul and cries, in the face of our decadent and indifferent society, ‘Let God arise! I shall give thee no rest, O Lord, till thou come!’ Such saints this world sorely needs. Perhaps more now than ever.”
(*The Thought of God* by Maurice Roberts, pg 142)

“Where are the men with a moral vision for their families, a zeal for the house of the Lord, a magnificent commitment to the advancement of the kingdom, an articulate dream for the mission of the church and a tenderhearted tenacity to make it real? When the Lord visits us from on high and creates a mighty army of deeply spiritual men committed to the Word of God and global mission, the vast majority of women will rejoice over the leadership of these men and enter into a joyful partnership that upholds and honors the beautiful Biblical pattern of mature manhood and mature womanhood! (John Piper, *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* pg.53-54)

Seven Proofs for the Priority of Godliness in the Believer’s Life from 1 Timothy

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2. Godliness is the _____ for the believer’s life (1 Tim 3:16 cf. 1 Cor 2:2; Eph 1:4; Col 1:22, 28; 2 Pet 1:3-7; Phil 2:12-15)!

3. Godliness is a _____ for the believer’s life (1 Tim 4:7 cf. 2 Cor 7:1; 1 Thess 4:4-7; 1 Tim 4:7; Tit 1:1, 8)!

4. Godliness is a _____ in the believer’s life (1 Tim 5:4 cf. Tit 1:6; 1 Tim 2:2; 3:2,4, 12; 2 Pet 3:11)!

5. Godliness is a _____ through the believer's life (1 Tim 6:3 cf. Col 3:12-14 Eph 5:1-2; Tit 1:1; 2 Pet 1:4; Heb 13:7)!

6. Godliness is a _____ satisfying the believer's life (1 Tim 6:6) cf. 2 Cor 4:16-18; Js 1:2; Phil 3:12-14; 4:11-13; 1 Tim 4:11)!

7. Godliness is a _____ in the believer's life (1 Tim 6:11 cf. Col 3:5-17; 1 Tim 4:15; 1 Cor 9:24-27; 2 Pet 3:18)!

An Introductory Definition

Godliness is God _____ that yields God likeness!

~ To be godly is to _____ with God!|

~ To be ungodly is to _____ from God and walk with and in the ways of Satan!

Some Provocative Examples Regarding the Priority of Godliness

1. Look up this verses and compare the difference between Cain and Abel marking down any helpful observations you might make: Gen 4:1-8; Heb 11:4; 1 Jn 3:8-15; Jn 8:42-44; 1 Jn 5:19; 2 Tim 2:26-3:9

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3. Below are a number of examples of godly men. Look up the Scriptures that describe these men and write down your observations of what marked them and made them men of God.

- Enoch (Gen 5:21-24; Heb 11:5-6; Jude 14-15)
 - He was a man marked by an _____ in God
 - He was a man that _____ God
 - He was a man _____ after God
 - He was a man that _____ against ungodliness
 - He was a man who lived _____ in a godless world
 - He was a man who was _____ by God
- Noah (Gen 6:9; Heb 11:5-7; 2 Pet 2:5)
 - He was a man marked by _____ despite the demand
 - He was a man who _____ God despite the difficulty
 - He was a man who _____ God despite the distractions/temptations
 - He was a man who _____ against ungodliness
 - He was a man who lived _____ in a godless world
- Abraham (Gen 12:1-4; 15:1-6; 17:1-3; 22:1-18; Heb 11:8-10, 17-19)
 - He was a man sovereignly _____ by God
 - He was a man _____ to God despite his old age

- He was a man who _____ in the Word of the Lord despite the obstacles
- He was a man who demonstrated great _____ for God
- He was a man greatly _____ by God
- He was a man willing to give up _____ for God
- He was a man who lived faithfully in the present because he fixated on the _____
- He was a man who believed that with God all things are _____
- Zacharias (Luke 1:5-23, 57-79)
 - He was a man sovereignly _____ by God
 - He was a man who faithfully _____ with God throughout his life
 - He was a man who lived with deep sadness and _____
 - He was a man who diligently _____ the Lord
 - He was a man of heart felt _____
 - He was a man who learned to _____ the Word of the Lord
 - He was a man that greatly _____ God
 - He was a man controlled by the _____

A Long Line of Godly Men
 “Surrounded by Such a Great Cloud of Witnesses”
 2-13-21

“History is the unfolding of the plan of God ...Not surprisingly, God’s servants throughout history have understood and embraced this reality. From Moses to the present, there truly has been as long line of godly men who have demonstrated this certainty in both their words and their lives. These servants of God are our human heroes of the faith. But it is not their inherent greatness that we applaud. Rather it is the greatness and glory of their sovereign God, as reflected in their lives and their teachings, that is so compelling.” — John MacArthur

"Get your texts from God—your thoughts, your words, from God. In great measure, according to the purity and perfections of the instrument, will be success. It is not great talents God blesses so much as great likeness to Jesus. **A holy minister is an awful weapon in the hand of God. A word spoken by you when your conscience is clear, and your heart full of God's Spirit, is worth ten thousand words spoken in unbelief and sin.**" — Robert Murray M'Cheyne

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 - He was a man who learned to _____ the Word of the Lord

- He was a man that greatly _____ God
- He was a man controlled by the _____

God's Plan has always been and always will be to do His work in and through godly men!

- The Patriarchs (Job; Enoch; Noah; Abraham; Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses)
 - Job was a man who _____ God (Job 1:1-2:3)
 - Moses was a man who lived for the _____ of God (Heb 11:23-28)
 - Joseph was a man who fled from sin because of the _____ of God (Gen 39:9)
- The Prophets (Daniel; Jeremiah; Isaiah; Elijah; Elisha; John the Baptist)
 - Daniel was a man who would not _____ the Word of God (Dan 1:8)
 - Jeremiah was a man who faithfully _____ the Word of God (Jerm 1:4-19)
 - John the Baptist was a man who passionately _____ the Word of God (Mt 14:4)
- The Apostles (Peter; John; James; Paul)
 - Peter lived in the _____ of the Gospel (1 Pet 1:3-9)
 - John lived under the _____ of the Gospel (1 Jn 4:10-11)
 - Paul lived by the _____ of the Gospel (Titus 2:11-14)

- The Elders (1 Tim 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9)
 - Elders must have a God honoring commitment to the _____
 - Elders must have a godly character in _____ & _____
 - Elders must have a godly conduct in the _____
 - Elders must have a godly reputation in the _____
- The Deacons (Acts 6:1-4; 1 Tim 3:8-13)
 - Deacons must be dignified in _____
 - Deacons must have clear conscience in _____
 - Deacons must have a proven and purified _____
- The Father (Dt 6:1-25; Eph 5:22-33; 6:4; Col 3:19-21)
 - A father Must _____ the Truth
 - A father Must _____ the Truth
 - A father Must _____ the Truth
 - A father Must _____ the Truth
- The Man (Titus 2:1-10; 1 Tim 2:8; 6:11-12; Col 1:7-8, 4:7-8, 12-13; Acts 4:36-37; 8:2; 9:10-19; 9:27-31; 11:19-26; 12:25-13:1-4!)
 - Older Men
 - Younger Men
 - Stephen
 - Timothy
 - Titus
 - Silas
 - Epaphras
 - Tychicus
 - Barnabus
 - Ananias
 - Brothers in Antioch
 - Courageous Churchmen

Godliness: Biblical Facts that Lay a Strong Foundation

“Godliness is devotion in action”

(5-8-21)

“The more that God’s Word is removed from our lives, the more inhibited our spiritual progress becomes. Nothing else can do the work that the truth does. There is no sanctifying power in human wisdom, intuition, insight, or experience. It is only the Word of God. Only the truth revealed in Scripture sanctifies – sound teaching accurately interpreted, understood, and applied. As divine revelation is embraced, spiritual progress is made. There is no alternative routes to godly character and holy living.” — John MacArthur

“Godliness is useful for all things: it fences off all troubles; it supplies all wants; it makes the soul and body completely happy.” — Thomas Watson

“Periodical godliness is perpetual hypocrisy” — Charles Haddon Spurgeon

“Stale godliness is ungodliness. Let our religion be as warm, and constant and natural as the flow of blood in our veins. A living God must be served in a living way.” — Charles Haddon Spurgeon

“Holiness is nothing else but the habitual and predominant devotion and dedication of soul, and body, and life, and all that we have to God; and esteeming, and loving, and serving, and seeking Him, before all the pleasures and prosperity of the flesh and the world.” — Richard Baxter

“True holiness does not consist merely of believing and feeling, but of doing and bearing, and a practical exhibition of active and passive grace. Our tongues, our tempers, our natural passions and inclinations – our conduct as parents and children, masters and servants, husbands and wives, rulers, and subjects – our dress, our employment of time, our behavior in business, our demeanor in sickness and health, in riches and poverty – all, all these are matters which are fully treated by inspired writers.” — J. C. Ryle

“Holiness is the very principle of eternal life, the very beginning of eternal life in the heart, and that which will certainly grow up to eternal life.” — Jeremiah Burroughs

“Holiness is not something we are called upon to do in order that we might become something; it is something we are to do because of what we are already are.” — Dr. Martin Llyod Jones

"Get your texts from God—your thoughts, your words, from God. In great measure, according to the purity and perfections of the instrument, will be success. It is not great talents God blesses so much as great likeness to Jesus. **A holy minister is an awful weapon in the hand of God. A word spoken by you when your conscience is clear, and your heart full of God's Spirit, is worth ten thousand words spoken in unbelief and sin.**" — Robert Murray M'Cheyne

Five Facts that lay a strong biblical foundation for a life of godliness

- Godliness is inseparably linked to biblical _____
(See Ps 1:1-3; Jn 17:17 & 2 Tim 3:16-17; Titus 1:1 cf. Rom 1:18 & Titus 1:14)
- Godliness is tethered to _____ and _____ for God
(Ex 3:1-6; 14:31; Ps 130:4; 2 Cor 7:1; Heb 12:28-29; 1 Pet 1:15-17)
- Godliness is rooted and enjoyed in _____
(Rom 6:1-14; 12:1-2; Eph 2:10; Col 1:21-22; 2 Cor 5:14-15; Titus 2:11-14)
- Godliness is not less than but more than correct _____
(1 Tim 3:16; 6:6; 2 Tim 3:5; Col 3:1-4, 10; 2 Pet 1:4; Phil 3:12-14; Heb 12:14)
- Godliness is both a duty and delight that flows from personal _____
(Rom 12:1-21; Phil 2:12-13; 3:7-11; 2 Tim 3:12; Gal 2:20; 1 Cor 6:19-20; 2 Cor 5:14-15)

1. Read 1 Timothy 4:6-8 and explain the context of the letter and why Paul speaks about godliness so often when writing to Timothy. What are the “these things” mentioned in verse 6 and where else do you see this phrase used in this chapter and letter? Is your life and church built upon “these things” ...explain? In verse 7 Paul exhorts Timothy to stay away from “silly myths”. What does he mean and why was this so critical for Timothy and for us? How might this issue of silly myths come up today in the church? Compare the words for “trained” and “train” in verses 6-7 and explain their meanings and what we can learn from this as it pertains to pursuing godliness? Compare Hebrews 5:14 and 2 Pet 2:14 and explain the nature of being “trained” in these verses and how vital it is “train” oneself to godliness? What will this type of positive training demand?

2. Timothy is commanded to train in a specific direction toward “godliness”! What does this word “godliness” mean and how does 1 Timothy 6:11-12 help highlight both the priority and practice of godliness? Read 2 Pet 1:3-4 and explain how this passage helps constrain and comfort our active pursuit of godliness? What value is there in “training oneself” to godliness? What does Paul mean when he says it “holds promise” for both this life and the life to come? Promise for what? (Consider what Paul says to Timothy in these verses 1 Tim 4:6; 4:1-2; 2:1-4; 1:18-20; 1:3-7. Also see 2 Tim 1:1) Now broadening the context out to the rest of Scripture consider these passages and see if you can identify further blessings or promises that come upon those who seek to live godly Mt 5:6; Mk 10:29-31; Jn 10:10; 17:3; Rom 5:1-5; 8:28-31; Phil 1:6; 1 Cor 9:24-27; 2 Cor 7:1; 1 Pet 1:3-9; Ps 1:1-3; 24:1-6; 103:11-18; Prov 3:1-12. Is godliness something you pursue, something that is provided to you or both? Read 1 Cor 1:30-31; Phil 1:6; 2:12-13; 3:12; Col 1:21-23; 3:10; Eph 1:3-4; 2:1-10; 4:23-24; Titus 2:11-14; 4-8 and explain?

Godliness: The Fruit of Following Truth
“Godliness is the Work of Word”
(9-4-21)

The Word is the Magna Carta from heaven; we should be daily reading over this charter. The Word shows what is truth and what is error. It is the field where the pearl of price is hidden. How we should dig for this pearl! A godly man's heart is the library to hold the Word of God; it dwells richly in him (Col 3:16). Thomas Watson

Without absolutes revealed from without by God Himself, we are left rudderless in a sea of conflicting ideas about manners, justice and right and wrong, issuing from multitudes of self-opinionated thinkers.” John Owen

Truth will always be desired by true men. Charles Haddon Spurgeon

One man abiding in truth has more weight in his witness than millions under the power of the father of lies. Charles Haddon Spurgeon

A man who loves you the most is the man who tells you the most truth about yourself. Robert Murray M'Cheyne

God's truth always agrees with itself. Richard Sibbs

Where truth goes, I will go, and where truth is I will be, and nothing but death shall divide me and the truth. Thomas Brooks

Truth always carries with it confrontation. Truth demands confrontation; loving confrontation nevertheless. If our reflex action is always accommodation regardless of the centrality of the truth involved, there is something wrong. Francis Schaeffer

The best evidence of our having the truth is our walking in the truth. Matthew Henry

Truth is the agreement of our ideas with the ideas of God. Jonathon Edwards

All truth is given by revelation, either general or special, and it must be received by reason. Reason is the God-given means for discovering the truth that God discloses, whether in his world or his Word. While God wants to reach the heart with truth, he does not bypass the mind. Jonathon Edwards

Truth is that which is consistent with the mind, will, character, glory, and being of God. Even more to the point: truth is the self-expression of God. John MacArthur

Peace, if possible, but truth at any rate. Martin Luther

Children of Satan are people of lies and darkness and children of God are people of truth and light!

Review from lesson 4:

What does this word “godliness” mean and what is demanded for one to “train” himself unto godliness? What value is there in “training oneself” to godliness? What does Paul mean when he says it “holds promise” for both this life and the life to come? Promise for what? (Consider what Paul says to Timothy in these verses 1 Tim 4:6; 4:1-2; 2:1-4; 1:18-20; 1:3-7. Also see 2 Tim 1:1) Now broadening the context out to the rest of Scripture consider these passages and see if you can identify further blessings or promises that come upon those who seek to live godly Mt 5:6; Mk 10:29-31; Jn 10:10; 17:3; Rom 5:1-5; 8:28-31; Phil 1:6; 1 Cor 9:24-27; 2 Cor 7:1; 1 Pet 1:3-9; Ps 1:1-3; 24:1-6; 103:11-18; Prov 3:1-12. Is godliness something you pursue, something that is provided to you or both? Read 1 Cor 1:30-31; Phil 1:6; 2:12-13; 3:12; Col 1:21-23; 3:10; Eph 1:3-4; 2:1-10; 4:23-24; Titus 2:11-14; 4-8 and explain?

Lesson 5 Questions: See the pyramid diagram of godliness!

1. What was Timothy commanded to reject and stay away from (1 Timothy 4:7)? What does the term “irreverent” mean (1 Tim 4:7 cf. 2 Tim 2:16)? According to 1 Tim 4:6 what was Timothy to continue to train himself and saturate his life and ministry with? Explain to me what the term ungodliness means and how it is often manifested in our world? Ungodliness is the result of engaging in what (2 Tim 2:16)? Ungodliness is the ramification of swerving from what (2 Tim 2:18)? Ungodliness is the fruit of denying and suppressing what (Rom 1:18)? Ungodliness is the result of being devoid of and disconnected from what (Titus 1:14)? Ungodly people are those who are deprived of what (1 Tim 6:3-5)? Godlessness in the last days will be marked by weak willed woman and men who are always learning but unable to arrive at the knowledge of what (2 Tim 3:7)? What does 1 Tim 3:7 mean and can you give some modern examples of this today?

2. Hell be a place filled with people who love and practice what (Rev 22:15)? Condemned man lives in self-seeking unrighteousness because he will not obey what (Romans 2:4)? The evil last days will be marked by wicked men who oppose what (2 Tim 3:8)? These dark days will also be marked by so called religious people who turn away from listening to what (2 Tim 4:4)? Whole families will be upset because they follow foolish men who turn away from what (Titus 1:14)? False teachers bring in destructive heresies that many will follow and because of them the way of what is blasphemed (2 Pet 2:2)? Sadly, many people will say they have fellowship with God while they walk in darkness and do not practice what (1 Jn 1:6)? People perish, especially in the tribulation because they do not love what (2 Thess 2:10)? What will God do to people who love lies and hate truth (2 Thess 2:11-12 cf. 1 Kings 22:19-23 also see Rom 1:18-33 especially vss.24, 26, 28)?

3. How is training yourself to godliness and truth inseparably linked (Titus 1:2)? What is the greatest defense against impure thoughts and ungodly living (Ps 119:9, 11, 36-37, 97-105, 128, 133, 160-165, 172-175)? God's plan for purifying every man involves what (Jn 17:17; 2 Thess 2:13; James 1:21; 1 Pet 1:22-23; 2 Pet 1:3-4)? The godly life is really the result of responding to what (Ps 1:1-6; Prov 3:1-12)? Is it possible to live a godly life apart from God's Word (Prov 2:1-22)? Read Proverbs 2:1-4 and identify the three conditional clauses that start with "if" and explain what they mean? Identify the results given in Proverbs 2:5-15 connected by the words "then" and also explain the reasons for these results as highlighted by the subsequent words "for" in verses 6 and 10? What is it that protects men from the forbidden woman and the adulteress (Prov 2:16-19)? Proverbs 2:20 is synonymous with what kind of life?

4. The godly man is above all else a man of what (Ps 1:2; 51:6; 86:11; 119:43; Mt 4:4 cf. Dt 8:3; Ezra 7:10; 2 Cor 13:8; Js 1:22-25)? Jesus Christ declared that His followers were people of the what (Jn 18:37 cf. Jn 4:23-24; 8:32; 16:13; 17:17)? A godly man loves what (2 Thess 2:10)? A godly man obeys what (1 Pet 1:22)? A godly man declares what (2 Tim 2:15 & 4:3)? A godly man defends what (2 Cor 13:8 cf. 1 Tim 3:15)? A godly man speaks what (Eph 4:15, 25)? A godly man wears what (Eph 6:14)? A godly man believes what (1 Tim 4:3)? A godly man walks in what (3 Jn 4)? A godly man abides in what (2 Jn 2)? A godly man rejoices in what 1 Cor 13:6)? A godly man worships God in what (Jn 4:23-24)? A godly man professes and practices what (1 Jn 1:6)? A godly man is controlled by what (1 Jn 2:4)? A godly man fights temptation with what (Mt 4:4)?

Godliness: Preparing to use the Sword 101

“Take... the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God”
(1-15-21)

TAKE THE SWORD! No longer is it, talk and debate! No longer is it, parley and compromise! The word of thunder is— Take the sword. The Captain’s voice is clear as a trumpet— Take the sword! No Christian man here will have been obedient to our text unless with clear, sharp, and decisive firmness, courage, and resolve, he takes the sword. We must go to heaven sword in hand, all the way. TAKE THE SWORD. Charles Haddon Spurgeon

The Bible is not merely to be repeated and known but to be lived and felt. Martin Luther

You see, we frequently come to the Bible to study it, to teach it, to preach it, to outline it, everything except to be changed by it. Howard Hendricks

To use the words of Hodge and Warfield, the exegete is after what the author “intended to affirm.” It is nothing short of disastrous for the authority of Scripture to say, “The author may not have intended this, but I think the text means this anyway”

A text cannot mean [now] what it never meant [then]. Or to put that in a positive way, the true meaning of the biblical text for us is what God originally intended it to mean when it was first spoken. Gordon Fee

The Word is the Magna Carta from heaven; we should be daily reading over this charter. The Word shows what is truth and what is error. It is the field where the pearl of price is hidden. How we should dig for this pearl! A godly man’s heart is the library to hold the Word of God; it dwells richly in him (Col 3:16). Thomas Watson

The best evidence of our having the truth is our walking in the truth. Matthew Henry

Truth is the agreement of our ideas with the ideas of God. Jonathon Edwards

The Church today is quite possibly more susceptible to false teachers, doctrinal saboteurs, and spiritual terrorism than any other generation in church history. Biblical ignorance within the church may well be deeper and more widespread than at any other time since the Protestant Reformation. John MacArthur

For as the aged, or those whose sight is defective, when any book, however fair, is set before them, though they perceive that there is something written, are scarcely able to make out two consecutive words, but, when aided by glasses, begin to read distinctly, so Scripture, gathering together the impressions of Deity, which, till then, lay confused in our minds, dissipates the darkness, and shows us the true God clearly. John Calvin

Review (Lesson 5): The godly man is above all else a man of what (Ps 1:2; 51:6; 86:11; 119:43; Mt 4:4 cf. Dt 8:3; Ezra 7:10; 2 Cor 13:8; Js 1:22-25)? Jesus Christ declared that His followers were people of the what (Jn 18:37 cf. Jn 4:23-24; 8:32; 16:13; 17:17)? A godly man loves what (2 Thess 2:10)? A godly man obeys what (1 Pet 1:22)? A godly man declares what (2 Tim 2:15 & 4:3)? A godly man defends what (2 Cor 13:8 cf. 1 Tim 3:15)? A godly man speaks what (Eph 4:15, 25)? A godly man adorns what (Titus 2:10 cf. Eph 6:14)? A godly man believes what (1 Tim 4:3)? A godly man walks in what (3 Jn 4)? A godly man abides in what (2 Jn 2)? A godly man rejoices in what 1 Cor 13:6)? A godly man worships God in what (Jn 4:23-24)? A godly man professes and practices what (1 Jn 1:6)? A godly man is controlled by what (1 Jn 2:4)? A godly man fights temptation with what (Mt 4:4)?

Lesson 6: Using the Sword 101...What Must We Do with the Word?

~“Training” in 1 Tim 4:7 means what and demands what of every believer? Read Ezra 7:10 and explain what is clear about this man of God? Where did the handling of God’s Word begin for Ezra and what pattern was clearly displayed in his life and practice? What is God’s ultimate purpose in revealing Himself to man through creation (general) and through His Word (special) (Ps 19:1-14; Jn 1:1-18; 17:3; Rom 1:18-23; 12:1-2; 2 Tim 3:16-17; 2 Pet 1:3-4; Heb 1:1-2)? What should be our goal when reading and studying God’s Word? Are there wrongs motives in and wrongs ways to handle God’s Word (Js 1:22-23; 2 Cor 2:17; 4:2; Titus 1:11; 2 Pet 3:16; cf. 2 Tim 2:15)? What is your plan for reading, studying, meditating on, memorizing, applying, and teaching others God’s Word? Training yourself to godliness will involve all of this!

1. What must I have, before wielding the Sword?

- A Genuine Relationship with Jesus_Christ (1 Cor 2:14-15; Tit 3:4-7)
- A Humble Dependence on the Holy Spirit. (1 John 2:27; cf. Ps 119:18)
- A Patient Devotion to diligent study. (2 Tim 2:15; Acts 17:11; Titus 1:9)
- A Disciplined and Inquisitive _____ (Ps 119:9-24, Prov 2:1-5; 2 Cor 10:4-6)
- A Humble and Teachable _____ (Ps 25:9; 86:11; 139:23-24; 143:10; Js 1:19-25)
- A Reverential and Expectant _____ (Ps 19:7-14; 119: 97-105, 111, 130, Isa 66:1-2; 2 Pet 1:3-4, 16-21; Heb 4:12-13)
- A Clear Understanding of _____ (2 Tim 3:16-17 cf. Ezra 7:10; Neh 8:1-12)

2. How must I think before wielding the sword?

Using a grammatical-historical method of interpretation is to study the language, culture, and historical background of the biblical text in an effort to discern the fixed meaning intended by the original author. Before sitting down to study a given passage of Scripture, it is essential for the interpreter to have a clear understanding of the proper goal of Bible interpretation. Simply stated, the goal of Bible interpretation is *to discover the original, divinely intended meaning of the author who wrote the text*.

The unfortunate tendency of many interpreters is to ignore the author's intention in favor of the question: "What does the Bible mean to *me*?" The problem with this approach is that what the Bible means to any given interpreter is *irrelevant*, for the true meaning of Scripture is found in the intention of the original author, *not* in the interpretation of the contemporary reader.

WRONG QUESTION: What does this verse mean to *you*?

RIGHT QUESTION: What did this verse mean before you were born?

7 KEY PRINCIPLES OF GRAMMATICAL-HISTORICAL INTERPRETATION¹

1. Come to a given passage of Scripture with the understanding that it is part of a larger unified whole, and that it should not be interpreted in contradiction to any other passage. (**The Harmony Principle**)
2. Come to a given passage of Scripture with (a) the presupposition that it was understandable to its original audience and (b) with the expectation that you can understand its true meaning as well. (**The Clarity Principle**)
3. Unless the language of the text demands otherwise, like with figurative speech, take the words of the passage at face value as you seek to avoid reading into the text a meaning that is not there (**The Literal Principle**).
4. Come to a given passage of Scripture with the assumption that it contains but one true meaning, the meaning that the original author intended to communicate to the original audience. (**The Single Meaning Principle**)
5. The first step in Bible interpretation is to examine the historical, cultural, and literary contexts of the passage under consideration. (**The Historical/Contextual Principle**)
6. The meaning of a passage is to be drawn from within the text itself not imposed on the text from the outside. (**The Exegetical Principle**)
7. Analyze the grammar and determine the meaning of words according to their normal grammatical and lexical uses at the time that the passage was written. (**The Grammatical/Syntactical Principle**)

¹ Fur and Köstenberger, *Inductive Bible Study*; 20-34.

The Reality of Biblical Meditation

“...on his law he meditates day and night.”
(3-26-22)

“It is not hasty reading--but serious meditating upon holy and heavenly truths, that make them prove sweet and profitable to the soul. It is not the bee’s touching of the flower, which gathers honey--but her abiding for a time upon the flower, which draws out the sweet. It is not he who reads most--but he who meditates most, who will prove the choicest, sweetest, wisest and strongest Christian.” Thomas Brooks

“Without meditation the truth of God will not stay with us; the heart is hard, and the memory slippery, and without meditation all is lost; meditation imprints and fastens a truth in the mind... As a hammer drives a nail to the head, so meditation drives a truth to the heart. Without meditation the word preached may increase notion, not affection.” Thomas Watson

“As it is impossible for a man to be nourished by meat if he [lacks] digestion and concoction, so it is impossible for a man to be nourished in grace, if he neglects the duty of divine meditation; for divine meditation is the spiritual concoction [mixing] and digestion of all holy things, and all holy duties.” Edmund Calamy

“Without meditation, truths are devoured, not digested.” John Ball

“A sermon remembered, but not ruminated, will only serve to increase our condemnation.”
Thomas Watson

“Hearing God’s Word is like one dip of the tea bag into the cup. Some of the tea’s flavor is absorbed by the water, but not as much as would occur with a more thorough soaking of the bag... [Meditation] is like immersing the bag completely and letting it seep until all the rich tea flavor has been extracted.” Donald Whitney

[Meditation is] “a necessary duty, without which all grace would languish and wither. Faith is lean and ready to starve unless it be fed with continual meditation on the promises.” Thomas Manton

“One hour spent thus [meditating], is worth more than a thousand sermons, and this is no debasing of the word, but an honor unto it.” James Ussher

“Little meditating makes lean Christians, of little life, little strength, little growth, and of little usefulness to others.” Nathanael Ranew

[Meditation is] “dwelling upon the mercies we receive, the chewing upon the promises.”
Edmund Calamy

“The end why God has given us His Word written and preached is not only to know it, but that we should meditate on it. The Scripture is a love letter... We must not run over it in haste, but meditate upon [it]... The necessity of meditation appears because without it we can never be

godly Christians. A Christian without is like a soldier without weapons or a workman without tools...Without meditation the truths we know will never affect our hearts...Without meditation we are guilty of slighting God and His Word.” Thomas Watson

Review: A Plan for Reading the Word (Ps 19:7-11; 119:105; Rom 15:4; 2 Tim 3:16-17)

1. Devotional Reading: A chapter a day from Proverbs for a month and repeat
2. Canonical Reading: Genesis through Revelation
3. Chronological Reading: Following the pattern of progressive revelation
4. Systematic Reading: <https://evangelism.org/professor-grant-horners-bible-reading-system/>
5. Focused Reading: Saturated and repeated reading in one book or even one chapter for months
6. Harmony Reading: Following a harmony of the gospels see “One Perfect Life”
7. Thematic Reading: See the topical index in the MacArthur Study Bible

Biblical Requirement and Reality of Meditation: (Jer 6:16)

(1.) Is meditation biblical and if so, where do we find it in Scripture and why is “biblical meditation” rarely spoken of in the church today? Contemplate over these passages as you wrestle with the previous question. In Deut 6:6 Moses commanded Israel that the law must not only be in their head but also in/on what? How does it get there? Joshua would find success before the Lord, in part, by doing what (Josh 1:8)? The godly man did not go the way of the wicked, in large part, because he did what (Ps 1:2)? What does David exhort his enemies to do (Ps 4:4)? David prayed that what two realities would be acceptable to God (Ps 19:14 cf. 49:3 & 104:34)? The sons of Korah said they did what over the steadfast love of God (Ps 48:9)? David said his lips would sing praise even at night during times of difficulty if he did what (Ps 63:6)? What changes Asaph’s depression to delight (Ps 77:6-12)?

(2.) Part of a young man keeping his way pure is doing what with the precepts of the Lord (Ps 119:15)? The Psalmist kept his head amidst persecution through doing what (Ps 119:23)? The Psalmist found strength through suffering by doing what with the Scriptures (Ps 119:27)? Delighting in and loving God’s Word for the Psalmist involved what (Ps 119:48)? Instead of focusing on insult the Psalmist will do what (Ps 119:78)? The Psalmist loves the law of the Lord and that is manifested by doing what (Ps 119:97)? The Psalmist is wiser than the aged because he does what (Ps 119:99)? The Psalmist rises before the dawn to do what (Ps 119:148)? Young men lack self-control in large part because they have not learned the discipline of meditation! A wise father instructs his son to do what about where he goes and what he does (Prov 4:26)? The righteous do what before they answer (Prov 15:28)?

(3.) Is this reality of meditation seen in the New Testament as well? What does Paul mean when he says “think about these things” (Phil 4:8)? See if you can rightfully define the Greek term **λογίζομαι** translated here as “think about”? Also see how another form of this word is used in Hebrews 12:3. What is the writer of Hebrews asking the readers to do? Now read Col 3:2 and explain what Paul means when he commands believers to “set your minds on things above”? See if you can rightly define the Greek term **ὑπονοέω** translated here as “set your minds on”? Does it make any difference in this context that the form of this Greek imperative is present active and if so explain? What kind of thought does Hebrews 10:24 call for? What does the word translated in Heb 10:24 as “consider” mean? Read 1 Tim 4:15 and explain what Paul is commanding Timothy to do regarding the reading, exhortation, and teaching of Scripture? What does Paul mean by his command in Col 3:16 to let the word of Christ “dwell richly” and does that have any connection to meditation? Read Rom 12:1-2 and explain how, in part, one has his mind renewed? Read James 1:22-25 and explain what is the difference between the forgetful man and the blessed man? Any connection here to the man in Psalm 1:2 and the promise in Psalm 1:3? Why does the one man in James 1:22-25 walk away and forget all that he saw and heard from the Word? How often do you think this happens today in the modern church after listening to sermons? What is one personal response that should always follow the Word read, the Word studied, and the Word preached?

(4.) What does it mean to meditate biblically? What part does personal application, or the personal practice of truth play in the pursuit of meditation? What are some unbiblical forms of meditation practiced by many today?

1. Roman Catholic Spirituality
2. Mysticism
3. Contemplative Prayer
4. Transcendental Meditation
5. Meditating on Lesser Things
6. Meditating on Wickedness

What are some common denominators between these unbiblical forms of meditation as contrasted to what the Scriptures call believers to do in meditating?

Next Lesson: The Practice of Biblical Meditation

The Practice of Meditating on the Word

“...on his law he mediates day and night”

(6-11-22)

“Set your whole heart on the word. Some people like to read so many chapters every day. I would not dissuade them from the practice, but I would rather lay my soul a soak in half a dozen verses all day than I would, as it were, rinse my hand in several chapters. Oh, to bathe in a text of Scripture, and to let it be sucked up into your very soul, till it saturates your heart! ...Set your heart upon God’s word! It is the only way to know it thoroughly: let your whole nature be plunged into it as cloth into a dye.” Charles Spurgeon

“Meditation is a middle sort of duty between the word and prayer, and hath respect to both. The word feedeth meditation, and meditation feedeth prayer. These duties must always go hand in hand; meditation must follow hearing and precede prayer. To hear and not to meditate is unfruitful. We may hear and hear, but it is like putting a thing into a bag of hole...It is rashness to pray and not meditate. What we take in by the word we digest by meditation and let out by prayer. These three duties must be ordered that one may not jostle out the other. Men are barren, dry, and sapless in their prayers for want of exercising themselves in holy thoughts.” Thomas Manton

“Meditation is the soul’s retiring of itself, that by serious and solemn thinking upon God, the heart may be raised up to heavenly affections. ...A holy exercise of the mind whereby we bring the truths of God to remembrance and do seriously ponder upon them and apply them to ourselves...[Meditation serves as] the bellows of the affections...we light affection at the fire of meditation.” Thomas Watson

"Meditation upon the Word of God is one of the most important of all the means of grace and growth in spirituality, yes there can be no true progress in vital and practical godliness without it. Meditation on Divine things is not optional but obligatory, for it is something which God has commanded us to attend unto." A.W. Pink

"By meditation, your *knowledge* is raised.
 By meditation, your *memory* is strengthened.
 By meditation, your *hearts* are warmed.
 By meditation, you will be freed from sinful thoughts.
 By meditation, your *hearts* will be tuned to every duty.
 By meditation, you will grow in grace.
 By meditation, you will fill up all the chinks and crevices of your lives, and know how to spend your spare time profitably.
 By meditation, you will draw good out of evil.
 By meditation, you will converse with God, and enjoy God."
 William Bridge

"It is easier to walk six miles to hear a sermon, than to spend one quarter of an hour in meditating upon it when I come home." Philip Henry

“Our age has been sadly deficient in what may be termed spiritual greatness. At the root of this is the modern disease of shallowness. We are all too impatient to meditate on the faith we profess...It is not the busy skimming over religious books or the careless hastening through religious duties which makes for a strong Christian faith. Rather, it is unhurried meditation on gospel truths and the exposing of our minds to these truths that yields the fruit of sanctified character” Maurice Roberts

“Reading without meditation is unfruitful; meditation without reading is hurtful; to meditate and to read without prayer, is without blessing” William Bridge

Lesson 7 “The Reality of Biblical Meditation” Recap and Review:

What does it mean to meditate biblically? What part does personal application, or the personal practice of truth play in the pursuit of meditation? Read James 1:22-25 and explain what is the difference between the forgetful man and the blessed man? Any connection here to the man in Psalm 1:2 and the promise in Psalm 1:3? Why does the one man in James 1:22-25 walk away and forget all that he saw and heard from the Word? How often do you think this happens today in the modern church after listening to sermons? What is one personal response that should always follow the Word read, the Word studied, and the Word preached?

What are some unbiblical forms of meditation practiced by many today?

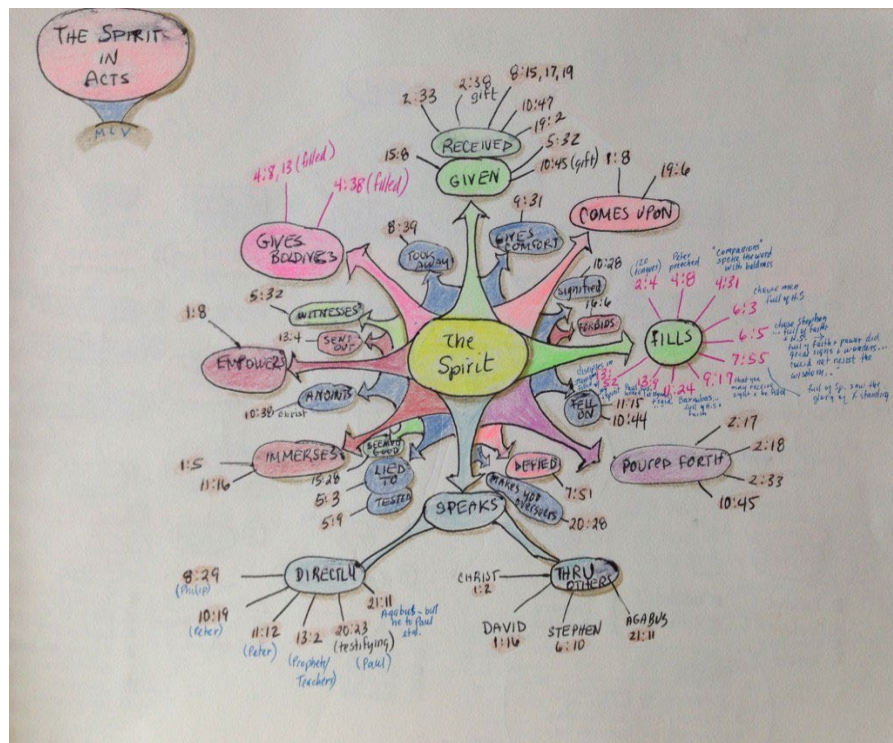
1. Roman Catholic Spirituality:
2. Mysticism:
3. Contemplative Prayer:
4. Transcendental Meditation:
5. Meditating on Lesser Things:
6. Meditating on Wickedness:

What are some common denominators between these unbiblical forms of meditation as contrasted to what the Scriptures call believers to do in meditating?

Lesson 8 The Practice of Biblical Meditation:

Remember what we have already learned in lesson 7 about practicing biblical meditation while working through Phil 4:8. We walked through some principles and practices for meditating on and through a specific text and passage. Consider how Phil 4:8 provides a basic framework for meditating, “forcing one’s mind to dwell on”, most texts, passages, and theological topics. Below are some further practical ways to implement biblical meditation...

1. **Rewrite** the text (without changing its meaning) in your own words (Jonathon Edwards)
2. **Summarize** longer texts in a concise phrase that highlights the main point of the passage
3. **Think** of a practical illustration that further encapsulates and explains the text
4. **Ask** how this text points me to and teaches me about God; Christ; Man; Sin; Gospel
5. **Pray** through the text
6. **Memorize** the text
7. **Sing** through the text
8. **Mind Mapping** so as to create a pictorial outline of the text, passage or topic (godliness pyramid or the one below by Jim Elliff on the Holy Spirit in Acts [found here](#))



9. **Identify** another passage, story, or biblical example that further illustrates, connects to, and or explains the truth of the text
10. **Speak** about and or **share** this text/truth with others

11. **Write** out lessons learned from the text and or resolutions in applying the text
12. **Clarify** how this text impacts and applies to your life and walk with Christ

Biblical meditation is meant to **slow you down** so that you can soak up the text and/or theological truth! Meditate small and slow so that you can think deeply about and grow stronger in truth.

“Our age has been sadly deficient in what may be termed spiritual greatness. At the root of this is the modern disease of shallowness. We are all too impatient to meditate on the faith we profess...It is not the busy skimming over religious books or the careless hastening through religious duties which makes for a strong Christian faith. Rather, it is unhurried meditation on gospel truths and the exposing of our minds to these truths that yields the fruit of sanctified character” Maurice Roberts

How might special seasons in life or special days throughout the year provoke us to meditate biblically on the Word and ways of God? Was this part of God’s design for Israel in creating the Sabbath (Deut 5:15)? What about the seven holy convocations, “feasts”, established by God as seen in Lev 23:1-44? Each feast was designed by God, in part, to provoke His people to theocentric meditation. How should “Communion” (1 Cor 11:23-28) on the Lord’s Day (Rev 1:10) serve as special day for meditation? How should baptisms also serve as a special time for pondering deeply on the gospel for the people of God (Mt 28:18-20; Acts 2:37-41; Rom 6:1-4)? How should funerals serve a serious and sobering time for meditation (Ps 90:12; Ecc 7:2; Rom 5:12; 2 Cor 5:8; 1 Thess 4:13-18)? What about weddings (Gen 2:18-25; Mk 10:1-12; Eph 5:22-33; 2 Cor 11:2; Rev 19:7) and times when children are born (Deut 6:1-9; Ps 127; 128; 139; Eph 6:1-4)? Times when children graduate (Prov 3:5-8; 4:20-27; Ps 37:4; Mt 6:33; Mk 10:44; 1 Cor 10:31; 2 Cor 5:9-10)? How might political election seasons provoke biblical meditation versus sinful consternation (Job 12:23 & Ps 75:5-7; Ps 118:8-9 & 143:3; Prov 21:1; Dan 4:34-35; Rom 13:1; Col 1:15-17; Eph 1:11; Rom 8:28; 1 Tim 2:1-4; Rev 22:12-13)? How might even hard days of suffering or temptation be turned into productive days of meditation (Gen 39:7-10; 50:20; Job 1-2; 42:1-6; Ps 119:9-11; Rom 5:1-5; 8:17-39; 1 Cor 10:1-13; 2 Cor 4:16-18; 12:7-10; Js 1:2-4; Heb 12:1-2; 1 Pet 1:3-9; 2:21-25; 5:6-11)?

What are some profitable biblical subjects/topics for meditation?¹

1. The Omniscience of God (1 Kings 8:39)
2. The Holiness of God (Isa 6:1-7)
3. The Wisdom of God (1 Tim 1:17)
4. The Power of God (Gen 1:1)

¹ I found several helpful puritan resources that listed out specific subjects for meditation much of which closely followed systematic theology paradigms. Thomas Watson’s book, *Meditation, A Christian on the Mount*, (edited by Dustin Benge, 2021) was very helpful. I pulled some of this list from Watson’s book on pgs. 27-69.

5. The Mercy of God (2 Cor 1:3)
6. The Promises of God (2 Pet 1:4)
7. The Guilt of Sin (Rom 5:12)
8. The Source of Personal Sin (Mk 7:14-23)
9. The Filth of Sin (Isa 64:6)
10. The Process and Goal of Sin (Js 1:12-13)
11. The Curse of Sin (Gal 3:10)
12. The Stupidity of Sin (Prov 28:26; Eph 4:17-18)
13. The Vanity and Duty of Man (Ecc 1:1 cf. 12:13-14)
14. The Excellency of Grace (2 Cor 9:8)
15. The Spiritual State of Your Soul (Prov 27:23; 2 Cor 13:5)
16. The Hard Way of the Gospel (Mt 7:13-14)
17. The Easy Way of Destruction (Mt 7:13-14)
18. The Reality of Apostasy (Heb 6:4-6)
19. The Certainty of Death (Heb 9:27)
20. The Proximity of Death (Ps 39:5)
21. The Uncertainty of Time (Js 4:13-17)
22. The Coming Judgment (2 Cor 5:10 & Rev 20:11-15)
23. The Place of Hell (Mt 25:30)
24. The Eternal Condemnation of Hell (2 Thess 1:5-9)
25. The Eternal Life in and with Christ (Ps 16:11; Rom 8:1; 1 Jn 3:1-3)
26. The Place of Heaven (Rev 21:1-5)
27. The Love of Christ (Jn 15:9; Rom 8:34-35)
28. The Sovereignty of Christ (Col 1:16-17)
29. The Forgiveness and Cleansing of Sin (1 Jn 1:9; Ps 103:12)
30. The Glory of God (Rom 11:33-36; 1 Cor 10:31)
31. The Sanctifying Grace of God (Phil 2:13-14)
32. The Sustaining Grace of God (2 Cor 12:7-10)
33. The Sufficiency of Scripture (2 Tim 3:16-17)
34. The Mysterious Providence of God (Ps 139:12)
35. The Fear of the Lord (2 Cor 7:1)

Living with a High View of God
 “The One who is high and lifted up...”
 (8-13-22)

“DELIGHT IN GOD (BECAUSE HE IS GOD). True saints center their attention on Christ, and His beauty transcends all others; His delight is the source of all other delight; He in Himself is the best among ten thousand and altogether lovely. These saints delight in the way of salvation through Christ, because it demonstrates God’s perfection and wonder; they enjoy holiness, wholeness, while they take no pleasure in sin; God’s love is a sweet taste in their mouths, regardless of whether their own interest are met or not. They rejoice over all that Christ has done for them, but that is not the deepest root of their joy. No, they delight merely because God is God, and only then does their delight spill over onto all God’s works, including their own salvation.” – Jonathon Edwards (1703-1758) in Religious Affections, pg 136

“The thought of God should be the Christian’s panacea. It should cure all his ills at a stroke. And what in infinity there is in the thought of God! Nothing can approach in beauty to the idea of the true and living God. That there exists a Being who is infinite in power, knowledge and goodness, that that Being cares for me with a perfect love as though I were the only man in existence, that he loved me before I was born and created me to enjoy him eternally and that he sent his Son to suffer the agony of the cross to secure my eternal happiness – that, surely, must be a thought to end all sorrow.” – Maurice Roberts The Thought of God, 5.

“The basic trouble with the church today is her unworthy concept of God... Our religion is weak because our God is weak... Christianity at any given time is strong or weak depending on her concept of God.” – A.W. Tozer

“God is the highest good of the reasonable creature. The enjoyment of him is our proper; and is the only happiness with which our souls can be satisfied. To go to heaven, fully to enjoy God, is infinitely better than the most pleasant accommodations here. Better than fathers and mothers, husbands, wives, or children, or the company of any, or all earthly friends. These are but shadows; but the enjoyment of God is the substance. These are but scattered beams; but God is the sun. These are but streams; but God is the fountain. These are but drops, but God is the ocean.” – Jonathan Edwards, The Works of Jonathan Edwards, Vol. 17: Sermons and Discourses, 1730-1733

“The god of this century no more resembles the Sovereign of Holy Writ than does the dim flickering of a candle the glory of the midday sun. The god who is talked about in the average pulpit, spoken of in the ordinary Sunday school, mentioned in much of the religious literature of the day, and preached in most of the so-called Bible conferences, is a figment of human imagination, an invention of maudlin sentimentality. The heathen outside the pale of Christendom form gods of wood and stone, while millions of heathen inside Christendom manufacture a god out of their carnal minds.” – A.W. Pink

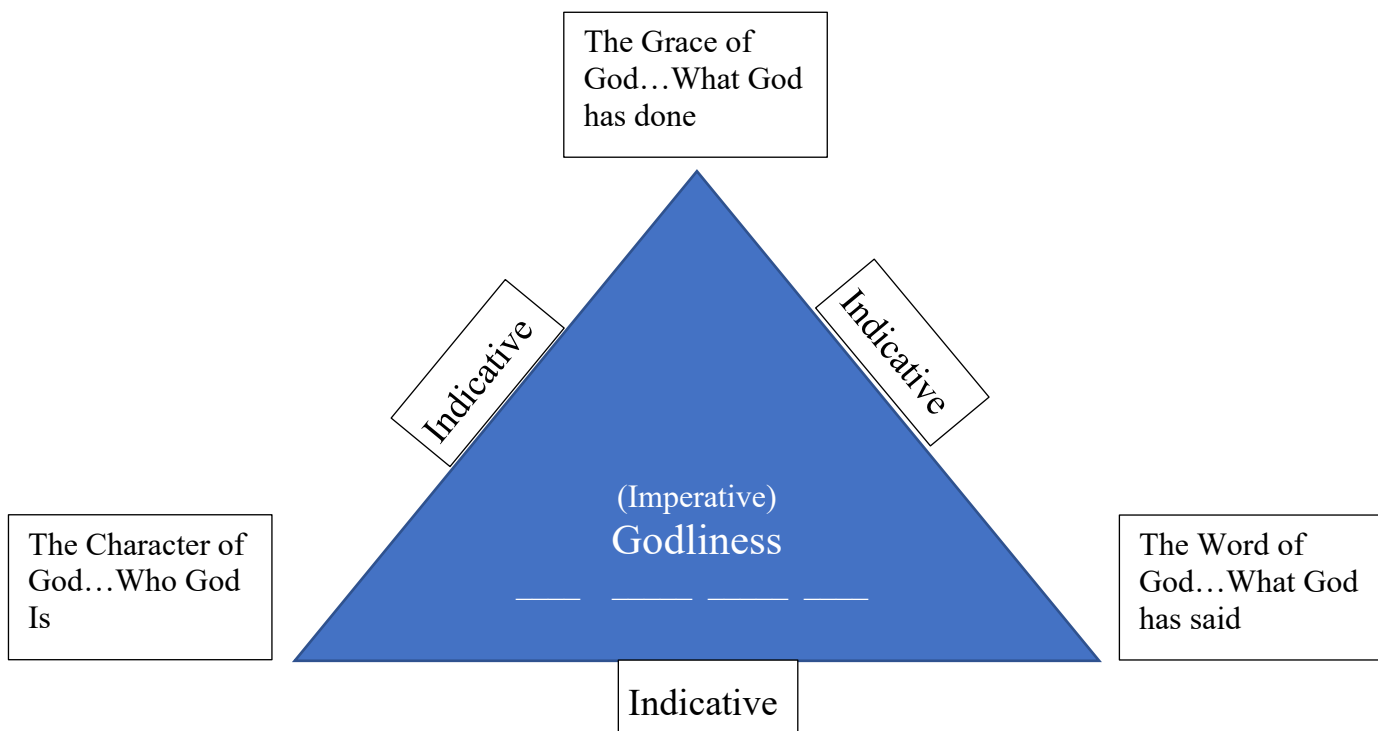
“Hence that dread and amazement with which as Scripture uniformly relates, holy men were struck and overwhelmed whenever they beheld the presence of God.... Men are never duly

touched and impressed with a conviction of their insignificance, until they have contrasted themselves with the majesty of God.” – John Calvin

“The way to honor the Lord is to live to Him by living like Him” –Stephen Charnock

Review: Five Facts that lay a strong biblical foundation for a life of godliness

- Godliness is inseparably linked to biblical _____
(Ps 1:1-3; Jn 17:17 & 2 Tim 3:16-17; Titus 1:1 cf. Rom 1:18 & Titus 1:14)
- Godliness is tethered to _____ and _____ for God
(Ex 3:1-6; 14:31; Ps 130:4; 2 Cor 7:1; Heb 12:28-29; 1 Pet 1:15-17)
- Godliness is rooted and enjoyed in _____
(Rom 6:1-14; 12:1-2; Eph 2:10; Col 1:21-22; 2 Cor 5:14-15; Titus 2:11-14)
- Godliness is not less than but more than correct _____
(1 Tim 3:16; 6:6; 2 Tim 3:5; Col 3:1-4, 10; 2 Pet 1:4; Phil 3:12-14; Heb 12:14)
- Godliness is both a duty and delight that flows from personal _____
(Rom 12:1-21; Phil 2:12-13; 3:7-11; 2 Tim 3:12; Gal 2:20; 1 Cor 6:19-20; 2 Cor 5:14-15)



Godliness is devotion in action!
Duty + Delight = Devotion

(1) Look up 1 Peter 1:13-17 and explain how this passage is paramount in the believer's training to godliness. What does the "Therefore" in verse 13 force you to consider? How does the gospel of sovereign grace drive everything that follows in this passage? How might you summarize verse 13 in relationship to verses 14-17? Now read verses 14-15 and identify for me how the believer is described at the beginning of verse 14. What is the negative command in verse 14 and what does the word "conformed" mean? Verse 15 does what in comparison to verse 14? Help me understand what is the positive command in verse 15, the parameters for this command and what it means? Where is Peter quoting from in verse 16 and what is the motivation or the reason that undergirds the command, "You shall be holy..."? How does verse 17 further clarify the motivation behind the mandate to live in holiness while walking through this world of wickedness? What does Peter mean by "conduct yourself in fear throughout the time of your exile"... why would a believer ever fear? How important is embracing the description of being an "exile" to faithfully following the command to be holy?

(2.) What does it mean that God's character must drive our conduct and is that a biblical truth? Look up Lev 11:44-45 and explain to me what God is both saying and demanding of His people Israel? What is the primary theme and emphasis of Leviticus? What does it mean when God says, "For I am the Lord your God."? How many times do you think this phrase "For I am the Lord" or "For I am the Lord your God" is used in Leviticus? Here are a few passages to consider (Lev 18:1-5 & 30; 19:1-4; 9-10; 11-12; 13-14; 15-16; 17-18; 23-25; 26-28; 29-30; 31; 32; 33-34; 35-37; 20:7, 26). Read Lev 25:17 as you explain what was meant to be the ultimate motivation for Israel regarding not wronging one another? Read Ex 20:1-2 and explain what was meant to be the driving force for Israel in following the 10 commandments given by God? What was Israel to do in preparation for meeting with God (Ex 19:7-15) and how does this only further highlight His character and theirs? Now read Ex 19:16-20 and 20:18-19 explain what happens when God reveals Himself to Israel on Mt Sinai? How does Moses answer the people and in so doing further help us see how a right view of God's character drives a right response in God's people?

(3.) Look up Psalm 36:1 and explain to me what is ultimately missing in the life of the wicked? How does Paul quote this passage in Rom 3:18 and what are the implications regarding man's depravity? How does the reality of being devoid of the fear of God correlate with Jeremiah 9:3 & 6? What does God mean when speaking of His people as "not knowing Him" in Isaiah 1:3 and how does He contrast them with the ox and donkey? What foundational warning did God give Israel in Deut 6:10-15 which they did not heed? What does it mean to forget God and how do we see that illustrated in these passages (2 Chron 26:16-21; Josh 5:20-21; Judg 8:33-34; Ps 9:17; 50:22; Isa 65:11-12; Jer 3:19-21)? Did Joseph forget God and what subsequent benefit was brought upon his life (Gen 39:6-10)? As we train ourselves to godliness we must always fight for a right fear of the Lord which will protect us from what (Prov 8:14; 9:10; 14:2 cf. Job 42:1-6)! If you could give a concise life purpose statement that tied all this together in helping clarify your life's mission, what would it be (See Ecc 12:13-14!!!)

In one of his letters to Erasmus, Martin Luther said, "Your thoughts of God are too human." How much more today! See Ps 50:17-23 (pay special attention to the end of verse 21)!

Faithfulness and Fearing the Lord

“...but a faithful man who can find?”

(12-10-22)

“Your life is short, your duties many, your assistance great, and your reward sure. Therefore faint not, hold on and hold up, in ways of well-doing, and *Heaven shall make amends for all!*” — Thomas Brooks

“Take away the fear of God from any profession of godliness, and all that is left is the stinking carcass of pharisaism, barren religiosity, or calculated hypocrisy!” Albert Martin

“Men could be content to have the kingdom of heaven; but they are loathe to fight for it. They choose rather to go in a feather bed to hell than to be carried to heaven in a ‘fiery chariot’ of zeal and violence.” — Thomas Watson

“The fear of the Lord is the soul of godliness!” John Murray

“The Church does not need brilliant personalities but faithful servants of Jesus and the brethren. Not in the former but in the latter is the lack.” — Dietrich Bonhoeffer

“Many people will profess faithfulness, but few will demonstrate it. The virtue of faithfulness is often costly, and few people are willing to pay the price. But for the godly person, faithfulness is an absolutely essential quality of his character, regardless of what it might cost.” — Jerry Bridges

“The remarkable thing about fearing God is that when you fear God you fear nothing else where as if you do not fear God you fear everything else.” Oswald Chambers

[The faithful man] “He has his back to the world, his face toward heaven and a Book in his hand.” — John Bunyan

“I call it [fear of God] the highest duty, because it is, as I may call it, not only a duty in itself, but, as it were, the salt that seasoneth every duty. For there is no duty performed by us that can by any means be accepted of God, if it be not seasoned with godly fear.” John Bunyan

“I have precisely one lifetime to make certain the Gospel survives and thrives in another generation – I must labor faithfully and invest wisely.” — John Kitchen

“All wickedness flows from a disregard of God...Since the fear of God is the bridle by which our wickedness is held in check, its removal frees us to indulge in every kind of licentious conduct (without moral restraint).” John Calvin

Review & Intro:

(1) Can you be a godly man and yet be devoid of faithfulness? Are there any examples of people in Scripture who claimed to be followers of God and yet in the end proved faithless (Josh 7:20-21; 1 Sam 15:17-23; Isa 5:8-24; Acts 5:1-11; 20:29-30; 1 Tim 1:19-20; 2 Tim 1:16-17; 3 Jn 9-10)? What is discouragingly revealing from the truth declared in both Prov 20:6 and Psalm 12:1-2? Is there any correlation of the reality from the two previous passages with the modern church? Explain? Look up the term faithfulness or faithful in a few dictionaries and give some definitions. What would be some synonyms for faithfulness? The terms “faithful” or “faithfulness” are used 150 plus times in the Bible and the bulk of those declare and point to the faithfulness of whom (Deut 7:9; Ps 33:4; 145:13; Lam 3:23; 1 Cor 1:8-9; 1 Thess 5:24; 1 Peter 4:19; Heb 10:23; 1 Jn 1:9)? Why is this point so encouraging to the godly man as he trains himself to godliness (Ps 40:11; 89:1-2; 119:86; 1 Cor 10:13; Titus 1:1-3; 2 Thess 3:3; Heb 11:11; Rev 1:5; 19:11; 21:5; 22:6)? If God were all things but not faithful, what hope would we have? Read Psalm 89 and count how many times faithfulness is mentioned. How does God’s faithfulness drive everything in this Psalm and what bearing does that have on David and the nation? How does this truth also drive the godly man’s conduct similar to 1 Pet 1:15-16? Now look up these passages and explain how important faithfulness to God’s revealed will is in the godly man’s walk (Mt 25:21-23; Lk 12:42-44; 16:10-13; 19:17; 1 Cor 4:2; 2 Tim 2:2; Rev 2:10)?

(2.) Read Prov 14:2 and explain how a study on the fear of the Lord gets to the heart of faithfulness before the Lord? Read these passages and explain what is lost when the fear of the Lord is forgotten (Deut 32:15-18; Judg 3:7; Ps 36:1; 106:19-22 cf. Prov 8:12 also compare Ex 9:20 with 9:30)? How did Nehemiah describe his brother (Neh 7:2)? What did Jethro help Moses do (Ex 18:21)? How did God describe Levi (Mal 2:4-6)? Why did Nehemiah treat the people better than the other governors (Neh 5:15-16)? Why was Job declared to be a blameless man and upright, meaning a just or honest man? What grounded and drove this character (Job 1:1)? And yet, Job’s faithfulness is heightened by his growing sense of what at the end of the book (Job 42:1-6)? Of course, Jesus Christ is the greatest example of what faithfulness looks like (Heb 3:1-6; 1 Pet 2:21-25) and Isaiah says prophetically of Christ that His delight will be in what (Isa 11:1-5)? Therefore, as we will learn throughout this study, faithfulness to the Lord is ultimately a consequence of what? How do you see this truth declared in Ecc 12:13-14? Read Proverbs 14:27 and explain how the fear of the Lord and life go together? Proverbs is a book all about what? What theme permeates Proverbs from beginning to end (See 1:7 & 31:30) and you could even say bookends the Bible (Gen 22:12 & Rev 19:5)? What does Proverbs 1:7 mean and how does Proverbs 9:10-11 bring clarity? The fear of the Lord leads to what (Prov 19:23) and provides what for the family who is led by a man who fears God (Prov 14:26)? How will a study on the fear of the Lord better help us see how godliness is a response to who God is?

(3.) Read both 2 Cor 5:11 with 1 Jn 4:18 and explain what we must understand and guard against when doing a study on the fear of the Lord? Many have defined the fear of the Lord as “reverential awe” which is not an exhaustive definition but a helpful place to begin. To bring further clarity look up these words in multiple dictionaries and write down what you find and see if you can find an archaic meaning to the words as well...

Awe =

Reverence =

Is this “reverential awe” what you see when you read Gen 22:12; 28:12-22; Ex 1:17; 20:20; Lev 19:32; Deut 17:19; Josh 24:14? What do you see connected in these verses regarding the fear of the Lord Gen 28:17; Ex 15:11; Deut 7:21; 10:17; 28:58; Ps 89:7; 99:3; 130:4; Ezek 1:18 cf. 28; 2 Lk 1:50; 5:6-11; 2 Cor 7:1; Heb 11:7? There are two primary ways the word fear, with God as the object, is rightly understood in the Bible and one of them is seen in showing a reverential respect, awe inspiring wonder, and humbled honor to the one being “feared.” However, this is only part of the picture as there is another way the fear of the Lord is expressed in Scripture. Read these passages and explain what you see and if it is more than a response of reverential respect (Gen 3:10; Ex 3:1-6; 14:31; Deut 6:13-15; 17:1-7; 21:18-21 WOW; Ps 2:11; 50:3, 16-22; 90:11; 119:110; Ecc 12:13; Isa 6:1-6; Jonah 1:10,16; Mt 10:28; Lk 12:4-7; 2 Cor 5:10-11; Acts 5:11; Phil 2:12-13; Heb 10:26-31; 1 Peter 1:17; Jude 22-23; Rev 14:7)? So, we can see how we are to recognize and remember what about God (Rom 11:22) and thus we are to offer acceptable worship to Him with what (Heb 12:28-29)? In what you have learned how does the Bible express the fear of the Lord and how should we then understand it?

Remember Mr. and Mrs. Beaver in Lewis’ Chronicles of Narnia? “Is he—quite safe? I shall feel rather nervous about meeting a lion.” “That you will dearie, and make no mistake,” said Mrs. Beaver. “If there’s anyone who can appear before Aslan without their knees knocking, they’re either braver than most or just plain silly.” “Then he is safe?” said Lucy. “Safe?” said Mr. Beaver; “don’t you hear what Mrs. Beaver tells you? Who said anything about safe? ‘Course he isn’t safe. But he’s good. He’s the King, I tell you.”

Calvin’s words are helpful as this lesson closes. *“For, to begin with, the pious mind does not dream up for itself any God it pleases but contemplates the one and only true God. And it does not attach to him whatever it pleases, but is content to hold him to be as he manifest himself; furthermore the mind always exercises the utmost diligence and care not to wander astray, or rashly or boldly to go beyond his will...Because it sees him to be a righteous judge, armed with severity to punish wickedness, it ever holds his judgement seat before its gaze, and through fear of him restrains itself from provoking his anger. Besides, this mind restrains itself from sinning, not out of dread of punishment alone; but, because it loves and reveres God as Father, it worships and adores him as Lord.”¹*

¹ John Calvin, *Institutes of Christian Religion* (Philadelphia: Westminster John Knox Press, 1967), 42-43. Emphasis added.

Fruitfulness and Fearing the Lord
““The fear of the Lord leads to life...”
Prov 19:23

“No point throughout the whole of Scripture is more urged than this fear of the Lord.” William Gouge

“The fear of God in which godliness consists is the fear which constrains (compels or powerfully produces) adoration and love. It is the fear which consists in awe, reverence, honor, and worship, and all of these on the highest level of exercise. It is the reflex in our consciousness of the transcendent majesty and holiness of God.” John Murray

“To fear God is to have such a holy awe of God upon our hearts, that we dare not sin. “Stand in awe and sin not.” Psalm 4:4. The wicked sin and fear not; the godly fear and sin not. “How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?” Gen 39:9... He who fears God will not sin, though it be ever so secret.” Thomas Watson

“Godly fear consists with love. This is so true, that the more we fear God, the more we love him; and the more we love him, the more do we fear him. Godly fear is not a destroyer, but a regulator of other graces. Without it faith might become presumptuous, hope might lose its sobriety, love might degenerate into fondness or sentimentality, and joy might become giddy. But where the heart is full of godly fear, all these unhappy results are avoided. So far from agitating, it calms and quiets the mind. It seems to give both gravity and cheerfulness. It moderates without depressing; it animates without intoxicating. It is good ballasts to the ship in her passage through tempestuous seas.” William S. Plumer

“The first thought of the godly man in every circumstance is God’s relation to him and it, and his relation to God. That is God-consciousness and that is what the fear of God entails.” John Murray

“I take this grace of fear to be that which softens and mollifies the heart and makes it stand in awe of both the mercies of God and the judgments of God. This is that which retains in the heart that due dread and reverence of the heavenly Majesty that is fitting to be in and kept in the heart of sinners...This is that...which makes the sinner stand in awe of God.” John Bunyan

“For, to begin with, the pious mind does not dream up for itself any God it pleases, but contemplates the one and only true God. And it does not attach to him whatever it pleases, but is content to hold him to be as he manifest himself; furthermore the mind always exercises the utmost diligence and care not to wander astray, or rashly or boldly to go beyond his will...Because it sees him to be a righteous judge, armed with severity to punish wickedness, it ever holds his judgement seat before its gaze, and through fear of him restrains itself from provoking his anger. Besides, this mind restrains itself from sinning, not out of dread of punishment alone; but, because it loves and reveres God as Father, it worships and adores him as Lord.” John Calvin

Review: How many and what types of fear do we find in the Bible? For the first type of fear look up these passages Prov 22:3; Gen 44:34; Ruth 3:11; Ps 9:20; Matt 10:23 cf. Acts 9:23-25; Mk 5:23 cf. 36; 2 Cor 11:3, 28; 1 Tim 5:23; Phil 2:20 & Col 4:12; Rom 13:3. For the second type of fear look up these passages Gen 3:10; 12:10-13; 16:2; 19:30-32; Prov 29:25; Ex 32:1-6, 21-24; 1 Sam 13:11; 15:24; 18:7-9; Lk 22:1-2, 56-62 cf. Mk 14:40; Jn 12:42-43; Gal 2:11-14. Remember, sinful fear always breeds cowardice (2 Tim 1:7), but godly fear always breeds courage (Prov 28:1)! The third type of fear is what we have seen in passages like Prov 1:7; Ex 20:18-20; Ps 33:8; 66:1-2; Mal 1:6; Mt 10:28; Heb 12:28-29; Ps 130:4; 147:11; Phil 2:12-13; 2 Cor 5:11; 7:1; Rom 3:18; 1 Pet 2:17; Rev 14:7. The fear of the Lord is ultimately a fruit of what and of Whom (Jerm 32:39-40)? According to Paul, believers are ministers of what Covenant (2 Cor 3:6)? Christ is the Mediator of what Covenant (1 Cor 11:25; Heb 12:24)? How does 1 Jn 3:9-10 correlate to what Jerm 32:39-40 declared about the fear of God being sovereignly gifted to believers through the gospel? The fear of the Lord and what always go together (Ecc 12:12-13; Deut 13:4; Prov 8:13 cf. Rom 3:18 and contrast with Jn 14:21, 23-24)? How does Rom 11:20-22 help us have a correct and full view of the fear of the Lord? The fear of the Lord involves first a veneration and awe of who God is (Ex 3:5-6; 15:11; Deut 10:17-20; 28:58; Ps 89:6-7; 99:1-3; 130:4; Isa 6:1-6; Ezek 1:18, 28; Lk 5:6-11; 2 Cor 7:1; Heb 11:7). Yet a biblical fear of the Lord will also be mingled with a holy dread and terror for what God has done, can do, and will do (Deut 6:13-15; Ps 2:10-11; 50:3, 16-23; 90:11; 119:119-120; Ecc 12:13-14; Mt 10:28; 2 Cor 5:9-11; Acts 5:11; Phil 2:13-14; Heb 10:26-31; 12:28-29). Two aspects you must get right if you are going to understand the fear of God rightly:

1. The awesome character of God drives us to worship Him humbly and joyfully. This is a focus on who God is in His awe-inspiring character.
2. The severe judgement of God protects and propels us to not offend Him. This is a solemn consideration of what God has done, can do, and will do in his terrifying day of reckoning.

God's awesome character is often seen most clearly in His manifold greatness and goodness and His severe judgments often seen in the manifestation of His holy wrath, righteous judgments, perfect jealousy, and ultimate hatred for sin as seen at the cross. Paul's exhortation in Rom 11:20-22 is so helpful here that believers never forget both the kindness and severity of God. These are both most clearly seen at and on the cross! Fear of the Lord rightly involves both a reverential awe and respect for who God is along with a holy and healthy fear of offending Him!

How will the Fear of God Impact my Walk with God?

~ The fear of God is often directly connected to godly conduct or behavior (Job 1:1)

- The fear of God and _____ (2 Cor 7:1; 2 Tim 2:19)
- The fear of God and _____ (Ps 5:7; Heb 12:28-29)
- The fear of God and _____ (Ps 2:11; Col 3:22-25; Eph 6:5-6)

- The fear of God and _____ (Prov 3:7; Isa 6:1-11)
- The fear of God and _____ (Ps 67:1-7; 2 Cor 5:9-11)
- The fear of God and _____ (Prov 19:23; 23:17)
- The fear of God and _____ (Eph 5:21; 1 Pet 2:13-17)
- The fear of God and _____ (Lev 19:14; 1 Pet 3:8-12)
- The fear of God and _____ (Ex 14:31; Ps 115:11; Prov 3:5-8)
- The fear of God and _____ (Prov 14:2; Neh 5:15-16; Job 42:1-6)
- The fear of God and _____ (Ps 66:18; Prov 28:9; 1 Pet 3:7)

~ Who God is should determine how we think-speak-live-worship! (Heb 12:28-29)

- The holiness of God should drive us to _____ **fear.** (Ex 6:1-6; Isa 6:1-9)
- The omnipotence of God should drive us to _____ **fear.** (Ex 14:31; Rev 15:3-4)
- The greatness of God should drive us to _____ **fear.** (Ps 89:6-7; Ps 33:1-9; Job 42:5-6)
- The wisdom of God should drive us to _____ **fear.** (Ps 139:1-18; Rom 11:33-36)
- The justice of God should drive us to a _____ **fear** (Lk 12:5; Acts 17:30-31; Rom 11:20-22)
- The love of God should drive us to a _____ **fear** (Ps 130:3-4; Prov 14:27)
- The sovereignty of God should drive us _____ **fear** (Dan 3:16-30; Acts 4:23-31)
- The name of God should drive us to _____ **fear** (Dt 28:58; 2 Tim 2:19)

- The presence of God should drive us to a _____ **fear** (Ps 139:1-24; Gen 28:17)
- The goodness of God should drive us to a _____ **fear** (Jerm 33:8-9)

How do I grow in the fear of the Lord and teach this to others?¹

1. _____ in correct (biblical) concepts of the _____ of God
~ Who God is!
 - God is majestic in Holiness (Rev 15:2-4; Isa 6:1-3)
 - God is incomprehensible in Immensity (Isa 40:12-26; 1 Kings 8:27)
 - God is unrivaled in Sovereignty (Ps 115:3; Acts 2:23, 4:23-31, 17:22-31)
2. _____ with a pervasive sense of the _____ of God
~That God is here and watching!
 - God is powerfully Imminent (Isa 66:1-2)
 - God is personally Omniscient (Psa 139:1-12)
 - God is pervasively Omnipresent (Jerm 23:23-24)
 - *Consider some personal applications
(Ps 23:4; 2 Cor 6:16-7:1; Heb 12:18-29)
3. _____ with a constraining awareness of our _____ to God
~ What God requires!
 - To Love Him Supremely (Mt 22:37-38)
 - To Obey Him Implicitly (Jn 15:14; Acts 5:29)
 - To Trust Him Completely (Heb 11:6; Phil 2:12)
 - To Answer to Him Fully (2 Cor 5:10-11; Rom 15:7-12)
4. _____ in awe of the underserved _____ of God
~ What God has done and will do!
 - Rejoice in God's Sovereign Grace (Col 1:13; 1 Jn 4:19; Jn 6:44)
 - Rejoice in God's Rich Mercy (Eph 2:1-5; Titus 3:5)

¹ See Martin, N. Albert, (2015). *The Forgotten Fear: Where Have all the God Fearers Gone?* Reformation Heritage Books. Helpful section on growing in the fear of the Lord. Some of what I say here taken from that book.

- Rejoice in God's Steadfast Faithfulness (Heb 13:5; Phil 1:6)
- Rejoice in God's Preserving Power and Patience (Jn 10:24-25; 2 Cor 12:10)
- Rejoice in God's Unending Love (Rom 5:1-11; 8:28-39; 1 Jn 4:17-18)

Here are a few points of mediation from what we have learned about the fear of the Lord:

1. A biblical fear of God is delivered as a gift of sovereign grace in and through the gospel.
2. A biblical fear of God is driven by a humble conviction of personal sin.
3. A biblical fear of God is driven by a clear understanding of God's purity.
4. A biblical fear of God is driven by a concrete understanding of God's power.
5. A biblical fear of God is driven by a constraining awareness of God's presence.
6. A biblical fear of God is driven by a compelling embrace of one's obligations to God.
7. A biblical fear of God is driven by an awe of receiving undeserved grace in Christ.

The Constant Presence of our Greatest Problem Jeremiah 17:9

“Never will Christ be wonderful Christ, and never will grace be wonderful grace until sin is wonderful sin and experimentally apprehended as out of measure sinful. Never, until sin is seen and sorrowed for as the greatest evil, will Christ be seen and rejoiced in as the greatest Good.”
John Yates (d. 1657) in the intro to Jeremiah Burroughs *The Evil of Evils*

"Sin is to the soul what rust is to gold, what scars are to a beautiful face, what stain is to a white silk cloth, it is ugliness across the face of beauty...Sin is poison, sinners serpents; sin is called vomit, sinners dogs; sin is called mire, sinners pigs. Sin is defiling, degrading. It stamps the devil's image on the human soul." Ralph Venning, *The Sinfulness of Sin* (written in 1669)

Sin discloses its true essence by hiding its deepest intents.” G.C. Berkower

“The doctrine of original sin is the one philosophy empirically validated by thirty-five hundred years of human history.” G. K. Chesterton

“Sin uses the law to break man and then uses man to break God’s law.” Ralph Venning, *The Sinfulness of Sin*

“Sin aims always at the utmost; every time it rises up to tempt or entice, if it has its own way it will go out to the utmost sin in that kind. Every unclean thought or glance would be adultery if it could, every thought of unbelief would be atheism if allowed to develop. Every rise of lust, if it has its way reaches the height of villainy; it is like the grave that is never satisfied. The deceitfulness of sin is seen in that it is modest in its first proposals but when it prevails it hardens mens’ hearts and brings them to ruin.” John Owen

“Sin has brought more plagues upon this earth than all the earth’s tyrants. It has brought more pangs and more miseries upon men’s bodies and souls than the craftiest inventions of the most cold-blooded tormentors. Sin...is such tyranny that none but those whom God delivers have been able to escape from it. Nay, such tyranny that even they have been scarcely saved; and they, when saved, have had to look back and remember the dreadful slavery in which they once existed.” Charles Haddon Spurgeon

“For, if the case be such indeed, that all mankind are by nature in a state of total ruin...then doubtless the great salvation by Christ stands in direct relation to this ruin, as the remedy to this disease; and the whole gospel or doctrine of salvation, must oppose it; and all belief, or true notion of that gospel must be built upon it.” Jonathon Edwards

“One degree off course here, according to the massive hamartiological compass of God’s Word, will result in missing the theological destination of an understanding of biblical salvation by a million miles. And, not only will one be off course theologically because of his defective hamartiology, but also he will be errant in his ministerial methodology.” Dr. George Zemek

“Sin establishes the plotline of the Bible...If we don’t comprehend the massive role that sin plays in the Bible and therefore in biblically faithful Christianity, we shall misread the Bible.”
D.A. Carson, *Fallen*; 22-23

“To speak of man as sinners in the modern church is like screaming out a profanity or obscenity at a very formal, dignified, genteel meeting, or even in church. It is forbidden. This general attitude is almost a new type of legalism, the major prohibition is, ‘You shall not speak anything negative.’” Millard Erickson

Introduction & Review: Consider where we have come from and where we are in this study

Men, as we begin to transition in our study from **who God is** to **what God has done** it is imperative for us to remind ourselves and grow deeper in our humble assessment of our wretched state (both past and present) as rebellious sinners. Therefore, this series of questions will further prepare you for a better understanding of the riches of God’s all satisfying grace and the overwhelming nature of His undeserved mercy given through the gospel.

Lesson: *Rejoicing in sovereign grace begins with recognizing the problem of persistent personal sin!*

1. Read Isa 6:1-7 and consider the response of Isaiah in verse 5 where he says “Woe is me!” Why does he say this? Is there anything in verses 1-4 that implicates Isaiah in any wrong doing? Now consider what it was that Isaiah saw. Look at verses 1-2 and list out what he saw and explain what it meant. Example: He saw the Lord upon a throne! What did that mean and declare to Isaiah? Also, as you consider this, find out the significance of when this happened as being “In the year Uzziah died” and how that helps highlight some of what Isaiah saw. Next consider what he heard in verse 3. Who was speaking and in what manner were they speaking and what were the implications of their declaration? Hint: What are the implications of “the whole earth is full of his glory!”? Also, contemplate what he felt and subsequently saw and probably smelt in verse 4 as the “house filled with smoke.” What house is he referring to here? Isaiah saw, heard, felt, and smelled something that moved him at the core of his being. What was it that did this to Isaiah? Now you are ready to grapple with these most important questions...

2. What does Isaiah mean when he says “Woe is me!”? What does/did the word “woe” mean especially in that day and age? Look back at chapter 5 and consider how many times he says “woe” in that chapter. Who is he speaking to and what is he saying? Consider the clear description given in verse 24 and the scary ramification deserved in verse 25. Is there a connection between Isaiah and his people in who they are? Explain and consider what that says about Isaiah especially since he was a man of God and a man of affluence. Look up Jer 4:13 and

consider the “woe” and how it is used. What is the cause of this “Woe” in Jeremiah 4:13 and what is the only solution as declared in verse 14? Any similarities to Isa 6?

3. What does Isaiah mean when he says he is a “lost” man? You might want to look at Isa 15:1 and how the Hebrew word for “lost” is used in that verse...hint it is repeated twice and translated the same in the ESV. Also look up Ps 49:12, 20 where the same verse is repeated using the Hebrew word for “lost” or “undone” though translated a little differently see if you can pick out what word it is? Also consider the applicability of this verse to what we are looking at in Isa 6!

4. Now, consider what Isaiah means by describing himself as a man of “unclean lips.” What does that word mean in biblical language? Think back to the Torah and ask yourself if anything unclean was ever allowed in the presence of God! Remember what God said in Ex19-20 about the people “consecrating themselves” getting themselves ready to meet with him on the mountain! Read Leviticus 10:10 and then look at the context and see what happens when people enter God’s presence in an unclean manner! Next read Leviticus 13:45-46 and consider what a “leprous person” would have to say to those who came near and where the leper was to live.

5. Have you ever wondered how Uzziah died? What did he have and how did he get it? See 2 Chronicles 26 especially verse 16-23! What did Uzziah fail to see? Noticed it was not what he did that was his demise but how he responded when confronted with his sin! Do you see the danger of failing to have humble view of self (Rom 12:3). Finally, read this most famous verse in Isa 64:6 where the same Hebrew word of “unclean” is used and consider the uncleanness of your life! If you have any doubts read further into verse 7! Sounds a lot like Rom 3:9-18! How does verse 18 of Romans 3 end? *All of this has provoked some people to see Isaiah here calling himself a “moral leaper.” I think that about says it all for all of us! Have you ever saw yourself as a leaper morally?*

Sin doth not only still abide in us, but is still acting, still laboring to bring forth the deeds of the flesh. When sin lets us alone, we may let sin alone: but as sin is never less quiet than when it seems to be most quiet, and its waters are for the most part deep when they are still, so ought our contrivances against it to be vigorous at all times, in all conditions, even where there is least suspicion.” John Owen, The Mortification of Sin

The Depth of our Disease and Spiritual Death

Isa 64:6

Until sin be bitter, Christ will not be sweet.” Thomas Watson

“The best preparation for the study of the gospel is neither great intellectual ability nor much scholastic learning but a conscience impressed with a sense of our actual condition as sinners in the sight of God. A deep conviction of sin is the one thing needful in such an inquiry, a conviction of the fact of sin, as an awful reality in our personal experience of the power of sin as an inveterate (chronic) evil cleaving to us continually and having its root deep in the innermost recesses of our hearts.” 19th cen Scottish Theologian James Buchanan

“On the contrary, as God is holy, all holy, only holy, altogether holy, and always holy, so sin is sinful, all sinful, only sinful, altogether sinful, and always sinful. In my flesh, there dwelleth no good thing. As in God there is no evil, so in sin there is no good. God is the chiefest of goods and sin is the chiefest of evils. As no good can be compared with God for goodness, so no evil can be compared with sin for evil.” Ralph Venning, *The Sinfulness of Sin*

“Never will Christ be wonderful Christ, and never will grace be wonderful grace until sin is wonderful sin and experimentally apprehended as out of measure sinful. Never, until sin is seen and sorrowed for as the greatest evil, will Christ be seen and rejoiced in as the greatest Good.” John Yates (d. 1657) in the intro to Jeremiah Burroughs *The Evil of Evils*

“If nothing else will do to sever me from my sins, Lord, send me such sore and trying calamities as shall awake me from earthly slumbers. It must always be best to be alive to Thee, whatever be the quickening instrument.” Robert Murray M’Cheyne

"The seed of every sin known to man is in my heart." Robert Murray McCheyne

“No man knoweth what villainy he is capable of; he only needs to be placed under certain circumstances and he will develop into a very fiend.” Charles Spurgeon

“Sin has an indwelling and captivating power, whereby it continually assaults the principle of spiritual life, beating down the Christian’s defenses, battering his armor, routing his graces, wasting his conscience, destroying his peace, and at last bringing him into a woeful captivity unless it be mortified. Corruption does not lie dormant in the Christian: though it reigns not supreme (because of a principle of grace to oppose it) yet it molests and often prevails to a very considerable extent. Because of this the Christian is called upon to wage a constant warfare against it: to “mortify” it, to struggle against its inclinations and deny its solicitations, to make no provision for it, to walk in the Spirit so that he fulfill not the lusts of the flesh.” A.W. Pink

Introduction:

Men, we have been deep in a deep study on biblical holiness and what it means to personally “train yourself for godliness...” (1 Tim 4:7). This study has moved us through seeing the inseparable link between pursuing godliness and God’s Word (What God has said), God’s Holy Character (Who God is), and what we are about to consider God’s Gospel (What God has done, is doing and will do)!

Thus, we are preparing to consider the great grace of the gospel that gives the believer the gift of positional godliness and the desire and ability to pursue practical godliness. Yet, before we can really appreciate and enjoy that marvelous gift of grace in Christ we must see, learn, and meditate on the deep need we have for God’s sovereign mercy because of the depth of our disease and spiritual death! Hence the quotes I have put above are practical and powerful in helping prepare and point us in the right direction for this study. Re-read them now!

Lesson:

Last study we left off in Isa 64:6 after considering the declaration of personal “uncleanness” by Isaiah himself (Isa 6:5) and how that term was what the leper would call out (Lev 13:45) “because of their personal unfitness for fellowship with God and the worshipping community.”

Now, read Isa 64:6-7 intently and carefully answer these questions:

1. How would you describe these verses in a few words? Who is Isaiah writing about here and is there a universality seen in these verses? If so explain where you see it and what it means and did you see this in Isaiah 6? The first part of Isa 64:6 speaks of “defilement” that yields “defiled deeds.” What does that mean and what is the reason for Israel’s defilement and where does it come from (see Isa 29:13)? Is there any correlation to this in the New Testament? (See Mt 15:1-20) Explain what Jesus is saying when he quotes Isa 29. What provoked Jesus to say this and what is the implication then and now? Is there any alluding to Isa 64 in what Jesus says in Matt 15:10-20?
2. As you read the second part of Isa 64:6 ask yourself this question...If the source of all that man does is defiled can he ever offer to God anything other than defiled deeds that are utterly unpleasing to God? What does Paul mean when he says in Romans 7:18 that nothing good dwells in his flesh? Is there any connection here to Paul’s point in Rom 8:7-8? Interestingly, how would Hebrews 11:6 relate to man’s inability to ultimately please God? Read Haggai 2:12-14 and answer this question, what hope does an unclean person have to ever offer to God anything that is “clean” or acceptable? (See also Job 14:4) How does this help you better understand God’s disgust with Israel’s “great” sacrifices in Isa 1:10-20 that were a “great” disgrace to God? Now, read and explain what Rom 3:19-20 are actually saying. Again, what hope does any man have apart from Christ?

3. Now, read the third part of Isa 64:6 and explain the deadly consequences of sin in man's life. What does he mean "we all fade like a leaf and our iniquities like the wind take us away? Do you see any parallels to Ps 1? Explain. Read Jeremiah 17:1-10 and explain the difference between the man who has a heart that turns away from God (Jer 17:5-6) and a man who has a heart that turns toward God (7-8). Considering the Bible's commentary on the heart here in Jerimiah (Read also Ps 36:1) and God's searching the heart what is man's deepest need? Read Ezek 36:26! Least we be confused, is this problem with man's heart just an Israel thing? I mean most of these passages we are reading are dealing specifically with Israel. Read these two passages (Gen 6:5 & 8:21) and explain what is so clear from these passages about man's diseased and dead heart. Consider how that connects to Rom 3:9-18 and help me understand how this passage is so clearly universal in its declaration and application. I was once taught that this passage was only about the Jews ☹ prove to me from this text why that statement is totally wrong.

4. There are two deadly results of sin upon the lives of all humanity. Read these passages and tell me in your own words what those are. **First** universal consequence we see in passages like Lev 4-6; Ezra 9:6-15; Ps 25:11; Isa 6:7, 53:10; Jer 33:8; Gal 3:10; Js 2:10 is what? How is this first result of sin summed up in Rom 3:19? Now this disastrous reality is twofold which means man's perilous predicament is worse than often realized. Explain how this universal verdict because of sin is universal by decree and personal by deed. Read these passages (Rom 5:12-18 & 1 Cor 15:21-22 as well as Rom 3:23, 6:23, 11:32; Gal 3:22; Ps 143:2; Ecc 7:20; Isa 53:6. What hope does man have in himself? Now consider the **second** result of sin upon mankind see Gen 6:5, 8:21; Ps 5:9, 14:2-3, 36:1; Ecc 9:3; Isa 64:6; Jer 13:23, 17:9; Mt 15:17-19; Jn 3:19; Rom 1:21-32, 8:5-8; 1 Cor 2:14; Eph 2:1-3, 4:17-19, 5:8; Col 2:13; Titus 3:3! What is this second result and how pervasive is it in and over man and his faculties...his being? Look up the old hymn *Rock of Ages* (one of my favorites) by Augustus Toplady. The first stanza of the original hymn reads, "*Be of sin the double cure: save from wrath and make me pure.*"? What did Toplady mean that Christ the double cure for repentant sinners?

Where Depravity and Godliness Collide

Section Three: "What God Has Done"

1 Cor 15:10

"Godliness is the sacred impression and workmanship of God in a man, whereby from being carnal he is made spiritual." Thomas Watson

"Grace is action on God's part, motivated by love and shaped by holiness, which takes account of the seriousness of sin yet brings sinners back into communion with Him" Carl Trueman

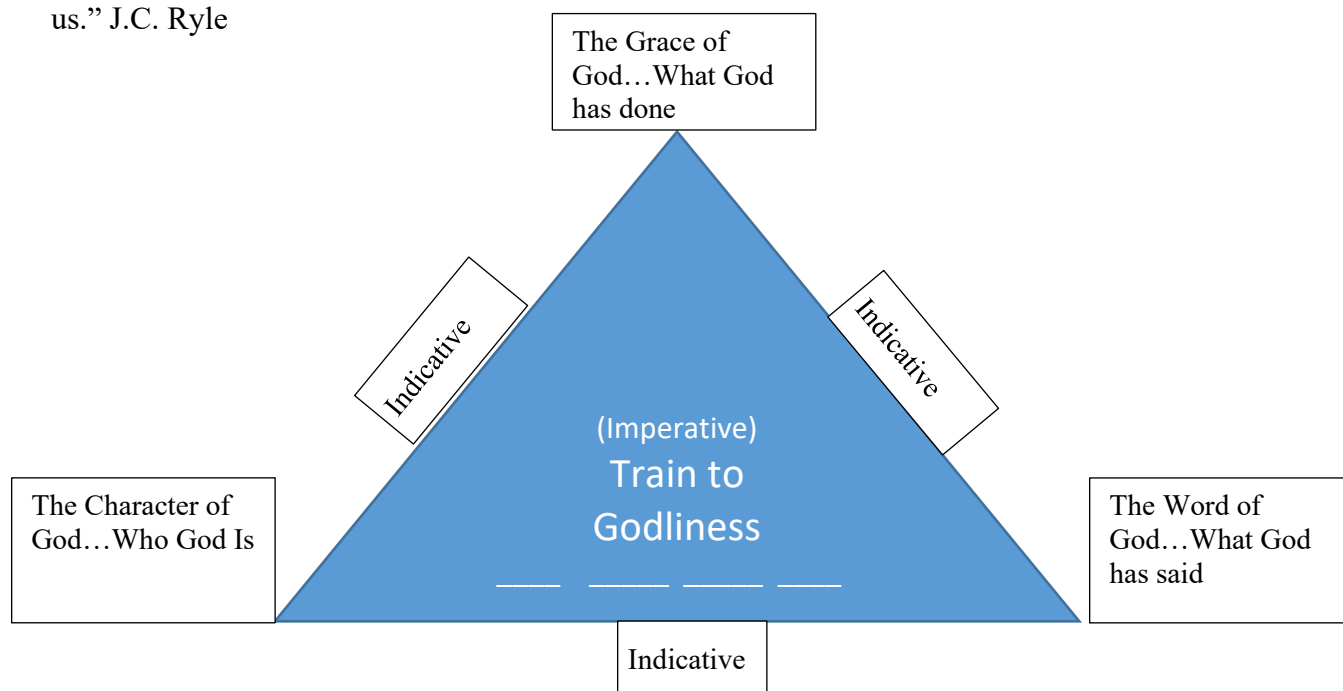
"A pardoned sinner will hate the sin that cost the Savior's blood" Charles Haddon Spurgeon

"A Superficial diagnosis of the depravity of man will only lead to insufficient remedies for his cure." Professor George Zemek

"The human heart has so many crannies where vanity hides, so many holes where falsehood lurks, is so decked out with deceiving hypocrisy, that it often dupes itself."
John Calvin, *Institute of the Christian Religion*, J.T. McNeill (1960), 3.2.10.

"This day, my God, I hate sin not because it damns me, but because it has done thee wrong. To have grieved my God is the worst grief to me." Charles Haddon Spurgeon

"I have had a deep conviction for many years that practical holiness and entire self-consecration to God are not sufficiently attended to by modern Christians in this country. Politics, or controversy, or party-spirit, or worldliness, have eaten out the heart of lively piety in too many of us." J.C. Ryle



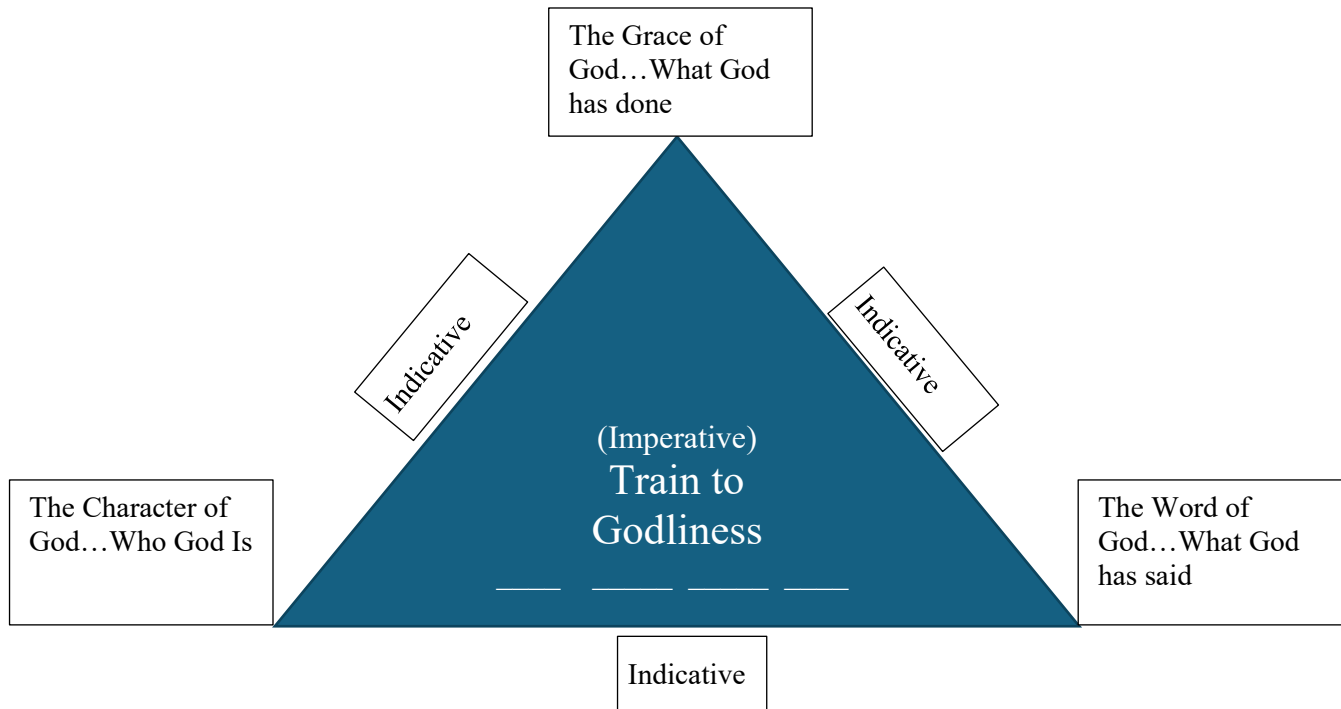
Godliness is devotion in action!
Duty + Delight = Devotion

1. What ultimately compelled the apostle Paul in his private and public life, ministry and pursuit of godliness (1 Cor 15:1-11; 2 Cor 5:14-15)? What drives you to fulfill your duty to train yourself to godliness (1 Tim 4:6-10; Titus 2:11-14)? How would you describe your pursuit...drudgery or delight (Phil 3:7-16; 2 Tim 4:6-8)? Considering all that we have studied so far, read Job 9:2 and contemplate the all-consuming question Job asks "How can a man be in the right before God?" Now, as you wrestle with what is the most important question in your life read these passages (Ps 36:1-4; Isa 64:6-7; Jer 13:23; 17:9-10; Rom 3:9-18) and explain the "natural state" of man as he stands before a holy God. List out at least five descriptors of natural man gleaned from the previous passages and explain how these truths begin to negatively shape your answer to Job's question? How does Eph 4:17-19 or Col 1:21 describe unsaved man? Is there a display of "total depravity" in these passages? Explain what that means. What hope does man have of standing right before God apart the work of God?

2. Now, read Ephesians 2:1-3 and explain how this passage dramatically describes what the previous verses above declared. What does it mean that "man is dead in the trespasses and sins" (Eph 2:1)? Consider 1 Cor 2:14 & Rom 3:10-12 and explain how that helps you better understand what Paul means. How does Eph 2:2 vividly display the fruit of being "dominated by sin" and can you list out three explicit results (from this passage Eph 2:1-3) of being dead that are manifested in life? What or who does a dead man follow? Read these verses and explain how they correlate to this passage and the pitiful state of the natural man (1 Jn 2:15-17; 2 Cor 4:4; Titus 3:3). Are there any other verses you could add that demonstrate man's desperate state?

3. Would you agree with this quote "*A Superficial diagnosis of the depravity of man will only lead to insufficient remedies for his cure.*" If you agree explain why with biblical support. From what you have learned so far how would you biblically define man's "depravity"? Here are some helpful verses if needed 1 Cor 2:14; Eph 2:1-3; Titus 3:3; 2 Cor 4:4; Rom 3:9-17. What does all this have to do with training yourself to godliness (1 Tim 4:7) and is there any correlation to Col 1:13-14; 2 Pet 3:18 and Titus 2:11-12? Read the glorious passage in Rom 6:1-14 and explain to me the most encouraging connection in all of this for a true believer as he pursues gospel driven godliness? See if you can find at least 5 life changing truths or promises being a result of the gospel that direct and encourage the believer's pursuit of God given godliness.

Godliness Men's Bible Study Review 1 Tim 4:7



Godliness is devotion in action!
Duty + Delight = Devotion
Mt 22:36-40

Men,

If you are newer to this Bible study or even see this Saturday as your first time it might feel like you are “parachuting” into the middle of a deep forest with no GPS. That is not a good feeling! So, I thought it might be helpful to provide a little overview on where we have been and where we currently are in our discipleship series on walking godly while living in an ungodly world.

You will be encouraged to know that each lesson in our series stands on its own as the Word of God feeds and guides us closer to Christ every other week and further equips the redeemed man to fight sin and strive for holiness. Yet, at the same time, each lesson methodically builds upon one another as they each paint a biblical picture of what genuine godliness is, where godliness comes from, why godliness must be pursued by every follower of Christ and, most importantly, how to practically train oneself unto godliness according to the divine means of grace.

While there are many clear commands given to the believer to progressively pursue godliness in his walk with Christ it is 1 Timothy 4:7 that has served as the scriptural impetus for this whole study. In that passage Paul commands Timothy, and by implication all of us to, “train yourself to

godliness.” The Greek word often translated as “train” literally means, “to control oneself by or thorough discipline.” Paul is also clear that this training has a specific direction and is unto “godliness.” The Greek term for godliness means “awesome respect accorded to God.” Thus, godliness is really an internal attitude of God centeredness that leads to external acts of Christ likeness! Godliness is a life that is focused on God and a life that is lived out for God. This is what Timothy, and every follower of Christ is not only called to but were saved for (Rom 8:28-29; 2 Cor 3:18; Eph 1:4; Col 3:10).

It is helpful to note that this Greek term translated as “train” is the Greek word from which we get our English word “gymnasium.” We understand that the gymnasium is to be a place marked by serious sweat, ongoing toil, and sacrificial labor in the pursuit of disciplining one’s body. Yet, the validity of this kind of training on a physical level is even greater and more important on the spiritual. Paul goes on in 1 Timothy 4 and reminds his son in the faith that while physical training is of some value it is the spiritual training that is of greater value because it deeply impacts both your earthly and heavenly life in every way. This study is all about learning and living in the biblical gymnasium as we seek to discipline our lives to godliness the way God designed it and demands it for His ultimate glory.

So far, in our study we have learned much about godliness by looking at many biblical exhortations given by God as well as many helpful examples of faithful men in the Scriptures who proactively pursued and walked in holiness. We have also considered the reality of “ungodliness” and where that comes from and what that looks like in a life to better help us guard against this natural default proclivity as we train.

A big part of our study to date has been learning about God’s designed means for how we are to train ourselves to godliness which is just another facet of the believer’s ongoing sanctification. We have learned that training oneself to godliness is all about three specific works and gifts of God, **His Word, His Character, and His Grace**. Growing spiritually as a godly man demands that you be a man who is in God’s Word, learning about God’s character, and overwhelmed by God’s gospel grace. Each one of these areas become specific targets and tools the man of God uses and aims for as he disciplines his heart toward progressive holiness in Christ.

Godliness is a Result of Growing in God’s Word

So far, we have learned how godliness is a work of God’s Word in and on the life of the believer. There is no salvation or sanctification apart from God’s sovereign and sufficient Word (Rom 10:17; Jn 17:17). We have clearly seen that God has designed His perfect Word to be the powerful tool in perfecting His people (Ps 1:1-6; 19:7-11; 119: 9, 11; Jn 17:17; 2 Tim 3:15-16; Titus 1:1; 1 Pet 1:22-23; 2 Pet 1:3-4)! This study has helped us see not only that God’s Word through God’s Spirit is the ultimate means of grace in sovereignly bringing godliness to the life of the believer but also how God’s Word works on the life of believers. We did an in-depth look at how to read, study, and mediate on the Word to train ourselves to godliness. God has been very clear to all of us that progressive godliness is without question a ramification of His Word’s work on our hearts. This section taught us many things but most of all we learned that if we are not growing in the understanding and obedience to God’s Word than we will not grow in godliness!

Godliness is a Result of Growing in God's Character

That brings us to the second section of the study which teaches us how godliness is also a result of growing in a right understanding and personal response to God's character. Training ourselves to godliness is not only driven by God's Word but also driven by **who God is in His character** (Ex 20:18-21; Lev 11:44; Ps 76; 130:3-4; Prov 1:7; Ecc 12:12-13; Isa 6:1-7; Mt 5:48; 2 Cor 5:9-11; 2 Cor 7:1; Col 1:15-20; Heb 12:28-29; 1 Pet 1:15-16). We ultimately go to God's Word that we might hear from (2 Tim 3:15-16; Ps 19:7-11), know (2 Pet 1:16-21; Ps 119:12-16), and follow Him (Ps 86:11; 119:33-40). God's character is meant to drive and shape the believer's conduct (1 Pet 1:16-17)! It is God's faithfulness that fuels the believer's faithfulness (Ps 89; Lam 3:22-24). It is God's awesome character that provokes the believer's awe of God (Heb 12:28-29). It is God's serious judgment that further motivates the believer's pursuit to please the Lord (2 Cor 5:9-11). Therefore, training oneself to godliness will demand growing in a mature understanding of the person of God.

Forgetting who God is and forsaking Him is the natural proclivity of the fallen heart in all men and the constant fight for every true believer (Isa 55:10-11; 1 Pet 2:11). Training oneself to godliness is, in part, about moving from being a forgetful man to being a faithful man (Isa 6). This study is really about the ongoing fight from being a man who forsakes God to being a man who daily forsakes self (Lk 9:23). Thus, we must daily remind ourselves of who God is in His great and holy character. As Paul rightfully said, we must remember both the "kindness and severity of God" lest we fail to see and respond to Him rightly (Rom 11:22). Therefore, growing in a right understanding of and response to God is all about growing in the fear of the Lord (2 Cor 7:1). This gets to the heart of the second section of this study as we have been learning all about how godly men fear God (Isa 11:1-5; 1 Pet 2:17)!

Godliness is a Result of Growing in God's Grace

Finally, as we are about to start learning in this next section, training ourselves to godliness is also a result of what God has done, is doing and will do through Christ (Rom 3:21-26; 5:1-11; 6:1-14; 8:18-39; Eph 2:1-10; Col 1:13-23; 2:9-15; 3:1-4; 1 Cor 1:30-31; 2 Cor 5:14-15; Titus 2:11-14; 3:4-7; Heb 12:1-2; 1 Pet 1:3-9; 2:22-25)! Remember, it is the divine indicatives of grace (statements of fact) that motivate our submission to the divine imperatives (commands) for holiness (Col 1-2 feed Col 3-4 cf. Rom 12:1-2; 2 Cor 7:1)! Therefore, the cross of Christ (2 Cor 5:14-15) always drives my ongoing joy filled pursuit of Christ which brings great delight amidst the difficult duty of training myself to godliness (Phil 3:7-16)! This whole framework (the triangle illustration of godliness above) helps us see how godliness is really a Trinitarian work in what God has said through His perfect Word (God the Spirit), who God is in His perfect character (God the Father), what God has done through His perfect sacrifice (God the Son)! Notice how before we ever consider what we must rightfully do, pursue holiness, we focus on the sufficient Word, saving Person, and sovereign work of God! This always protects us from going in the wrong direction, man centered "godliness", while actively propelling us in the right direction, God centered godliness!

If all of that helps us understand where godliness comes from and what ultimately drives it, then where do we look to learn how to actually "train ourselves to godliness"? If 1 Tim 4:7 is the

command than how do I rightfully fulfill that command without falling prey to focusing on a list of attributes? 2 Peter 3:18 is a helpful corollary here as we always rightfully train ourselves to godliness by growing in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Christ! Growing in the grace of Christ is the fruit of focusing on what God has done, is doing and will do through the gospel! One of the greatest ways to grow in Christ is by saturating your heart and life in God's amazing grace given in salvation. These become the roots of your life in Christ (Col 2:6-7) being sovereignly planted and nurtured by God Himself through His Word as He grows us to fear and obey Him with joy (Phil 2:12-13). Therefore, before we consider the fruits of godliness (Gal 5:22-24), we must begin digging deep into the glorious roots of our salvation which include election, regeneration, justification, reconciliation, redemption, propitiation, adoption, and glorification. Prepare yourself as we begin examining and pondering deeply the amazing, undeserved, all sufficient and unstoppable grace of God lavished on us in Christ!

I pray this overview of where we have been and where we are currently in our study will both encourage and equip you to get the most out of our time in the Word together on Saturday mornings. Humbled by this opportunity to marvel and mature together as we learn to live even more in awe of God's underserved sovereign grace!

For His Glory,
Matt White
Isa.66:2

Living in Awe of God's Sovereign Grace

Section Three: "What God Has Done"

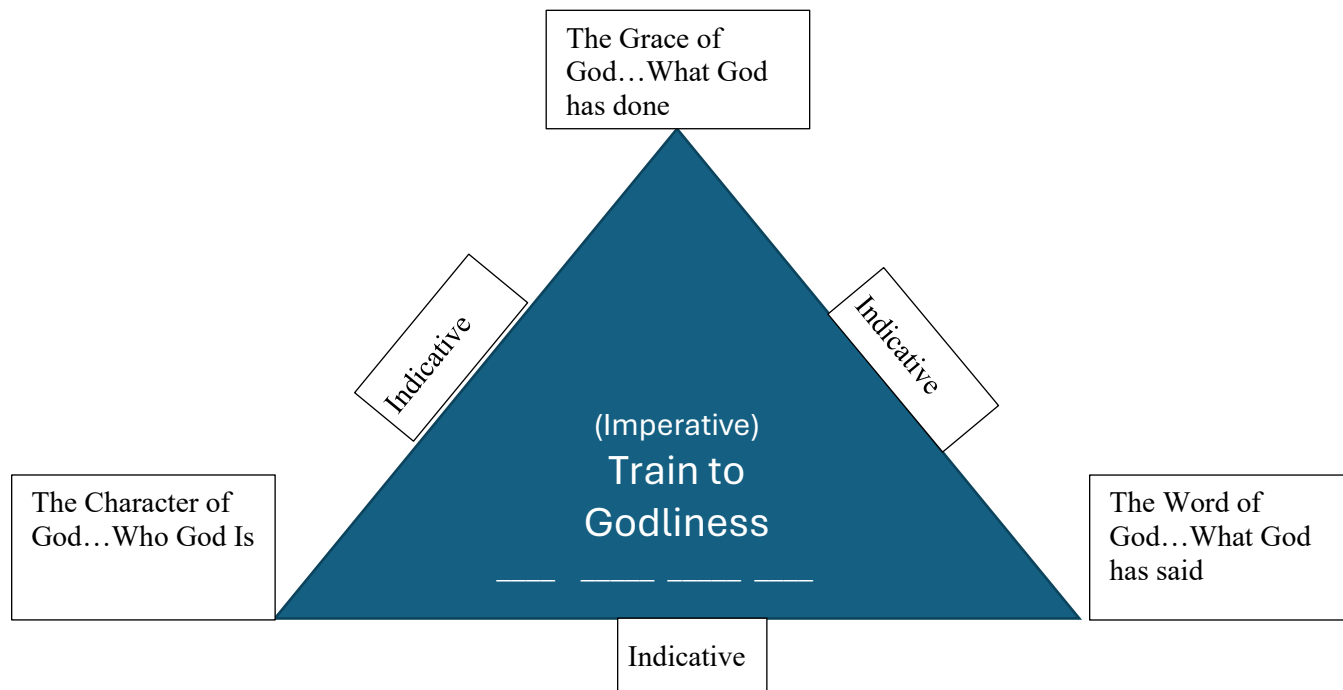
1 Tim 1:16-17

"It is unquestionably one of the tragic fruits of our fallen nature that we can grow in theological knowledge without growing perceptibly in appreciation of what that knowledge means. The head may be full, while the heart is cold. Truths maybe handled clinically without the affections becoming roused or kindled." Maurice Roberts in Thought of God, pg 79

"God has blessed us in this generation with a recovery of many glorious doctrines long buried under the rubbish of tradition and error. Our concern must be to 'improve' our privilege. Not to do that would be ingratitude to God. We owe it to Christ to be the best Bible-readers and the best hearers of sermons. We owe it to our families and to posterity to see that the church children of this rising generation see the best examples and receive the best instruction. Then let it be our heartfelt wish to stop up the leaks between the pulpit and pew, between the godliness of the father and son, between what we are in our creeds and what we are in our lives. It is a subject in which great issues are at stake." Maurice Roberts in Thought of God, Pg 152

"One of the beautiful paradoxes in God's wisdom is sovereign grace. The same grace that is unmerited is also unstoppable." Tony Reinke in John Newton on the Christian Life

"Sovereign grace has power alone to subdue a heart of stone; and the moment grace is felt, the hardest heart will melt." John Newton



Godliness is devotion in action!
Duty + Delight = Devotion

Review: Last lesson we dove deep into Ephesians 2:1-3 and learned what Paul meant when he said unsaved man is “dead” in his sins and how that “death” correlates to being “separated” or alienated from God (Col 1:21). We saw that being dead in sins speaks directly to the heart condition of man and thus every aspect of man is utterly incapacitated and corrupted wanting nothing to do with God and His ways. Furthermore, we learned that Paul proves this point of man’s hopelessness by describing how a dead man lives and who a dead man follows as a slave of sin, the world, and even of Satan. We must not lose sight of the depth of our depravity apart from Christ. This quote by John Calvin highlights how we are often deceived by our own depravity...

“The human heart has so many crannies where vanity hides, so many holes where falsehood lurks, is so decked out with deceiving hypocrisy, that it often dupes itself.”
John Calvin, *Institute of the Christian Religion*, J.T. McNeill (1960), 3.2.10.

Therefore, in our previous lesson we grappled with how critical it is that we have a clear and correct diagnosis of man’s ultimate problem because if we do not, we will only offer man an insufficient remedy at best. We also saw how man’s inner corruption is complete and utter, totally impacting every ounce of his being which means man is in a place of total depravity and spiritual inability (Jn 8:34; Eph 2:1-3; Rom 3:10-18; 1 Cor 2:14; Eph 4:17-19; Titus 3:3). Man, apart from Christ, is fully a slave to sin in how he thinks, in how he feels, and in how he acts (noetically, emotionally, volitionally). The Bible is clear that apart from sovereign grace man is utterly hopeless and helpless being enslaved in the kingdom of Satan (Col 1:13-14).

Now we are ready to start considering the power of God’s sovereign grace given through the gospel to break the shackles of sin and to set the believer free to live a life of godliness to the glory of God (Rom 6:1-14)! You must never forget that the roots of true godliness are entirely and completely a gift of God’s sovereign grace! Meaning an unmerited salvific work of grace that was unilaterally instigated and providentially accomplished by God alone. Remember the Ethiopian’s skin and the leopard’s spots of Jerm 13:23 and Who is the only one who can transform that which cannot be changed (cf. Jerm 31:31-34; 32:36-41)? This is the glorious truth of ***What God Has Done*** in the gospel that empowers us and compels us to be men who passionately train ourselves for godliness (1 Tim 4:7).

Lesson 15: (1) Now, let us return to Ephesians and see if we can grow even further in living in awe of God’s sovereign grace. Read Ephesians 2:4-5 and contemplate the colossal shift that is happening between the previous three verses (2:1-3) and verses 4-5. What are the first two words of verse 4 in the ESV? Look up and define for me the conjunction “but” so that you can better explain what it is being highlighted in this passage. As verse 4 begins with “But God” verses 1-3 are really all about or could begin with this phrase (you fill in the blank) “But _____.”

(2) Read these verses in the ESV (Gen 50:20; Ps 49:15; Acts 13:30; Rom 5:8; 1 Cor 1:27; 3:6-7) and tell me how they connect with and better help you understand what is being highlighted by the “But God” of Eph 2:4. Can you identify for me the similarities between Eph 2:1-6 and Titus 3:3-7? What words are repeated and what concepts are clearly interwoven through these two passages? Identify the *situation of man*, the *motivation of God*, the *foundation of salvation*, the *transformation* and *destination of the believer*.

3. Continue reading Ephesians 2:4-6 and explain what is being contrasted in this passage even as you read on through verse 10. How many points of contrast can you identify when you compare verses 1-3 with 4-6? Explain for me both who man is and what man does in verses 1-3 and now compare/contrast that with who God is and what God does in verses 4-6. See if you can fill in the blanks... While in death God brings _____; While in bondage God brings _____; While helpless God brings _____; While deserving wrath God delivers _____! This is sovereign grace! According to Scripture explain what grace is and how foundational it is to the believer's life and growth. (Ex 34:6; 1 Pet 5:10; Jn 1:14, 17; 1 Pet 1:13; Rom 3:23-24; 4:16; 5:15; 5:20; 6:23; 11:5-6; Eph 1:6-7; 2:5-9; 2 Thess 2:16; 2 Pet 3:18)? Write down at least three specific ways (with Scripture references) on how God's sovereign grace personally impacts you as you train yourself to godliness (1 Tim 4:7)?

The Utter Renovation of the Soul **Titus 3:5**

"Mere outward reformation differs as much from regeneration as white-washing an old rotten house differs from pulling it down and building a new one in its place." Augustus M. Toplady

"It is the Spirit that showeth us our sins, and the Spirit that showeth us a Saviour, and the Spirit that stirreth up in our hearts desires to come to God." John Bunyan

"Adoption gives us the privilege of sons, regeneration the nature of sons." Stephen Charnock

"Infants do not induce, or cooperate in, their own procreation and birth; no more can those who are 'dead in trespasses and sins' prompt the quickening operation of God's Spirit within them."
- J I Packer

"Regeneration, however it is described, is a divine activity in us, in which we are not the actors but the recipients." - Sinclair Ferguson

"The act of God in our regeneration is so momentous that no single category of thought is sufficient to describe the changes it brings about in and for us." - Maurice Roberts

"To be the people of God without regeneration, is as impossible as to be the children of men without generation." - Richard Baxter

"Good education is not regeneration. Education may chain up men's lusts, but cannot change their hearts." - Thomas Boston

"The ministry of the Word is the pipe or organ; the Spirit of God blowing in it, effectually changes men's hearts... Ministers knock at the door of men's hearts; the Spirit comes with a key and opens the door." - Thomas Watson

"The grace of God has no charms for men till the Holy Spirit gives them a taste for it." - John Calvin

"The saints' love to God is the fruit of God's love to them; it is the gift of that love. God gives them a spirit of love for Him because He loved them from eternity. His love is the foundation of their regeneration and the whole of their redemption." - Jonathan Edwards

"By nature I was too blind to know Him, too proud to trust Him, too obstinate to serve Him, too base-minded to love Him. The enmity I was filled with against His government, righteousness, and grace, was too strong to be subdued by any power but His own. The love I bear Him is but a faint and feeble spark, but it is an emanation from Himself. He kindled it, and He keeps it alive. And because it is His work, I trust many waters shall not quench it." - John Newton

Lesson Questions: The Necessity for Regeneration

Before we can truly appreciate the miraculous work of sovereign grace through regeneration we must be reminded of the state of the unregenerate man. Look up these verses and explain the unbelievers condition before Christ, his heart (Gen 6:5; 8:21; Ecc 9:3; Jer 17:9; Ezek 11:19); his mind (Rom 1:21-22; Eph 4:17-19; 1 Cor 2:14; Col 1:21); his eyes (Mt 15:14; 2 Cor 4:4-6; 6:14; Eph 5:8; Acts 26:18; 1 Jn 2:11); his lips (Rom 3:13-14; Mt 12:33-37; Isa 59:1-4; Ps 5:9; Js 3:6-12); his will (Jn 3:19-20; 6:44; 8:34-36; Rom 3:9-18; 6:16-18; 8:7-8; Eph 2:1-3; Col 1:13). How would you describe man's spiritual and eternal prognosis? Why is this often-called total depravity? Read Jeremiah 13:23 and explain what this total depravity or being "spiritually dead" means? Now read Eph 2:4-5, Rom 5:8-10, 1 Jn 4:10 and express in your own words the wonder of sovereign salvation!

The Reality of Regeneration:

Now that we have seen the necessity for spiritual renewal, we are ready to begin grappling with the amazing grace of *regeneration*. Look up Titus 3:5 and Matt 19:28 where the Greek word for *regeneration* is used. In Mt 19:28 how is the Greek word “regeneration” translated in this Text and how is it being used? In Titus 3:5 what does Paul mean by “the washing of regeneration”? It might help you to look up the definition for “*regeneration*” in a few dictionaries and write down some similarities you find. While the Greek word for regeneration is only used twice in the NT another word or series of words that carry the same idea are used a number of times throughout the NT. Look up Jn 1:12-13; 3:1-8; 6:63; 1 Pet 1:3, 23; 1 Jn 2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18; 2 Cor 5:17-18 and see if you can better grasp the definition or explanation of the theological truth of *regeneration*.

The Author of Regeneration:

Based upon these Scriptures how would you define or how does Scripture articulate this truth of regeneration? Who is the ultimate author of regeneration man or God? Substantiate your answer! (Hint these verses might help Dt 30:6; Jer 31:31-34; Ezek 11:19-20; 36:25-27; Jn 1:12-13; 6:63 Titus 3:5; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:3, 23; 2 Cor 5:17-18; Eph 2:4-5). Are there any illustrations of sovereign regeneration in the Bible? Look up Ezek 37:1-14 and explain what is happening in this Text especially as it relates to Ezek 36:25-27. Count how many times in Ezek 36:25-27 that God is the cause or says, “I will”. How does this amazing truth about sovereign regeneration impact your training to godliness (1 Tim 4:7)? In what specific ways does this reality of the radical renovation of the soul through the gospel encourage you in your fight against sin (Jn 5:24; Rom 5:5-14; 1 Cor 5:16-17; Col 1:13-14; 3:1-4, 5, 10; Gal 5:16; Eph 4:20-24)?

The Divine Work of Regeneration Titus 3:5

"Effectual calling is the work of God's almighty power and grace... he doth, in his accepted time, invite and draw them to Jesus Christ, by his Word and Spirit." Thomas Watson

"A man is not saved against his will, but he is made willing by the operation of the Holy Ghost... A mighty grace which he does not wish to resist enters into the man, disarms him, makes a new creature of him, and he is saved". Charles Spurgeon

"Original sin renders all human beings naturally dead (unresponsive) to God, but in effectual calling God quickens the dead". JC Ryle

"In this work the soul is passive; but being thus quickened by the Spirit of life from God, and set on their feet, they are capacitated for action." Elisha Coles

"...when I sought the Lord earnestly, I had no idea the Lord was seeking me". John Bunyan

"Adoption gives us the privilege of sons, regeneration the nature of sons." Stephen Charnock

"The crucial prerequisite for salvation is a work of the Holy Spirit in us" R C Sproul

"The Spirit of God always leads the people of God to devote themselves to the word of God. The Spirit enables us to do the duty to which the Bible calls us". Alister Begg

"The greatest miracle that God can do today is to take an unholy man out of an unholy world, and make that man holy and put him back into that unholy world and keep him holy in it". Leonard Ravenhill

"The preaching of the word is the great means which God hath appointed for regeneration: "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom 10:17). When God first created man, it is said that "he breathed into his nostrils the breath of life", but when God creates new man, he breathes into his ears." Ezekiel Hopkins

"The ministers of God are only the pipes and organs; it is the Spirit blowing in them, that effectually changes the heart". Thomas Boston

God... teaches his elect effectually when he brings them to faith... by the internal illumination of the Spirit he causes the word preached to take deep root in their hearts". John Calvin

"He calls them out of their natural state of sin and death to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ. He enlightens their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the things of God". J I Packer

"The effectual call is powerful; God exerts infinite power to call a sinner to Himself, conquering pride and enabling the will to yield to His grace." Thomas Watson

Lesson Questions: The Nature of Regeneration

A healthy understanding of regeneration will involve seeing its nature as conceptually distinct yet consequentially tethered to the divine calling of God. Consider these verses and explain what calling from God is seen here (Isa 45:22; 50:2; 55:6-7; Jer 17:3; Eze 18:23, 32; 33:11; Matt 11:28-30; 22:2-14; 28:19; Lk 5:32; 13:34; 14:16-24 24:47; John 3:16; 7:37; Acts 2:38-39; 4:12; 8:22; 13:38-39; 17:30; Rom 10:13; 2 Cor 5:20; Rev 22:17)? Can this calling be rejected by man (Isa 6:9-10; 50:2; 65:2, 12; Jer 7:13; 35:15, 17; Lk 13:34; Jn 3:18; 6:64; 7:41-42; 9:40; 10:20; 12:37; Acts 7:51; 17:32; Rom 10:21; Heb 4:6-7; 12:25)? Now consider this different calling from God which sovereignly sets the stage for regeneration to happen (Joel 2:32; Matt 22:1-14; Luke 14:21-23; Jn 6:44; 10:34 cf. 16, 26-28; 6:44, 65; Acts 2:39; 13:48; 16:14; Rom 1:6; 8:28-30; 11:39; 1 Cor 1:9, 20, 24, 26; 7:18, 21; Gal 1:6; 5:13; Eph 4:4; Col 3:15; 1 Thess 2:12; 2 Thess 2:14; 1 Tim 6:12; 2 Tim 1:9; 1 Pet 2:9; 5:10; 2 Pet 1:3; 10; Heb 3:1; 9:15). In what ways does this understanding of the sovereign calling of God in true salvation both humble you and encourage you as you train yourself to godliness (Rom 8:28-30; 2 Pet 1:10-11)?

The Means of Regeneration:

A complementary interaction happens in regeneration that begins with Who (John 3:3, 5-8; 6:63; 2 Cor 3:6; Gal 3:2-3; 1 Thess 1:5; Titus 3:5)? Scripture also declares Who else is involved in regeneration (Jn 1:13; 2 Cor 5:17-19; Eph 2:4-5; Col 2:13; 1 Pet 1:3; 1 Jn 5:11; Jn 1:12; 5:21)? What is the means the Spirit uses in regeneration (Rom 1:16; Eph 5:26; 1 Thess 1:5; 2:13; 2 Thess 2:13-14; James 1:18; 1 Pet 1:23-25)? How does that understanding change the way we evangelize and minister (Rom 10:14-17)? Some people use Scripture to teach falsely that baptism is the means of regeneration. Here are some Scriptures proof text used to the false doctrine of baptismal regeneration (Mk 16:15-16; John 3:5; Acts 2:38; 1 Peter 3:21; Acts 22:16; 1 Cor 6:11; Titus 3:5; Heb 10:22-23). Look at John 3:5 and explain in context why is “water baptism” not the divine means for regeneration (Jn 3:5, 8, 15, 16, 18, 36; Jn 3:8 cf. Num 19:17-19; Deut 30:6; Isa 4:4; 32:15; 44:3; 55:1; Jer 31:31; Joel 2:28-29; Zech 13:1; Ezek 11:18-20; 36:25-27)? Consider how these passage listed here speak to salvation and/or regeneration and point not to baptism but to what (Jn 1:12; 3:14-16; 3:36; 6:47; Luke 24:46-47; Acts 5:31; 10:44-48; 11:13-18; 13:48; 15:7-9; 26:16-18; Rom 3:25-30; 4:5; 5:1; Gal 2:16; 3:8; 3:24; Eph 2:8-9; Phil 3:8-9; 1 Tim 1:16; 2 Tim 3:15; 1 Pet 1:8-9; 1 Jn 3:23)? Now read 1 Cor 1:13-17 and explain if Paul thought that baptism was part of the gospel in any way? Also read Luke 23:32-43 and see if baptism was part of this man’s salvation.

The Results of Regeneration:

Consider the depth of being spiritually dead and totally depraved and answer how deep or extensive is the impact of regeneration? Hint: look up Jn 5:24; Rom 6:5-14; 2 Cor 5:16-17; Col 1:13-14 and ask yourself if the gospel changes part of the man or the whole man? In regeneration the mind's eye is radically changed (Acts 26:18; 2 Cor 4:4-6; Eph 1:18) so that a mind bent on the flesh is replaced with a mind driven by what or Who (Rom 8:5-9; see also 1 Cor 2:14-16)? Does God utterly change man's heart in regeneration (Ezek 11:19; 36:26) so that his affections and desires are freed to love God and His ways (Ps 27:4; 40:6-8; 42:1-2; Mt 5:3-8; Jn 3:21; 2 Cor 5:16-17; 1 Pet 1:8; Eph 4:23-24; Col 3:1-4,10)? Explain the massive difference of someone hearing the gospel and learning how to "be nice" verses someone believing in the gospel and being made new (2 Cor 5:16-17)? What would "salvation" from man's perspective look like without a biblical view of regeneration? What would be the practical impact of an unbiblical view on regeneration have on evangelism, preaching, and discipleship in and through the church? How does this amazing truth about sovereign regeneration impact your training to godliness (1 Tim 4:7)? In what specific ways does this reality of the radical renovation of the soul through the gospel encourage you in your fight against sin (Jn 5:24; Rom 5:5-14; 2 Cor 5:16-17; Col 1:13-14; 3:1-4, 5, 10; Gal 5:16; Eph 4:20-24)?

Celebrating Sovereign Salvation Eph 1:3-14

“No man will ever be lost who wants to be saved. In other words, we could never say a man is lost because he was not chosen. The Bible never says that. The reason men are lost is because they’re sinners. And men do not want to come to God.” – S Lewis Johnson

“The Bible teaches both the sovereignty of God and the free moral choices of man with equal emphasis. Richard Fulle, the third president of the Southern Baptist Conviction, said, ‘It is impossible for us to reject either of these great truths, and it is equally impossible for our minds to reconcile them.’” – Jerry Bridges

“God chooses us, not because we believe, but that we may believe...” – Augustine (354-430)

“Until we are willing to grant that there is no way that God could be unjust to fallen sinful creatures we will have serious difficulties with the doctrine of election.” George Zemek

"To make human action the cause of divine blessing is to overturn the whole nature of salvation." - Iain Murray

“If any man doth ascribe of salvation, even the very least, to the free will of man, he knows nothing of grace, and he has not learnt Jesus Christ aright.” – Martin Luther

Let us then ascribe the whole work of grace to the pleasure of God’s will. God did not choose us because we are worthy, but by choosing us He makes us worthy. – Thomas Watson

The doctrine of grace humble a man without degrading him and exalt a man without inflating him. – Charles Hodge

There can be no grace when there is no sovereignty. Deny God’s right to choose whom He will and you deny His right to save whom He will. Deny His right to save whom He will and you deny that salvation is of grace. If salvation is made to hinge upon any merit or fitness in man, seen or foreseen, grace is at an end. – Horatius Bonar

God elects us in order to eliminate all boasting, all self-reliance, all human pride. G.K. Beale

The doctrine of predestination promotes humility, not arrogance; assurance, not apprehension; responsibility, not apathy; holiness, not complacency; and mission, not privilege. – John Stott

I am persuaded that the doctrine of predestination is one of the “softest pillows” upon which the Christian can lay his head, and one of the “strongest staffs” upon which he may lean, in his pilgrimage along this rough road. – Charles Haddon Spurgeon

<https://www.georgemuller.org/quotes/category/election>

This quote below is from George Muller who struggled with the doctrine of election until he studied it biblically.

“Before this period I had been much opposed to the doctrines of election, particular redemption, and final persevering grace; so much so that, a few days after my arrival at Teignmouth I called election a devilish doctrine. I did not believe that I had brought myself to the Lord, for that was too manifestly false; but yet I held, that I might have resisted finally.

And further, I knew nothing about the choice of God's people, and did not believe that the child of God, when once made so, was safe for ever. In my fleshly mind I had repeatedly said, "If once I could prove that I am a child of God for ever, I might go back into the world for a year or two, and then return to the Lord, and at last be saved."

But now I was brought to examine these precious truths by the word of God. Being made willing to have no glory of my own in the conversion of sinners, but to consider myself merely as an instrument; and being made willing to receive what the Scriptures said; I went to the Lord, reading the New Testament from the beginning, with a particular reference to these truths. To my great astonishment I found that the passages which speak decidedly for election and persevering grace were about four times as many as those which speak apparently against these truths; and even those few, shortly after, when I had examined and understood them, served to confirm me in the above doctrines.

As to the effect which my belief in these doctrines had on me, I am constrained to state, for God's glory, that though I am still exceedingly weak, and by no means so dead to the lusts of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, as I might and as I ought to be, yet, by the grace of God, I have walked more closely with Him since that period.

My life has not been so variable, and I may say that I have lived much more for God than before. And for this have I been strengthened by the Lord, in a great measure, through the instrumentality of these truths. For in the time of temptation, I have been repeatedly led to say:

"Should I thus sin? I should only bring misery into my soul for a time, and dishonour God; for, being a son of God for ever, I should have to be brought back again, though it might be in the way of severe chastisement."

Thus, I say, the electing love of God in Christ (when I have been able to realize it) has often been the means of *producing holiness, instead of leading me into sin*. It is only the notional apprehension of such truths, the want of having them in the heart, whilst they are in the head, which is dangerous."

Some Review: (See the Godliness Study Major Review)

“The Motivations of the Godly Man”

1.) The Love of God: 2 Cor 5:14-15; Rom 5:1-11; 1 Jn 4:9-11 2.) The Goodness/Grace of God: 1 Pet 2:1-3; Ps 34:8; Titus 3:4; 1 Cor 15:10; 3.) The Wisdom of God: Rom 11:33-36; 16:25-27; 1 Cor 1:25; Isa 55:6-9; Ps 147:4-5; The Power of God: Jer 32:17; 1 Cor 1:24; 2 Cor 4:7; Rom 8:31-39; Isa 40:25-26; Eph 3:20!

The Problem with the Doctrine of Election:

Sadly, this doctrine has been one of the most misunderstood and misrepresented doctrines in all of Scripture. Even worse, this doctrine has been used by many to cause division and dissention among genuine believers throughout church history which is very disheartening. I believe this doctrine to be one of the most glorious and comforting truths in Scripture but the way that man often handles this truth robs God of His glory and robs man of the truth driven confidence of rightly knowing God. Therefore, before we embark on this very long and slow study of God and His electing love it is imperative that we start from the right place. Here are two key and nonnegotiable perspectives we must have we are going to see this doctrine rightly and more importantly apply it personally.

1. We must always start with and always remain in a **humble** mindset!

It is critical that we start this study and every study with a clear, biblical, and humble mindset about the amazing nature of God and the sovereign salvation He Himself brings to all who believe! WHY? **Because God can be truly known but never fully known!** See Rom 11:28-36 and explain the primary topic in the broader context (Rom 9-11) and what this final doxology (11:33-36) declares both about the topic and our God. For help consider these passages Dt 29:29; Job 11:7-9; 36:26; 37:5; Ps 92:5; 104:24 (consider the whole Psalm); 139:17; 145:3-4; 147:5-6; Isa 40:28; 44:7; 55:8-9; Micah 7:18. So what should be our response as we consider the nature of our God? How helpful would it be to have the perspective of Job as we grapple with this most difficult and glorious doctrine of election (Job 42:1-6)? Read Ps 50:21 and see if you can identify one of the biggest problems with man in the study of God? See how Paul seeks to preempt this kind of humble perspective in these verses (Rom 9:6; 9:14-18; 9:19-21; 9:30; 11:1-6; 11:25-32; 11:33-36).

Wayne Grudem said it well when speaking on the incomprehensibility of almighty God when he declared, “It is not only true that we can never fully understand God; it is also true that we can never fully understand any single thing about God. His greatness (Ps 145:3), his understanding (Ps 147:5), his knowledge (139:6), his riches, wisdom, judgments, and ways (Rom 11:33) are all beyond our ability to understand fully.”

2. We must always start with and always remain in an **honest** mindset!

It is an undeniable fact that this doctrine and all the glorious doctrines surrounding God's sovereignty are not easy for finite and fallen redeemed man to understand. Therefore, a right way to study these doctrines, which are meant to be studied and enjoyed for God revealed them to us, is with a humble and honest heart! Honest first about the difficulty of the doctrine. When we come to the doctrine of election where are immediately confronted with the two seemingly contradictory truths of God's sovereignty and human responsibility. I like to refer to these as theological tensions which are divinely placed in Scripture by God to drive us trust Him (Rom 1:17). There are many of these to found in God's Word. One of my professors writing on this topic says, "In theology, the words, "paradox," "antinomy," and "tension" are used as synonyms for each other... Statements or doctrines about God and His works that, from human perspective, are apparently mutually contradictory and yet have internal and external consistency and are, therefore, true."

There are many of these throughout Scripture that bring tension into our lives and I believe they are put there by God to drive us to trust Him and ultimately rest in His perfect revelation even if I cannot fully understand how the points of tension work together in perfect harmony. Here are some examples of some seeming theological paradoxes we must face when studying Scripture.

1. The Trinity: God is one essence, but three Persons, with each Person being the entire essence (Mt 3:16-17; 28:19).
2. The Person of Christ: Jesus is a complete divine nature and a complete human nature in one Person (Col 2:9; Phil 2:5-11).
3. Scripture: The Bible is fully inspired by God, and therefore inerrant, and yet also written by fully, consciously engaged fallible human authors (2 Tim 3:16-17; 2 Pet 1:20-21).
4. Salvation is completely by sovereign grace because man is utterly unable to believe and yet man is fully responsible to believe (John 6:35-70).
5. Progressive Sanctification: Scripture contends that God sanctifies the Christian completely. And yet, the Christian is responsible to grow in holiness (Phil 2:12-13).
6. The paradox of prayer - Why pray if God has already sovereignly determined the outcome of all things (cf. Luke 18:1 with Isaiah 46:10)?
7. The paradox of Christ's death - Did God kill Christ (Acts 2:23), or the Jews (Acts 2:23), or the Romans (Acts 2:23), or humanity in general by virtue of their sin and need of a savior (John 3:16; 1 Timothy 4:10; 1 John 2:2)?
8. The paradox of salvation - Am I saved (Rom. 10:13), or being saved (1 Cor. 1:18) or just nearer to the time of my salvation (Rom. 13:11)?
9. The paradox of God's Love: Does God love the World (Jn 3:16 cf. Mt 5:44-45) in the same way He loves His special elect people (Jn 15:13 cf. Rom 5:8)?
10. The paradox of the atonement: Is the cross of Christ only for the elect or does the cross work of Christ bring impact on both the elect and nonelect? Is it limited or unlimited in its work or is it both understood rightly (1 Jn 2:2; Eph 5:25; 1 Tim 4:10)?

God is completely sovereign over the lives of humans. He directs all things according to His will, and has unconditionally ordained some to be saved. (Ps 115:3; 135:6; 139:16; Prov 21:1; Dan

4:35; Eph 1:11; Rom 8:28-30; 9:21; 1 Pet 1:2). Yet people are held accountable for their own decisions and actions (e.g., Matt 16:27; John 3:36; 2 Thess 1:8; 1 Pet 4:17; Rev 22:12).

John MacArthur comments on these two truths when he says, “May I tell you? They will always run parallel. They will always run parallel. They will never come together. They will never intersect. They will never be diminished; legitimately, they are what they are. The fact that you don’t understand how they go together only proves that you’re less than you should be. It doesn’t say anything about God. Your inability to harmonize those things is a reflection of your fallenness, my fallenness. People ask me all the time, “How do you harmonize those?” And my answer is, “I don’t. I can’t.” They can’t be harmonized in the human mind. But realize this, you are a puny mind and so am I, and collectively we are puny compared to the infinite, vast, limitless mind of God. All I can tell you is that in the Word of God, these truths run parallel. And the answer is to believe them both with all your heart. And the one, divine sovereignty, will inform your worship and the other, human responsibility, will motivate your evangelism.”

Note this tension in the following: Gen 50:20; Isa 10:1-12; Matt 11:27-30; Jn 1:12-13; Jn 6:35-40; Lk 22:22; Acts 2:23; Acts 4:23-28; Acts 13:48; Phil 3:12-13

Sadly, this doctrine has been one of the most misunderstood and misrepresented doctrines in all of Scripture. Here are some other reasons for this problem to consider as you guard and prepare your heart to listen and learn from God’s perfect Word. (1) Incorrectly taught or never explained! (2) Misconceptions on the person and work of God! (3) Wrong perspectives on the nature of man! (4) Inaccurate views on salvation! (5) Incomplete and Unbiblical perspectives on the nature of love! (6) A fallen understanding of “fairness”; “freedom” and “Equality” (7) A Theology from below instead of from above! (8) An unwillingness to trust God and His Word! (9) A lack of disciplined study of the Bible and doctrine! (10) A natural refusal of anything that attacks personal autonomy. Can you relate to any of these or identify which ideology or perspective you might be susceptible to? Can you think of any others that might serve as roadblocks or hindrances to our study on this topic?