

THE VIRTUE OF GODLINESS

This series of five bible lessons is taken from the special phrase, TRUSTWORTHY SAYINGS. They are taken from the following passages from the Pastoral Epistles.

1 Tim.2:12-17 (15) - God Saves the Worst of Sinners
1 Tim.3:1-7 (1) - Honorable Office of Overseer
1 Tim.4:1-11 (9)

2 Tim.2:8-14 (11)
Titus 3:1-11 (8)

A TRUSTWORTHY SAYING is an important church doctrine that was either being attacked, not being followed correctly or was an infrastructural doctrine of the church.

The third Trustworthy Saying deals with the Virtue of Godliness in Ch4ristian Way of Life (CWL) (1 Tim.4:7b-9). The Greek word for godliness is eusebeia.

Eusebeia is a Greek compound word (eu and sebeia). When sebomai is combined with (eu), it implies the virtuous character of godliness, the devout life or a life of reverence for God.

This lesson will study SIX aspects of the Virtue of Godliness in the CWL.
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1. It is possible for an individual to appear religiously devout and still be an unbeliever.

At best, it reflects positive volition at God consciousness. At worst, it reflects a substitute for grace salvation through the gospel of Jesus Christ (Gal.2:16; Eph.2:8-9; Matt.19:16-30) [RYR and Pharisees]

Cornelius, the Roman centurion of Acts 10-11, is an example of a religious unbeliever with positive volition at God conscious being offered gospel hearing.

He is described as “A devout man, and one who feared God with all his household, and gave many alms to the Jewish people, and prayed to God continually.” (Acts 10:2, 22)

Peter’s message to this religiously devout unbeliever is recorded in Acts 10:34-48. When the gospel was explained to him, he believed and became Peter’s first Gentile convert. Later Peter will explain how God was working on both ends (Peter and Cornelius) in Acts 11:12-14.

2. At salvation, the regenerate person becomes godly on the basis of grace gospel (Rom.1:16; 1Cor.15:3-4; Eph.2:8-9). This is based on positional truth (union with Christ) (2 Cor.5:17; 2Pet.2:5, 9).

“Godly (eusebeia) indicates those who were recipients of God’s grace and who, as a result showed the impact of grace in their lives.” (Expository Dictionary of Bible words, pg.315)

“For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.” (Rom.5:8)

“For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and **to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age.**” (Titus 2:11-12) This is based on experiential truth (CWL; 2Pet.3:11).

3. An unusual promise of God is associated with godliness in CWL (2 Tim.3:5, 10-12).

“And indeed, all who desire (thelo / p.a.ptc) to live (zao / p.a.infin) godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted (dioko / f.p.ind).” (2 Tim.3:12; 1 Tim.2:1-2; 6:5-10)

Paul declared that godliness was profitable for the CWL (2 Tim.3:16), for both the present life and also for the life to come. “For bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come.” (1Tim.4:8)

4. Paul used the analogy of a Greek gym in the word discipline (gumnazo / p.a.impv) to illustrate the Virtue of Godliness (1 Tim.4:7-8) “Discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness.”

§ Our gym is the church classroom where the word of God is rightly divided (2 Tim.2:15; 4:6).

§ Our exercise is the inhaling and exhaling of word of God (2 Tim.3:16-17; Heb.5:14).

§ Our discipline is developing the eight floors (virtues of CWL) of the edification complex of the soul (ESC) by spiritual growth (1 Tim.4:6-9).

5. Godliness is listed as 1 of 8 divine virtues of spiritual growth maturity of CWL.

“In your faith supply (epichoregeo / a.a.impv.2pl) [choregos supplied the finances for the chorus] moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge; and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness; and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love.” (2 Pet.1:5-7)

Note that **godliness** is listed as the sixth virtue of CWL with only brotherly love and agape love above it.

Faith (te pistis) [the faith system of cycling Bible Doctrine] is the first floor of the eight floor virtuous house of a spiritually mature Believer with **love** (ten agape) being the penthouse floor.

“For if **these qualities** are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he who lacks **these qualities** is blind or short-sighted, having forgotten his purification from his former sins.” (2 Pet.1:8-9)

Godliness is described as “A genuine reverence toward God that governs one’s attitude toward every aspect of life.” (NIV, 2 Pet.1:6)

6. Godliness is referred to as a mystery doctrine of the church age.

“And by common confession great is the mystery of godliness: HE, who was revealed in the flesh, was vindicated in the Spirit, beheld by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory.” (1 Tim.3:16)

The mystery of godliness is not a WHAT, but a WHO (The Incarnate Jesus Christ).

Note the following six ways of disclosing the mystery of godliness to the church age. Fill in the correct word in the blank.

Flesh _____

Nation _____

Spirit _____

World _____

Angels _____

Glory _____