

INTRODUCTION

Godliness---It has been our pleasure, several times over the past few years, to consider the word "godliness," because our Lord's apostle makes use of that term several times in 1 Timothy, which we have been studying together for these three years.

"Godliness" sounds a little bit like it would mean "being like God." But it means more like, being "toward God" or being "for God." It means something like what we mean by "piety" or "devotion." Using the word "godliness" is a way quickly to refer to the very large subject of the worship of God, in faith and repentance, because of what He has revealed to us about Himself, and what He has done for us by His grace, especially in reference to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

"Godliness" is the subject when we read what God said to Israel at Mount Sinai or Horeb, when He said:

I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me. (Exodus 20:3)

Believing in Jehovah, the one true God, as the one who saved him from slavery, and turning from the temptation to worship the false gods of the Egyptians or the Canaanites, an Israelite might seek to be forgiven his idolatry and to worship only God. That is the matter of "godliness."

"Godliness" is the subject whenever we quote our Lord Jesus in saying,

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. (Matthew 22:37-28)

When a Jewish man or woman heard that, recognized the truth of it, and followed after Jesus of Nazareth, believing Him to be the Son of David sent by God, that is the matter of "godliness."

"Godliness" is the subject whenever we hear what Peter preached in Jerusalem, and how God showed mercy to the people there:

Acts 2:36-42 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ." (37) Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (38) Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (39) For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call." (40) And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation." (41) Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. (42) And

they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

When men and women in Jerusalem realized they had a share in the crucifixion of the Christ, and they heard the gospel, and they repented and were baptized, gladly receiving the gospel, and when they joined with the congregation in worshiping and in hearing the apostles' doctrine, that is the matter of "godliness."

"Godliness" is the subject when we read what Paul proclaimed to the jailer in Macedonia, and how God showed mercy to him:

Acts 16:30-33 And he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" (31) So they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household." (32) Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. (33) And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. And immediately he and all his family were baptized.

God commands us what we must do. But that just reveals to us that we have not fulfilled the requirements of God's perfect law, nor can we. But God also shows us His great mercy, in sending His own Son. Jesus Christ died on the cross to pay the penalty we deserved, in His death redeeming us with His own blood. Jesus died, and was buried, but on the third day rose again. Before ascending back to heaven, He commanded that repentance and forgiveness of sins be preached in His name all over the world. Ever since, as sinners hear that gospel, or good news, and as the Holy Spirit works faith and repentance in their hearts, they believe in Jesus Christ, turning to follow Him. They worship God acceptably in the name of Jesus Christ, as He has ordained. This is the great theme of the Bible. This is "godliness." No wonder it comes up over and over in the letter we are studying.

This time the term "godliness" comes up in the context of the apostle's warning about those people who try to teach something else in the congregation. While the faithful pastors and teachers are teaching and exhorting what the apostles call "these things," some people will try to teach other things.

The devil did this to our first parents, Adam and Eve. He moved men to false prophecy in the Old Testament Israel. Such people troubled the congregation in Ephesus in the time of Paul and Timothy. And there will be such people troubling the churches all over the world all the way until the Lord Jesus comes back.

So our Lord Jesus, in His perfect care for His flock, sent us this letter, in which we are warned about such people. We are warned that they do not consent to or agree with what we do consent to or agree with. What it is that we consent to, but they do not, is here put to us in two expressions. Last time we looked at the first expression: "the words of our Lord Jesus Christ"

Today we look at the second expression, describing what we consent to or agree with, but which the false teachers do not: "the doctrine which accords with godliness"

TEXT

1 Timothy 6:3 If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to **the doctrine which accords with godliness**,

BODY

I. Doctrine

- A. This means teaching; here in the sense of what is being taught
- B. This is one of those many places where we have two words for the same thing in our language---one of them English, and one Latin
 - 1. “teaching” is an Old English word
 - 2. “doctrine” is from Latin
 - 3. but they mean the same thing
- C. In the Greek New Testament, the several aspects of the concept are forms of the same word, whether teach or teacher or teaching or doctrine
- D. So, here, teaching or doctrine refers to those things that are taught

II. Doctrine Which Is According to Godliness

- A. Or which accords with godliness
- B. At least one of the translations says, “doctrine which promotes godliness”
 - 1. I don’t think that conveys the right idea
- C. G2596 *kata*
- D. Our Lord Jesus Christ and His apostles have taught us all these things pertaining to worshiping God, that the Bible calls “godliness”
- E. They also have taught us how to walk, how to live, the commands by which we are to know how to behave in this life
- F. This doctrine or teaching about how to live is in harmony with or agreement with or accord with all they have taught us of godliness
- G. There is accord between our Lord’s preaching of the gospel and His teaching how His disciples should live in this world
- H. There is no separation between this doctrine and “wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ”

III. Example - 1 Peter 2:4-18

A. Matters of godliness

1. 2:4 He (the Lord Jesus Christ) is a living stone, rejected by men, but chosen by God and precious
2. 2:4 we come to Him (faith)
3. 2:5 we are like living stones, built up a spiritual house (temple)
4. 2:5 we are a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ
5. 2:6-7a He who believes on Jesus Christ will not be ashamed or confounded; will find Him precious
6. 2:7b-8 those who, instead of believing, are disobedient, will stumble over Him
7. 2:9-10 By God's choosing, and by God's mercy, He has called you out of darkness into His light, to be His own people

B. Doctrine which accords with godliness

1. 2:11a If you are the people of God, then you do not belong to this world, but are sojourners and pilgrims through it
2. 2:11b abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul
3. 2:12 NOTE: the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus Christ
 - a) Here are the words of Jesus Christ - Matthew 5:16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.
 - b) Here are the words of Jesus Christ, taught by Peter - 1 Peter 2:12 having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.
 - (1) let your light so shine before men - having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles
 - (2) that they may see your good works - the Gentiles...by your good works which they observe
 - (3) glorify your Father in heaven - glorify God
4. 2:13 submit to human authority
5. 2:17 love the brothers
6. 2:17 fear God
7. 2:17 honor the king
8. 2:18 servants, be submissive to your masters

C. Back to matters of godliness

1. 2:21b Christ suffered for us
2. 2:22 He committed no sin
3. 2:23 when He was reviled, he did not revile in return
4. 2:24a He bore our sins in His own body on the tree (meaning the cross)
5. 2:24b we can now repent and live for righteousness, being healed by His stripes
6. 2:25 we are now like sheep that had gone astray, but have returned to the great Shepherd

D. See how Peter's ministry of the Word shows that Peter consents to or agrees with the wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the doctrine that accords with godliness

CONCLUSION

The words of our Lord Jesus Christ, which we acknowledge to be both wholesome and authoritative; and the doctrine which accords with godliness; these words and this doctrine, we consent to or agree with; and so these things we teach and exhort.

Were we not in this state, we would not realize when someone began teaching something else, some doctrine that does not accord with godliness.

Were we not attentive to this matter, we would not realize when someone began teaching something else, some doctrine that does not accord with godliness.

So, let us take care to be in this state as individual Christians and as a congregation. And let us constantly give our attention to staying that way.

Next time, God willing, we will read on in 1 Timothy, and take the warning about avoiding anyone who does not consent to the words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the to the doctrine that accords with godliness.

Thad - Call to Worship and Opening Prayer - Psalm 103:1

Stephen - Scripture Reading - Psalm 103:2-18

Dillon - Congregational Prayer

Jeff - Benediction - Psalm 103:19

Allison - Prelude

Allison - Trinity 432 "Jesus, What a Friend for Sinners" - Andrew lead

Rita - Trinity 70 "Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven" - Alex lead

Rita Haven - Trinity 690 "Jesus Paid It All"

Whether considering what God has done for us in creating us, and in redeeming us from our sins through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ; or whether considering the response He works in us, of faith and repentance and worship, the subject of “godliness,” is the great theme of the Bible. No wonder it comes up over and over in the letter we are studying.

IV. What Is Meant By “Godliness”

- A. Greek word G2150 *eusebeia* - compound word
 1. *eu* - good
 2. *sebomai* - to worship
 3. good worship; right worship
- B. This is the word meaning “piety” or “devotion to God”
- C. It is the heading under which the Gospel or good news is preached, that you may know God has done for you in creating you, and in atoning for your sins through the blood of Jesus Christ, shed on the cross; that you may know there is forgiveness of your sins in Him, and eternal life for you in Him
- D. This includes faith: believing in Jesus Christ, trusting yourself to Him
- E. This includes repentance: turning from sins to follow Jesus Christ