

Theme: Godliness is not a means to worldly wealth but of heavenly, eternal gain. It is the fruit of a life that is at peace with God, content with whatever our circumstances under his hand.

Background: "Teach and urge these things." A quick review:

Introduction: It took me a long time to realize I don't see what I don't see – either in the world or in my life! They are called "blind spots."

I. "Godliness" Is the Goal

A. Godliness in the Pastoral Epistles - a major theme in 1 Timothy

B. What is godliness?

1. The reality of true godliness
 - a. It is not just "doing good things"
 - b. It is: a heart that is at peace and "right" with God - actions spring from a heart that is captivated by God's goodness
2. The appearance of godliness (2 Timothy 3:5)
 - a. Seeking God's acceptance through your behavior - the expectation that "I will be rewarded for this"
 - b. Pursuing "godliness" for material (or spiritual) gain - The issue Paul has in front of him/us.
3. True Godliness - v.3 – "teaching that accords with godliness"? - A change of heart, not just actions

II. Godliness for Material Gain

A. False teachers

1. Different teaching??
 - a. Not the "sound words" of Lord Jesus ("Sound," because they are the Word of God)
 - b. Not the "teaching that accords with godliness"
 - 1) The gospel as declared by the Apostles - "The one who hears you hears me" (Luke 10:16)
2. Wandering from the truth (1:6; 6:10) - They got lost listening to themselves

B. Serious consequences (4)

1. Conceited and Ignorant (Puffed up)
2. Divisive
 - a. Loving controversy and quarreling (arguing)
 - b. Not talking about Christ and His work
3. Lovers of Money
 - a. They think godliness is a path to "gain"
 - b. Their real desire?? "...to be rich" (9)

C. Grave danger for teachers and hearers

1. A temptation and trap - devised by their own desires (James 1:14, 15)
2. Ruin and destruction (9) - "Plunged", drowning in, immersed in...
3. Depraved and deprived
 - a. Depravity of life (life of dreadful sin)
 - b. Deprived (and depriving others) of the truth
 - c. For what??!!...
4. A treacherous love
 - a. A love that is the root of all kinds of evils
 - 1) An almost endless list can be made
 - 2) Jesus warns, "Be on your guard" (Luke 12:15)

- b. A subtle deception - Our materialistic age
- c. None of it goes with us! (7)

III. Godliness, with Contentment, Is Gain?

A. Confirming the truth:

- 1. Godliness is great gain – with contentment! Not financial gain – but spiritual life! (1 Timothy 4:8)
- 2. What is contentment? – It is rooted in peace with God (Philippians 4:11-13; 3:8-10)

B. The contrast

- 1. Covetousness - I want what I don't have
- 2. Contentment
 - a. I don't need much! I already have everything in Christ Jesus my Lord!!
 - b. Doesn't depend on circumstances!
 - c. Opens our hearts to the needs of others

C. The challenge - Checking for "blind spots"

Conclusion: Godliness is not a means to worldly wealth but of heavenly, eternal gain. It is the fruit of a life that is at peace with God, content with whatever our circumstances under his hand. We must pursue godliness, giving of our lives and possessions – which leads to lasting joy for you personally while opening the door for other's spiritual and physical life. The failure to do so may bring ruin and destruction.