

PURSUIING GODLINESS

Practical Methods For Pursuing Godliness

June 24, 2012

I. Review

A. Over the past three Sundays, we have worked our way through some of the important truths and requirements for growing in godliness.

1. We began this study by looking at the method God gave Israel for purifying the Promised Land of its evil inhabitants. And we looked at Israel in relation to the Promised Land to gain insight into the method God has given us for purifying our hearts, minds, and flesh of the evil that resides within us. I also pointed out on that first Sunday that just as Israel would drive out as many evil inhabitants as it willed or wanted to drive out – and no more – so we will put off our old nature and put on Christ to the degree we want to be godly, and no more.
2. The second Sunday we looked at God’s part in the method He has given us for growing in godliness. We did this by examining the many promises God has given us to empower and assist us in the growing process. And because we have these promises from God, we can be certain that we will always have enough power and assistance from God to do our part in pursuing godliness.
3. Last Sunday we looked at God’s standard of godliness which is the standard we are to aim for. Then we looked at the kind of effort required of us to ultimately arrive at God’s standard. And I urged us to make God’s standard our standard. I then cautioned us about accepting any lower standard, because any lower standard than God’s standard is a fraudulent standard. Finally, I urged us to make an effort equal to the task before us.

B. Today, it is my intention to begin looking at some methods and means of doing our part that have been common among serious minded Christians from the earliest days of the Church, and which, when practiced over many years, will bring you as close as we humans can be to God’s standard of holy living.

C. Pray

II. Several considerations in preparation for looking at a method for growing in godliness.

- A. **I Peter 3:10-12** . . . The one who desires life, to love and see good days, must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit. [11] He must turn away from evil and do good; he must seek peace and pursue it. [12] For the eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous, and His ears attend to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.
1. Note the words ‘desire,’ ‘seek,’ and ‘pursue.’ All three are true of all of us all the time. The question we ought to be concerned about is WHAT have we set our affections upon, for those are the things we desire, seek and pursue.
 2. And again today, I am urging you to seriously, willfully, intentionally, purposefully, diligently, and persistently [to] desire, seek and pursue God and godliness, for that is the path of life, and the only path to the riches and blessings and peace and joy of the Lord.
- B. The one who loves himself (selfishness) cannot love God. But the one who dies to self and submits himself to the will of God so as to obey the word of God, loves God.
- C. The one who loves himself seeks his own glory and happiness through pride and self-rule, while the one who loves God seeks God’s glory and happiness through humility and obedience.
- D. No one can love God with all his heart if he does not fear God with all his heart, because without the fear God, no one will begin and then persist in growing in godliness to the degree of gaining the purity of heart needed to love God wholeheartedly.
- E. Our physical eyes, when healthy, can see almost everything, even small gnats and mosquitoes flying about in the air. But when they are covered by cataracts or grow dim with old age, large objects are sometimes hard to discern, while small objects are missed altogether. The same is true with our spiritual eyes. The more we put off sin and put on godliness, the clearer we see right from wrong even in little things, while the more we allow sin to remain, the dimmer our vision and the harder it is for us to see the smaller sins that so easily trip us up and lead us astray.
- F. No one can truly grow in godliness and gain godly love who does not have himself as his own accuser.

III. Conclusion