

Exercise Godliness

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[0 : 00] It is good to be back with you again. My wife and I decided that we wouldn't wait as long between our visits here as we did last time.

It was 22 years between our first visit and last July since we were here, because we came through on deputation to the mission field of Poland.

And then, of course, this time we decided, well, we're not going to wait another 22 years. I don't know one if I'll be around in 22 years. I don't know if the Lord will tarry another 22 years. I got a feeling that we're getting closer and closer to seeing what Russ was talking about with our own eyes.

I trust you had a good holiday time. And it's not just happy holidays. It's Merry Christmas. And I'm all for happy holidays, too.

But it is Christmas. It's we're trying to remember and rejoice in the birth of our Savior. I know. I know. December 25th.

[1 : 06] No, I doubt very highly that he was born on December 25th. But he was born. And we celebrate his birth. And however you want to look at it, we know that he was born to die.

And that's why he came and that's why we celebrate it because he's our Savior. He's our Redeemer. He's our Reconciler. He's the Lamb of God. And praise God for it all.

And he's my Savior. And I am so glad that I'm saved by his grace. And because of that, you have a pastor here that's saved.

And his wife. And I've got grandkids that are saved. You don't know what's going to happen when you make a decision. You make the right decision, you don't know what will happen down the road. But God's hand's in it. And God's blessing's upon it. And it's all good. And it gets gooder and gooder all the time. So we did enjoy ourselves with our family, with your pastor and his wife and kids.

[2 : 10] And we enjoyed it thoroughly because we, how well we remember all the years, the number of years that we were overseas in Poland by ourselves on Christmas Day.

We'd get up. You know, it's a little lonely when it's just you. And your wife. Your wife looking at you. So we would, we'd have a little time. We'd set aside and we'd pray.

We'd read the scriptural passages about the birth of Christ. We'd sing some songs. But you know, it's kind of, it's a little melancholy when you're singing by yourselves. There's not too many people around there.

But we did do a lot of Skyping through the years, you know, as those things came on, you know, on the scene. And that was thoroughly enjoyable to be connected with all of our kids. And of course, we can do the same with our daughter and her family over in Nepal.

And now our other daughter up in about five hours north of us in Idaho. And of course, our son here now in L.A. And we thought they needed a little companionship being their first year here by themselves.

[3 : 14] And Carla, especially without her family. So we decided that we're not your mom and dad, of course, but we're, we're family. We enjoyed, you know, being here and we'll be going in a couple of days.

You know, last time when I was here in July, those of you that might remember our being here and might remember that I preached, I spoke on having hope in your heart. And one thing I said in there, I said, my hope is not in the election, the upcoming election.

Well, guess what? We're on the other side of that, aren't we? My hope wasn't in. Now, I might have had rather different designs than as things turned out.

The, as circumstances, you know, happen and it is what it is. And I'm not looking forward to the possibilities of what may unfold in the future. But my hope wasn't in that election.

My hope is in the Lord. You know, whatever transpires. And, you know, we live, we come from a red state, Idaho. I like saying that in the blue states. I just like saying it.

[4 : 16] I live in a red state. You know, I live in a place where they still have indoor dining. I'm telling you, folks, it's a thing in the past. But that's, it's a reality there.

In fact, a week, a week ago Monday, the day before we flew here, my wife's birthday was on a week ago Monday. We went out to a place, indoor dining.

We enjoyed it. Wore our masks inside to it, took them off, ate to our heart's content, put them back on when we went out. But we enjoyed it. So those things, they may be the new norm.

Who knows? Things come on, seen, things change. But my hope is not in those things. My hope is in the Lord. And, you know, we know the end from the beginning.

We know how the thing ends. We've got the book. You know, we were looking at a football game yesterday afternoon or evening, I guess. And Miami and Las Vegas playing.

[5 : 15] And that thing got hopping later on. The early part, a little dull, not too much scoring. But the fourth quarter, all of a sudden, team down below, you know, that was losing. All of a sudden, they tied it. And then they came back.

And they came back. And they're winning. And they came back. And they got the lead. And it's 19 seconds. And if you were a Miami fan, you thought, no, not much hope. It's only 19 seconds.

What are you going to do starting at the 25-yard line? All of a sudden, they're within field goal range, six seconds left. They kick a field goal, one second left. You know, if you were a Miami fan, you're looking, that's no hope, no chance.

They're not coming back. It's lost. That's throwing the towel. Well, guess what? That's how you do it when you're watching the game. And now, if you watch a replay, it's altogether different. You know the outcome already.

You sit back and you say, oh, Vegas just scored 19 seconds. Eh, no problem. Because you know the outcome. Well, the government may change.

[6 : 14] Maybe this country turns socialistic. I hope not. Maybe it does. But you know what? That's not where my hope is. My hope is in the Lord. And one day, I'm going to see him, as we heard, face to face.

We'd say in Poland, eyeball to eyeball, face to face. Glory to God. It could be that quick. Don't let the Lord catch a napping.

Be ready. He's coming. He's coming. All right. Let's pray. Our Father and our God, we ask that you'll communion with us this morning. May your hand be on this service.

And what's said and done, please take me out of the way. Lord, help us to see that your word can be exalted, that your glory can be seen. Lord, help us to see something today.

Help us that will be life-changing in a literal way. Something that we can take from this service this morning that will count tomorrow.

[7 : 18] That we'll remember tomorrow and next week and next month. And we'll live it and apply it to our lives. Help us to be challenged today by your word and your spirit.

In Jesus' name, amen. I want to look this morning at a subject. We're going to talk about it in a moment, introduce it in a moment. But in chapter 4, or Psalm 4 rather, Psalm 4, look at me in verse 3.

We're going to see something here, something that God values. And it's in verse 3. But know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself.

The Lord will hear when I call unto him. Godliness. That's something that God values. We see it here that he sets apart.

The word holy, it was mentioned this morning already in Sunday school. And sanctification, they all come from this idea of being set apart. When you were saved, you were already doctrinally set apart.

[8 : 25] You were positionally set apart in Christ. That's your position. That's where you are in Christ. Set apart positionally. But practically, God wants us to set ourselves apart from the world unto him.

Experientially. It's something that we should apply in our lives. To be godly. To be godlike. To take on God's character in our own lives. To apply ourselves.

And apply ourselves to God and apply what we read in the scripture. Now, if you will, I ask you to turn to 1 Timothy chapter 4. 1 Timothy chapter 4.

I want to look at a couple of verses here as well. To catch, again, the theme of what we're talking about this morning.

1 Timothy chapter 4. And look with me. Start in verse... We'll start in verse 6 to get the context. If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.

[9 : 33] But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness. For bodily exercise profiteth little.

But godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. Exercise thyself unto godliness.

Now, we know what exercise is. And this world is crazy about exercise. How many gyms do you have in the area? How many people are on... How many bike paths do you have people to bike? Or hiking trails in the hills around here. And we were on the other side of the hills last late afternoon and hiked along one of the trails. And it's pretty in a canyon there.

Beautiful things. It's good to get some exercise. But if you're going to exercise, guess what you're going to have to do? You're going to have to put out some effort. Put forth some effort. It's going to require something of yourself.

[10 : 30] You're going to have to apply yourself to it. If you like to ride a bike, it takes effort. You just can't... Now, I had... When I was in Poland, I had a stationary bike. You know, I was on a bike doing a lot of exercise and going nowhere.

But I read a book or whatever else. But you can... If you're going to exercise, you're going to have to apply yourself. You're going to have to put forth an effort. You're going to have to do something.

Now, we do... We exercise for a lot of reasons. But one of them... One reason is to stay in shape or to get in shape. Right? You want to exercise. Maybe you've had some physical problem.

And you want to exercise yourself just to stay in shape somewhat. Or keep yourself in shape. But, you know, we need to exercise ourselves on the godliness. For spiritual reasons.

And spiritually exercise ourselves. Exercise your thought life. Exercise your tongue. Exercise your habits. Exercise, you know, your conduct.

[11 : 31] Your speech. Exercise. You know, another reason that we exercise is to shed weight. Right? Nothing we want to talk about around the holidays. Thanksgiving in back of us.

Now Christmas in back of us. The New Year's ahead of us. And I've heard things said that, you know... Okay, January 1st is always what? New resolutions. Right? One of the resolutions is always...

I've got to lose weight. I've got to stop eating this. Start eating this. Start exercising. Stop, you know, loafing around being a couch potato. Whatever the case is. Exercise.

But we do it to shed excess weight that we've gained. And we should exercise on the godliness to get rid of and shed the excess sin. And sinful habits that we've allowed ourselves to accumulate. Whether it's in our thought life. Whether it's in the things that we listen to or the things that we see. Whether it's in the tongue. The habits that we fall into. Relationships that we have.

[12 : 31] Attitudes that we have. Or whether it's our conduct. Places we go. Things we do. And we need to shed some of those things. But it's exercise. Physical exercise is a good thing.

Now, Paul says here it profits little. But he's thinking of the big realm. He's thinking of spirituality.

But it is worthwhile. If you have a heart condition, it's good to exercise.

If you have high blood pressure and all, it's good to exercise. Diabetes, good to exercise. There's a lot of things. Overweight, good to exercise. A lot of reasons.

It's a good thing. But in comparison, your bodily exercise here isn't going to help you in heaven. But you're exercising to godliness. As he says here, look at verse 8 again.

Bodily exercise profits little. But godliness is profitable in all things. Promise of the life that now is. It'll help you out here. You exercise yourself on the godliness.

[13 : 31] You will refrain from certain sins that will have consequences. It'll be a blessing and a benefit to you in this life. But then he also says in the end of verse 8, And of that which is to come.

How are you going to get to the great white throne judgment and sit there and wondering whether your life is, whether there's going to be gold, silver, precious stones passing through the fire, or whether your life will resemble the wood, hay, and stubble passing through the fire?

How are you going to get there if you don't exercise yourself on the godliness and live for the Lord and be godlike in your life and take on God's character in your life? When that day comes, there's

going to be a lot of tears.

You know, Paul talks about that in 2 Corinthians, about the fear of the Lord. And in the context there, he's talking about the judgment seat of Christ when we stand before him. Some people look at that and say, Well, that's the Bema seat judgment.

It's only rewards that are handed out, like the Olympics, only rewards. No chastening at the stand there when they give out the rewards and the gold or silver or bronze, first, second, third place.

[14:45] No. But the judgment seat of Christ is more than just the so-called Bema seat judgment, as it's called. There's going to be a lot of tears because we're going to look at things that we didn't do that we should have done.

And we're going to look at all that wood, hay, and stubble, all the things that we thought were important in this life, and they didn't amount to anything when it comes to eternity. So exercising ourself on the godliness is a real benefit and a real blessing.

Paul talks about this all the time. Look at 1 Timothy chapter 6. Just turn a page, possibly, in your Bible. Look at verse 11. But thou, O man of God, flee these things and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.

Flip with me over to Titus. The book of Titus. Look at chapter 2 for a second. We see this theme again, godliness. Titus, Paul talks about it there in chapter 2, starting in verse 11.

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us. So salvation is the first thing that grace of God does, but then the grace of God also teaches us how to be sanctified, how to live for the Lord, denying ungodliness, worldly lusts, that we should live soberly, righteousnessly, and godly in this present world.

[16:07] And then the future, looking for that blessed hope. Do you remember in 2 Peter chapter 2, where Peter talks about add to your faith? And he says, add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, etc.

So it's all through. God values godliness in our life. If you will, turn back to 2 Timothy chapter 3 for a second.

There's an interesting statement here in regarding godliness. 2 Timothy chapter 3. And look at, if you're beginning at verse 1, we'll not read through, but we'll skip over the verses, but look at verse 1 to get the context.

This know also that in the last days, perilous times shall come. Men shall be lovers of their own selves, etc., etc. And then go to verse 5, in concluding this list of the character traits of people in the last days, verse 5 he says, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.

There are people that try to conform, they have an outward conformity, an outward conformity to some type of a standard. And they look, they equate that with godliness.

[17:32] That's not godliness. It may be piety, but it's not godliness. Godliness is something that's inside of you. To be godlike, to have your heart motivated toward the things of God.

Not just on an outward sense, but on an inward sense. So therefore, in countries like where we were in Poland for almost 20 years, you'd see outward piety.

You'd see outward forms, manifestations of godliness, the reverence for their holy days. Even so much so, you would never see it in the States, because you're talking about a country that's upwards over 98% Catholic.

So you see them on a particular holy day where they're literally parading through the streets with their banners and everything else. You'd never see that type of a display, religious display, here in this country.

And then you used to have, of course, and maybe to some degree you do, the monks that would go off to the monasteries, because they were pulling away from the world so they could be just separated to God in their holiness.

[18:39] That was an outward conformity. They'd wear harsh clothing, because nothing, they wanted to just pull away from the world, and they wanted to have, please themselves, or please their flesh, put down the flesh, all those things, thinking that that was a way that they showed and expressed their love and affection for God.

Well, you know, some of those fellows that were in those things, or even some of the nuns that were in their cloisters and whatnot, were some of the, you know, most demon-driven individuals on this earth.

That doesn't change. Just separating from the world and putting the flesh down does not change what's in the heart. You need a heart transformation. You need a new birth. That's the only thing that'll change that. Not just pulling away totally from the world and all. Then you'd have, you know, the Islam and all. Just, you know, outward profession. Just, you know, kneeling down and praying in a certain direction three times a day, as if that makes and equates to godliness. And yet, you look at the fruit of that religion, where people that, at the drop of a hat would go kill somebody because they slandered their, their prophet, their Muhammad. [19 : 54] Or they think that heaven is such a thing that it's, you know, that it's just a righteous affair. That's not godliness. That's just a form of godliness.

But you know, it's sad to say that Christians can do the same thing, can't they? Christians can have the attitude that if I do the right thing, that means I'm godly. If I come to church, I equate that with godliness.

If I read my Bible, godly. If I pray, godly. If I witness to somebody, godly. If I serve God, we equate all those things that we're doing with godliness.

Well, listen, I agree with you that a godly person, I believe, is going to go to church to hear the word of God. And a godly person is going to try to serve God.

And a godly person is going to read their Bible and a godly person is going to pray. But the prayer doesn't make you a godly person. You have to have it in the heart. Reading your Bible in and of itself doesn't make you a godly person.

[20 : 55] It has to be something that's in the heart. So my question to you, do you consider yourself godly? Do you consider yourself the one that God wants to separate to himself, the godly person?

And I want to try to bring it into a practical level here. And I want to ask three questions of all of us today. And because, again, we think of, a lot of times we think of the idea of godliness and we think of moral perfection.

And we think of, you know, sinlessness. In that light, there's none of us that are godly because none of us are sinless. Now, we ought to sin less, but none of us are sinless.

None of us have a moral perfection, though that's something that we should achieve to conform to Christ. But how can we ask ourselves the question, look ourselves in the mirror and say, am I godly?

Am I a godly person? Do others possibly see me as being Christ-like? Three questions. Three things that I want to ask you about and I ask myself the same way each time that I look at these.

[22 : 07] Three things. I want to ask you this. You could ask yourself if you're godly by taking this test. How do I react to trials?

How do I react to testing? When God lets things in my life that I didn't want in my life, how do I react to those things? When things upset my schedule, things that I wasn't planning on doing, things that I didn't invite into my life, how do I react to all those things?

Can I do like James mentions and then also Peter mentions, you know, count it all joy when you fall into diverse temptations? And he goes on to say that the trial of your faith?

So when you're tried, when God allows testing in your life, when he allows things like, you know, whatever it is, some type of problem, a heartache, a tragedy, adversity, circumstances that are beyond your control and allows those things in your life, how do you react to those things?

It could be as simple as, you know, a washer and appliance breaking down in the house, a car. It could be as difficult as seeing a loved one suffer through some physical problems.

[23 : 27] Or yourself, go to the doctor and get a diagnosis that you've got a particular physical problem that's not going to go away or life-threatening. When those things happen, how do you react to those things?

Back to God? Blame God for it? Is it easy, is it an easy thing for you to grumble and gripe and complain about them and do you still consider yourself godly?

Because, well, I read my Bible and I pray and I come to church and, but how do you react to the trials and the testings that God allows in your life? That's, do you, are you willing to do, you know, as Paul said, in everything, give thanks?

That's not easy, is it? In everything, give thanks. Now, on Christmas Day, when you, if you received presents and you were giving, giving out presents and you saw joy in people's hearts and their, you know, smiles on their faces and whatnot and it was easy then, right, to give thanks.

It's easy to give thanks when there's a nice meal in front of you, easy to give thanks when your family was together if that were the case, but what about when God lets adversity in your life? [24 : 43] How do you handle that? Tell you what, that's going to show whether you're godly or not because it's all going to happen. You can't, you know, as Job says that, you know, man is born under trouble as sparks fly upward and guess what?

If you've ever had a fire going, sparks fly upward. Man's born under trouble. You know what David said? He said, it is good for me that I have been afflicted in the Psalms 119.

It is good for me that he had the right attitude because he got, he said, before I was afflicted, I went astray and in a couple of verses later, it is good for me that I have been afflicted.

He learned the lesson. You know, I've had some friends that I've seen after I was saved and going on to serve the Lord and I've seen some friends that have gone through some real difficulties and I wouldn't point at myself and say that I'm godly, but I'd point at them and say, you know, that fellow had a godly trait because when he approached testing and trials, he stayed the course and he remained faithful and he had a good testimony.

I think of a fellow that I went to Bible school with. He was from my home area and when we'd be in that area, we'd see him. His name was Paul Wolfram. And the year that we, or just when we were on deputation to go overseas, so that would have been 78 and 79, I guess, or somewhere in that time and he had found out that he had leukemia and it was going to kill him and it did kill him.

[26 : 23] In fact, probably we went overseas in June of 99, I said 79, so it's 97 to 99 when I was on deputation and right in that time somewhere he got leukemia and after we left and the last time we saw him, but it was just before we left and it was in early June, late May, early June that we saw him and that September, I believe it was, he passed away.

He was a little bit younger than myself and this is going back 20 some years. But you know, I'd call Paul different times. I'd call him when we were on deputation different places and I'd say, hey Paul, how you doing?

Just wanted to call. And you know what he did? He didn't sit down and just list all the different problems that he had and whatever and he was going through it. But he'd say, how are your kids doing?

He'd ask me about my kids. Joy and Toby and Rose, how are they doing? And I thought, man, I'm here to talk to you about how you're doing and you're asking me how my kids are doing.

How are you doing on deputation and all that? You know what I take from that? I look at that and I say, that fella had a godly reaction to testing. I have a friend, he's a pastor in Rapid City, Cedar Rapids, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

[27 : 52] Randy. And just before deputation, somewhere in that time frame, several kids, a son, several daughters, and a very tragic situation that in his life, his son committed suicide.

He was either a late teenager, upper teenage years or just out of high school, somewhere in there. Tragic. Falling out with a girlfriend, something that we would look at as just, you know, go get through it, get over it, get beyond.

God's got so much more for you to do, so much more for you to enjoy in life and then he didn't see the end. And you say, how does somebody get through that? Well, they don't. They always remember that circumstance, that situation and finding him.

But you know what? He was pastoring 20 some years ago when that occurred. He's still pastoring today. You say, what's going on? Is that my opinion of that?

That was a godly reaction to that testing. He didn't quit. He didn't lash out at God. Oh, he's sorry. He regretted.

[29 : 07] Tears. But he stayed there and he didn't blame God for it and he didn't quit on it. And my question to you is how do you react to testing?

I have a friend, I've seen people that have lost babies, a couple overseas in Poland, little baby, fairly newborn. They had a New Year's Eve party.

They had it laying on the bed just to sleep and the baby suffocated to death. How does a family get over that?

How does a mom? I've seen moms react in a different way when they've lost miscarriages and they've just gone off the deep end. But how does somebody react to those things? Losing little infants, losing children to different diseases, seeing your child go through some heartaches, having a son commit suicide and stay in the ministry and not blame God for it.

How do you react to trials? You know, we have a Savior that reacted to trials in a startling way because when he was at Gethsemane, he said, Father, if it be possible to take this cup from me, but nevertheless, not my will, but thine.

[30 : 19] He was willing to hand it over to God, hand it over to his father and said, I want this. I don't really want to go through this. I know what's going to occur tomorrow. I know that I'm going to suffer your wrath for sin in my body.

And I'd rather not. The humanity within me says, revolts at that thought and I don't want to participate in it. And that's why I sweat, as it were, great drops of blood.

But he said, nevertheless, not my will, but thine. That's what Paul talks about when he says, in everything, give thanks. Another question.

Another question, if I might move on. How do you react to temptation? How do you react to temptation? You know, temptation is part of life. There's not one of us that can avoid temptation. In fact, if the Lord Jesus Christ was tempted, driven, he was led of the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil. So if God the Father allowed the Holy Spirit to lead his son in the earthly body to be tempted of the devil, you and I are all going to be tempted.

[31 : 29] Temptation in and of itself, we know that's not sin. It's what we do with the temptation that's sin. Just because a thought passes through your mind, just because something occurs doesn't mean that you've sinned.

It's the temptation. temptation. But what you do with it, the old saying is, you know, you can't stop a bird from pecking down at your head, but you can stop them from building a nest there.

That's the difference. It's when you, what do you do with that temptation? You know what the Bible says in 1 Corinthians chapter 10, verse 13? There's no temptation taking you but such as is common to man.

But you know what God does? With that temptation, he makes a way to escape that you may be able to bury. So the question is this, when temptation comes our way, do we sit back and say, oh, yeah.

Or do we look for that way to escape? And there's a lot of different temptations. Temptation can be to just, you know, to gossip about something. Temptation can be in a lustful sense.

[32 : 34] There's all kinds of temptations. Temptation can just be to be lazy, indifferent, not do it, not apply myself to the ability that God gave me. Temptation all over the place.

Thoughts in my mind. I have to exercise myself on the godliness. Temptation. How do you respond to the temptation? Do you look for the way to escape?

Do you look for that escape mechanism that God puts in there, that door that says, I can scoot out of here and avoid this temptation or do you embrace the temptation?

You know, it's the, when we, contemplating the temptation is where sin comes in. And that, of course, eventually comes to the place where we commit the sin, the commission of the sin.

But the, nobody falls, you know, we use the expression, somebody says that we, you know, so-and-so fell in the sin. Nobody falls in the sin. Now, if I keep walking across here, I'm going to stumble and fall, right?

[33 : 35] Because I'm right on the edge of this step. But it's not something I planned on doing, it just happened. But that's not the way it is with sin. Nobody falls into sin as if they didn't see it, they didn't plan on it, they didn't contemplate it.

We contemplate it. We mull it over. We think about it. And then when the opportunity comes, we go for it. the devil sets us up for it.

And the devil knows the chinks in our armor. He knows those gaps in the old, you know, the old knights in armor type of thing. He knows where our weaknesses are. And he knows what our besetting sin is.

And he knows what to hit us with. How do you react and respond to temptation? Our Lord, we know what he did.

You know, when he was, as I said already, when he was driven of the spirit, led of the spirit into the wilderness, that he resisted the devil and he quoted scripture to the devil and what was the devil's response?

[34 : 38] He ended up leaving. And the Bible says that Jesus, our Savior, was tempted at all points like we are, yet without sin.

Praise God for that. He didn't sin. Now that doesn't mean you and I will be sinless. That's above and beyond us in Christ we are. And then we ought to practice that in our own lives.

Bible says that we're to resist the devil. We're to deny ungodliness. We're to flee ungodly lust. We're to depart from iniquity. We're to exercise ourselves unto godliness.

These are things that we should do. These are things and areas in our life that we need to apply.

One other thing, and we'll move on to the third. We need, how do you react to trials and testing?

How do you react to temptation? Do you secretly look forward to it? Secretly long for it? Or are you looking for that way out of escape?

[35 : 41] Third thing is simply this. How do you react to rejection? How do you react to rejection? Nobody likes to be rejected. I think for the most part, typically everybody likes to be liked.

Doesn't mean that you have to live on that edge that, you know, I have to have people like me so I do everything to please people. But I think, generally speaking, nobody, people don't like to be received in a negative way.

They don't like to be turned off. They don't like to be rejected. But how do you react when you're rejected? When you're forsaken? When you're, for instance, falsely accused of something?

When you're slandered about something? When you're evil spoken of? Or just simply ignored? Or when you're criticized? How do you take those things? You're not respected.

You don't get the respect that you feel you deserve. You don't get the glory that you think you deserve. You earned. You're looked over.

[36 : 40] You're slighted in some way. You know, it happens. It's all through life, isn't it? All through life. How about when you were a kid and you were the last one picked for the ball game?

You know, it's like, well, okay, we'll take you. There's nobody else left. That's not a good feeling, isn't it? Nobody likes that kind of a feeling. How about if you apply to a college or university and you're rejected?

That's not a good feeling. How about if you go up to a young lady and you ask her whether it would be for a date or you ask her to marry and you're rejected? Or what if you're sitting there and you're waiting for him to ask and he never does?

And you're rejected. You're the so-called proverbial wallflower. Ostracized. Everybody kind of overlooks you. What about when you have a job and you've applied yourself and your boss elevates somebody else and not you?

But you earned it. You deserved it. But they got it. And not you. And you feel slighted, overlooked. How about in a marriage situation where one says, looks at you and they say, you know what?

[37 : 50] I don't love you anymore. And they split. Rejection. How do you react to rejection? Our Lord, was he rejected? I mean, come on.

The son of God. The ideal man. The perfect man. And yet he came unto his own and his own received him not.

And on the cross, you know, when he was reviled, the Bible says that he reviled not again. Right? But he committed himself to him that judges righteously.

When you're slighted, when you feel that you're offended, when you feel that you've been misjudged or, you know, overlooked or whatever the case is or falsely accused, are you willing to say, Lord, they don't know me like you know me.

And if they did, they would definitely reject me. They wouldn't listen to me. They wouldn't want me next to them. They wouldn't even want to talk to me if they really knew me like you know me.

[38 : 58] So, Lord, I'm just giving this over to you. I'm just giving it over to you. Can you do that? How do you respond to rejection? You know, our Lord and our Savior endured all these things.

He endured the rejection. He endured temptations. He endured testings. No problem. He passed every time. I don't know.

We sit back and we say, yeah, but, yeah, but, he was the Son of God. What would you expect? You expect, you expect, you would expect a godly reaction to testing or temptation or rejection because, so let's bring it back to somebody that we could relate with.

We can't relate with Jesus Christ because he's the perfect example. And we would expect and anticipate that he would respond that way. But what about somebody that's not just flesh and blood as he was, but he still had deity?

How about somebody that was flesh and blood like you and I are? Do we know anybody in the Bible? Well, there's one man that comes to my mind that endured all three of these things in a godly

fashion.

[40 : 15] Joseph. Joseph. Little old 17-year-old Joseph. Rejected by his brethren. How would you, I mean, you know, there's 12 brothers and at least Dinah, the one sister.

I don't know what kind of a family that was. That poor girl. I mean, she had to be, she had to fight for herself if she wanted, I mean, if it was one of those buffet style, you know, dinners all the time, you know, boarding house reach, you know, you didn't get it, you didn't get anything.

So she had to, she had to be, she had to have a tough skin, I guess. But how about this? Now, Benjamin wasn't part of the thing, but you have those 12, you have 11 brothers and 10 of them are out there with the sheep and you go to check on them because daddy wants you to and instead of having them embrace you and be wonderful, hey, Joseph, good to see you.

They throw you in a pit, they're ready to kill you and instead they decide to get a little change out of it, maybe go to coffee shop and pick up a little something on the way back home and they sell you to slave merchants on their way to Egypt and you get chained in shackles in no doubt and you're looking back over your shoulder at your brother's just rejected.

Flesh and blood rejected. But when he had an opportunity and at the end of Genesis chapter 50 when dad's dead and the boys are back in Egypt and they said, oh man, now we're really going to get it.

[41 : 58] now Joseph's really going to drop the hammer on us. It's all going to be over. Dad's out of the way. He's been waiting for this time. Now he's going to get back at us. And Joseph's response, am I God?

God did this. God worked this out to save us as a family, to spare us because of the famine that he was going to bring into the land.

You meant it for harm and evil but God meant it for good. He says, I accepted it. I've dealt with that a long time ago. I'm over it. So he handled rejection. And when he's in the house, Potiphar's household and taking care of everything there and Potiphar's wife cast glances at him and she looks over at this young buck and she has different thoughts about him and she says, come and lie with me and he says, hey, how can I do this wickedness and sin against God?

He handled temptation. He looked for that way of escape and he left and he left his coat and she used that as evidence that he'd been there that he sought to defile her and she falsely accused him. He was tested not only in that light but also when he was in prison because of that false accusation and he's there and he again, you know, he finds favor in God's sight and therefore in the jailer's sight because everything he did, he did right.

[43 : 30] and then when the baker and butler are there and they have these dreams and he said, hey, I'll give God the credit for it.

I mean, his testimony, his faithfulness was right down the line and he interprets the dreams and we know that situation and he said, hey, when you get out would you remember me?

Remember me so I can get out of this place and it was two years later that Pharaoh had his dreams and then that the butler remembered what had taken place and that there was one that could interpret the dreams.

He said, oh, you know, it's my fault. I forgot about it. I overlooked it. I got out and freedom and all I could do is enjoy my freedom. I forgot about the fellow that interpreted that dream and gave me peace and said that you would restore me to my job.

So he was there for another two years but when he said, when he was there before Pharaoh he said, I can't interpret it but God can and he gave all the glory to God. How do we respond?

[44 : 40] Can we respond? Well, the Lord Jesus Christ did but he was God but Joseph did too and he's our example. Can we model his example?

Can we follow after him? Can we react to testing like Joseph? Can we react to temptation like Joseph? Can we react to rejection like Joseph did?

Bottom line is, can we be that one that God has set apart for himself because we're godly? We have a God-likeness about us. We're not going to give in.

We're not going to throw in the towel. God means more to us than life itself. God means more to us than the pleasure of this world. We look at God and we don't look at him like Demas did having loved this present world.

We look to God and we say, he's worth living for. He's worth dying for. He's worth denying myself this. He's worth going on and no matter what he allows in my life, I'm just going to give him the

honor and give him the praise and give him the glory because he's worthy of it.

[45 : 49] Are you godly? How do you match up when you look at those different examples? Let's pray. Our Father and our God, we thank you for your goodness to us, your mercy and your grace.

Ask, Father, that you'll speak to our hearts. Just, Lord, may you be honored and exalted. None of us are perfect. None of us. By far, myself included. Well, Lord, by your description, we can be godly and we can respond to these things in a godly fashion.

We're not perfect. We're not sinless. We never will be in this life. But we can respond to you in a fashion that will please you and will be one that you've set apart to yourself.

Lord, help us to examine ourselves and if there be anyone here this morning that does not know Jesus Christ as their Savior. Oh, Lord, may they understand that the things they do, the conformity to some type of a standard is not godliness.

Godliness and righteousness as holiness is found in the Lord Jesus Christ. It's not our works that you want, but it's our faith in your work on Calvary. Help us to learn to trust you as our Savior.

[47 : 03] We ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen. together and in a moment of time... Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.