

Godliness - Godly Direction

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Date: 25 November 2018

[0:00] I was just reflecting on that song there that talks about crown him ye martyrs of our God.

! And I know in the news lately there's a story about a man who's got shot by some arrows and killed in a remote Indian island.

Have you heard of that? I know it's been on the media, social media. And people are kind of laughing at him. How foolhardy that he should go to some isolated place, to some remote tribe, with his intention to share the gospel, share the love of God, to reach this unreached people for God's glory.

People mocked him because he got killed for doing it. But he's a martyr of our God, isn't he? And what a glorious thing. As much as we know some religions glorify martyrdom in another way. But we are martyrs of our God, as it were, such a witness for God that he would give his life to seek to take the message of salvation to another land. God bless such endeavors. If missionaries hadn't gone to other lands, then the message wouldn't have reached these lands.

[1:28] And we see, I know when our brother Bobby was here, you know, we sometimes talk about, you know, headhunters and that. That was a reality in his nation. And not that long ago in the scheme of things.

And it makes you wonder, wow, you know, praise the Lord for men and women who've got the gumption to risk their lives, to hazard their lives for the glory of God, for the name of Jesus Christ. Praise God.

Now, I must confess, I was seeking, I could say, godly direction here. And I was praying about what should I preach today.

And I didn't ask the Holy Spirit, I asked my wife. She's almost the next best thing. And she said, preach on godliness. Godliness. So, I thought, yeah, that must be of God. Godliness, mustn't it? Godliness.

And really, that's the first slide, but I don't have the picture for that one. But godliness, godliness, what is it? Godliness. It's been described as a God-centered life. A God-centered life. A life founded on truth.

[2:42] And the Bible contrasts between two peoples. We see that in Psalm 1. You might want to turn there. Psalm 1. The Bible contrasts between two peoples. Two groups of people.

The godly and the ungodly. Godly and the ungodly. And I put to you that we need godly direction, don't we? Godly direction. Psalm 1. I love this psalm. It's got so much meaning, so much substance to it.

Psalm 1, verse 1. Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

Just meditate on that for a minute. Verse 2.

His delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night. Verse 3. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season.

[4:08] His leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. The ungodly are not so, but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.

Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish. Two ways. Two ways. Two ways to walk. Two ways to walk. The broad way, the multitude, or God's way.

Maybe not so popular. As our Lord said, the majority are headed down the wrong track. We're either godly or ungodly.

Righteous or unrighteous. When we are saved we find a new direction. It's a dramatic change. A change of direction. Really a U-turn. I know I've heard it put that as far as the broad way and the narrow way, you could almost consider, well, it's almost as if it may be the same road but the others are going the wrong way.

[5:29] Like they're going away from God. Whereas God's people are going towards God. And we need a U-turn to do a 180 and turn around.

That's what repent means. It means to do an about face. To do that U-turn. And in becoming a Christian it's a new way of living.

There's a godly direction that brings change. And there's a whole brand new purpose and meaning for life that impacts our lives and others. We have a new orientation.

A new rule of life and conduct. We are under new management. You see that in the shops sometimes, don't you? There's, you know, the cafe gets a new cook.

And you think, oh, let's go and see if they are improved. They're under new management. That's what God does for us, doesn't he? He puts a sign over our heart, under new management.

[6:29] No longer self-managed, but God managed. God's my manager. Or under his management, under his leadership. And it tells us here of the godly.

His delight is in the law of the Lord. And in his law doth he meditate day and night. Note that which the godly man delights in. There's a delight. It's delightful.

It's delightful. It's that which gladdens and rejoices our heart. There's a delight. There's a gladness there. There's a blessing in the law of the Lord.

The word of God. It's what we meditate in. It's that which changes us from the inside out. From top to toe.

There's a meditating and it motivates us. It renews us. There's a new motivation. A new purpose. Because God sets a new direction. That U-turn.

[7:25] That repenting. He shows us the way. He sets the direction. Godly direction. It tells us, the word of God says, this is the way. Walk ye in it. This new godly direction comes.

And it brings a new order. That comes to our lives in every dimension. Such that, God helping us, our homes come under a biblical godly order.

Under God's authority. You know, it's often times a statement in statements of faith. That this is the rule of conduct.

This is the rule of life. The word of God, the Bible, is the only rule of life and conduct. Or words to that effect.

The rule. This should rule over us. The word of God. God's rulership. God's order. Should order our lives. Our homes. Our thinking. Our purpose for life.

[8:24] It's the rule of life and conduct. And likewise in our homes. They should come under God's authority. Such that we can have godly mothers and godly fathers.

It's a crying need. Godly husbands. Godly wives. Such that there's a godly direction that impacts our whole purpose of life.

God's will, isn't it? That's God's will, isn't it? As much as we don't always see it. That godly direction that transforms us. That headship. That harmony. That God has ordained for us.

That is his will for us. And really to be the best dad you can be, you need to be a man of God. To be the best mum.

To be a woman of God. To be the best person. Just be in his hands. Let him transform you. Let be that malleable, pliable lump of clay that he can fashion and shape you to be the very best that you can be.

[9:33] As he has designed you to be. To find his meaningful life for you. And godliness will impact all those dimensions of life. Of our living of our relationships. How do we find this godly direction for life?

I put to you godliness begins and is sustained by grace. Godliness happens by grace. Godliness. We see in Titus 2.11 it says, For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men. Thank God. Where does salvation come?

God brings it. He gives it. He grants it. He bestows it. He bestows it. The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.

Teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. It goes on to say, looking for our saviour to come.

[10:36] The grace of God, it brings salvation and it teaches us how to live. It instructs us what to deny and how to live, righte, what to let go of and what to live for.

And that new orientation happens. It's a godly mindset. Really we get a biblical world view. And so we kind of stick out from the crowd, don't we? As God's people, we know that, and it seems increasingly so, that this world is, in my perception of it, it seems like it's getting worse.

I don't know what you think, but this world and the world view of the common Joe on the street couldn't care less about Christianity and couldn't care less about questioning what is right and wrong.

I'll just do my own thing. And yet, God challenges us to break out of that, to break the mould.

It's like years ago, I think I saw some kind of advert and it had all these people that were all the same. And then one breaks the mould. There's one that just, actually I'm not going to follow the crowd.

[11:57] I'm not going to go that way, the broad way. I'm going to go God's way. I'm going to trust the Lord even if I'm the only one in my workplace or wherever it be, in my family.

I'm going to follow God even though I'm going to stick out like a sore thumb. Because I want God's way for me. And that biblical world view, it's counter-cultural, isn't it?

We're so contrary to this world and this culture that is hedonistic and couldn't care less about God. Just living for yourself and no thought for tomorrow. And just eat, drink and be merry. Party on until you're paralytic and beyond.

You know, that's the world view that we're in, isn't it? The popular world view. And everything of culture shapes us to think like that and to be like that. And to dare to be different.

[12:59] To dare to break the mould. It's what we're called to. He renews our thinking. He transforms us from the inside out.

And he gives us a new tongue, as it were, as well. Such that we actually talk different. We get a different kind of language that comes out of our mouths.

Like Ecclesiastes 10.12. The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious. But the lips of a fool will swallow him up.

Now, godliness should impact all the dimensions of life. Such that even our speech changes. So, those swear words won't slip out of our lips so easily anymore.

And hopefully, not at all. That godliness will impact us such that we'll stop and think before we speak.

[14:11] That godliness will impact our stewardship of life. The gifts of life that we have. Every day is precious, isn't it? Every day, every moment, every interaction with another person is precious.

It's special. Let's be godly stewards of the gifts of life. We are made to be godly. And we are made godly by God, by his grace.

The grace of God teaches us how to live soberly, righteously and godly. And it's all by his working. Not something manufactured or forced on us or imposed by the dictates of men.

Or I've got to behave just so. Because I'm around a Christian now. I've got to be different. When we don't always stop to think, Christ is with me all the time.

So, if I wouldn't be like that when another Christian is present, maybe I need to stop and think, the Lord Jesus is present. And this being made godly, it's all by grace.

[15:30] It's by grace. It's by godly biblical convictions. It's his grace at work. Working in our lives. Saving us and guiding us. And when we take this godly path, we find godly direction.

Godly direction. Secondly, we find a godly separation. A separation. Something changes such that it's a different path to others.

And we can feel like we're alone. We can feel like we're isolated from others.

And it can be hard. Especially when you're an isolated man or woman in a family that is not committed to the Lord.

Psalms 1, it says, Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

[16:33] We're God's dearly beloved people. We take a different path to others. There's a godly separation. We don't hanker after the counsel of those who are godless. You know, Dr Phil doesn't tell us how to live.

Or what's her name? Oprah Winfrey. Certainly not Oprah. You don't want to tune into that to get your counsel, do you? We don't tune into that.

We tune into a new wavelength. You know, we get God's wavelength. Just tune it in. That whole new way of thinking. A biblical worldview. And it tells us that God has set apart him that is godly for himself.

The Lord has set apart him that is godly for himself. That being set apart, that separation, it's not just separated from, it's a separation unto. Our beloved, precious Lord.

That blessed Lord God, our Saviour, he wants you for himself. He wants you to be dear and near to him. And this new direction means we walk in a different way to those who do not know the Lord.

[17:41] Others may not be able to understand this. He's called us out. He's called us out. He's called us out. He's called us unto himself. And there is a separation unto the Lord. A separation from that which does not honour the Lord.

So godliness shows, as we say, in all manners of life. And this is not to dictate to others because it's, I think it's largely as the Holy Spirit prompts you.

And draws you and convicts you and points things out to you. The way we talk, is it worldly or is it godly? How do you draw that?

Where's the fine line there? Is it godly? Is it worldly? The way we give, is it freely or selfishly? The way we dress, is it modestly or worldly?

The way we love, is it selflessly or vainly? The way we think and feel, do we care for others or only about ourselves? The way we die, is it expectantly and restfully or fearfully and lost?

[18:46] You know, I've got a book at home that talks about the last words of people. And what a contrast. It's like darkness and light. Between those who know the Lord, they know where they're going, they know they've got peace with God.

As they're lying there with their dying breath, they praise Him, they glorify Him, they speak words of assurance, they speak scriptures, they sing gospel songs, they share the gospel, and those who are dying without hope, without God.

What a contrast it is. It's chalk and cheese. When we live for God, one day we'll die with that same assurance in His comfort and fellowship.

And we are a separated people. We're distinct and different. It tells us, love not the world. Love not the world. Neither of the things that are in the world, etc.

It tells us, keep yourself unspotted from the world. How easy it is to get spotted from the world. I think sometimes when I'm out in the garden sometimes and I just think, oh, I'll just do this little job and I've got my Sunday best on, or I'm wearing something that you wouldn't ordinarily wear in the garden, and oh, it's all over me.

[20:05] Just think, oh, I just can't avoid it. It just happens, doesn't it? And it's like that in the world, isn't it? Sometimes when we mix with the world, when we go about the everyday, we're contaminated and we almost need to have a chemical shower.

What do they do when someone comes into contact with contamination, as it were? There's a sense where we get spotted by the world and we need to get clean before God.

And that godly intent that we should have, that our decisions are based on what will give honour to God. That godly thinking will be such that in decision-making we think of that as primary.

Will it grieve the Holy Spirit or will it glorify God? Is it worldly? Is it questionable? Or can I do that without any twinge of conscience?

We're a godly people. We're called to be a godly seed. And we'll be marked, we'll stand out. People will mock us. You know, down through history we see those who are outright Christians and some

of them might have been a little more out there than others, but there's a sense where the world kind of saw they were different and they were marked and they were martyred.

[21:30] They were hated and killed for the gospel's sake. And the false church of its day killed them in the name of God because they were different, because they stood for the truth of God.

They wouldn't be detoured by the falsehood of the day. And likewise now there's a clash of cultures. It's going on right now.

And we're constantly bombarded. It's like we can't help but be bombarded because it's all around us. This hell-bound culture, this hell-bound world, this Christless, godless, Christ-rejecting, Bible-denying world wants to influence you.

But rather we should be the influence. The world will hate us, the Lord Jesus said that. And notice this one. Paul says to Timothy, Yea, yes, assuredly, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

Paul says everybody who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall, it's guaranteed, suffer persecution. So if you're getting pushed around and whispered about or lambasted and picked on because you're standing for Christ, God bless you today.

[22:54] Be encouraged. You're in the right place. We have for life a godly direction. It means a walking in a different way. A godly separation that means sometimes we're just going to feel totally excluded and isolated.

We don't have to be part of the crowd. We take a different path because we want to please our Saviour and Lord. And that may bring persecution and loss. Yea, it may, yet no matter the opposition and hatred you face, I want to put to you there is a blessing.

We see of the blessed man that there is a godly fruit. We talked about a godly direction, a godly separation, and thirdly and lastly, a godly fruition.

I had to use this funny word to make it rhyme with the other ones. So there's a direction, there's a separation, and there's a fruition. There's fruit. There's fruit that we shall bear. It tells us here, The Lord says you will be like a tree.

Like a tree. Like a tree. Like a tree. Like a tree. Bearing fruit. There's a fruitfulness that comes.

Brother, sister, there's a glad assurance for you.

[24:15] There's a harvest for you. Your life will bear fruit. There will be fruit that will abound to your account. The Bible tells about the fruit of the Spirit, love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith.

Your life will bear fruit. If you're a godly man, a godly woman, God promises you the vibrancy, the fruitfulness, the vitality that will result.

You will reap what you sow. Now I've been looking at my veggie patch lately, and there's nothing growing in one of the veggie beds.

I haven't put anything in it yet. Okay, it's empty. And sometimes we can make that mistake through life, can't we? I wonder why isn't God bringing fruit into my life?

Why am I not seeing God work in me? Put your heart and soul into God. Get things sorted with Him. Pray. Seek His face.

[25:19] Invest your soul in that which is going to minister to you. Feed your heart, your soul on the Word of God.

And then there will be a harvest. Witness. We see some folk are actively witnessing in this church. And they're seeing souls respond.

They're seeing lives touched because they're sowing. They're reaping now. And there will be a reaping yet to come. There's a harvest. A harvest.

But we have to plant. There's a nourishment and an abounding that we promised from the godly. We may see not a lot of it at times.

It might seem barren. But God will abound to your account. In 1 Corinthians 15, 58. Paul says, Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as you know that, your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

[26:25] Paul's saying here, and apparently the word always, always is, there's an emphasis to that. Always abounding. But notice what it says

first.

Be steadfast. Be unmovable. Be always abounding. God wants us to be always abounding. It goes on in 2 Corinthians 8, 7.

Therefore, as ye abound in everything, in faith, in utterance, in knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that you abound in this grace also. So we should abound in all of these things.

Abound in faith. Trust the Lord. And keep on trusting him. Abound in utterance. Don't be afraid to confess Christ as your Saviour and Lord. And you can do that tactfully as the opportunity comes. Don't be afraid to share that you're a believer in Christ. Sometimes it is the turning point in your life. As our Lord says, he that confesses me before men, him will I confess before my Father which is in heaven.

[27:35] Open your mouth and confess your faith. Abound in knowledge. This is the source of knowledge, the fear of God.

And abound in diligence. Don't hold back. Give it your all. Give it your best. Give it your utmost. Be diligent. And abound in love.

Abound in love. Abound in grace. Shouldn't we abound in all these things? And just another abounding is 2 Corinthians 9, 8.

God is able to make all grace abound toward you that you always having all sufficiency in all things may abound to every good work. God is able. He's given you all grace.

So that you always have all sufficiency in all things may abound to every good work. And we might have not much to rub together as it were, as the world would reckon.

[28:37] But grace, grace abounding. You can be rich in faith. You can be rich towards God. Not what the world would count as rich.

But rich in what matters. Rich in what matters. And the great gift that God has given you. Salvation. The gift that God has given you.

That is such a precious gift, isn't it? The riches of His grace. You've got the riches of His grace. Share it.

Amen. And we see that godliness is not stagnant and fruitless. It's fruitful. Paul says, Refuse profane and old wise fables. Talking about false doctrine and such.

He says, Exercise thyself rather unto godliness. For bodily exercise profiteth a little, but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

[29:38] Paul's saying, Reject some things. Refuse some things. Refuse that which is false and wrong. But exercise yourself rather unto godliness. And I understand, and I mentioned it not long a time ago, but this word exercise, it's got the sense of going to the gym to exercise yourself.

It's got the sense of a dedicated training regime. Of a commitment to extend yourself and expend yourself and to increase your strength.

Increase your capacity to exercise yourself such that it's stronger and stronger. That's more lasting. It's greater and deeper.

That godliness. It should be something that we should want to increase godliness and extend it and to get closer to God and stronger in our faith.

And this heart of godliness is made possible as God works in us. That he will strengthen our faith. He will strengthen your faith as you seek him and as you grow godly.

[30:49] So determine that. Determine. I want to be more godly. I want to be more stronger in my faith. I want to grow as a Christian. I don't want to be stagnant and stale.

I will commit to building godly character. One brick at a time. God helping me. I'm going to grow. And Peter gives a bit of a picture here in 2 Peter 1 of that adding to your faith.

He says that God has given us divine power. He's given us divine promises. And we can be partakers of the divine nature.

Wow. That's pretty radical, isn't it? That you can be a partaker of the divine nature. Such that, Ethel, you will be a partaker of the divine nature.

That Christ will be in you. Roz. Gene. Dennis. Roy. And you lot on the other side. That God will be such in you that the divine nature would be in you.

[31:55] Such that you will exude Christ. Amen. Wouldn't that be lovely? Yeah. When people get close to you, they'll be a sweet savor of Christ. You'll smell like Christ. You'll have that atmosphere around you that people will sense, wow, what a lovely Christian.

What a wonderful Christian. The divine nature will come out of your very life. Might be being a bit exaggerating a bit there.

But there is that sense, isn't there? We should so reflect Christ that people will notice, that people will be touched.

And it goes on, according as his divine power has given to us all things that pertain unto life and godliness. God has given us everything that we need to be godly.

[32:54] He's given us all things by his divine power. He's given us all things. And then it says, it goes on, exceeding great and precious promises.

Exceeding great and precious promises. Wow. Isn't that wonderful? If you're feeling like, oh, I just need God to speak to me.

Well, open this up. And he will. Amen. You see some people that think, oh, I want God to give me an audible voice or some prophet to prophesy over me or some TV evangelist to give me just the right word.

And God can quicken this to your very heart. Exceeding great and precious promises. Just open it and take it in. And it goes on that we've escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

And verse 5, add to your faith, it says. Giving all diligence, add to your faith. Now we trust in the Lord, we're saved, we're heaven bound, but don't leave it there.

[34:05] Add to your faith virtue. And to virtue, knowledge. And to knowledge, temperance. And to temperance, patience.

And to patience, godliness. And to godliness, brotherly kindness. And to brotherly kindness, charity. Don't leave it there as you might go along that journey. Keep adding to your faith. And then it says, for if these things be in you and abound, they shall make you that you shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Imagine that, as it were, adding one layer after the other. You know, that the faith and such. And adding godliness, adding brotherly kindness, adding love.

And by God's grace, we can abound in what matters. In godly living. Such that it will become a lifestyle. We'll become truly alive. And we can live by godly principles.

Such that this won't just be a theoretical thing. That, oh, God wants me to do such and such. But it'll be almost second nature.

[35:11] Because the divine nature is in you. And we can be partakers, even of the divine nature. Such that the very nature and person of Christ is in you. So, when someone slights you, you'll treat them like Christ would.

When someone wrongs you, you'll treat them like Christ would. And when you're feeling like everyone's against you, you'll have the peace of Christ in you.

You'll be able to overcome. Because his very nature will be in you. His very nature and person will be alive in you. And we'll become partakers of it. And then transmitters of his grace.

Contagious. It tells us in John 15, our Lord says, Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit, so shall ye be my disciples.

We've seen, blessed is the man. Walks not in that ungodly council.

[36:21] There's a new direction. There's a new way of living.

There's a new direction. There's a new separation. Such that, okay, we're on the road less travelled. We're on that road that the many will not go down that road.

We're feeling alone and isolated as a Christian. But you're on the right road. That's what matters.

There's a separation. And then there's this fruit that will abound.

There's a fruit that will abound. And God's power makes this happen. And the ultimate, and the motivating factor really is this.

That God the Father is glorified. That's what motivates us. Not so we can say, I'm godly. I've got my godliness badge. I've got my godliness medal. I've got the certificate to hang on the wall.

[37:22] I'm godly now. No, it's not about you bragging that you're godly. It's about so your Father can be glorified. It's so God can be glorified. So that when you see his face, you'll give him more glory.

You'll give him more praise. And you'll lay your crown down. And you'll give him honour. And there'll be something of life that you've lived that will have been a godly purpose to your living.

There will have been some godly wisdom that you've saturated your mind with the word of God. You've soaked it in. That by his mercy, you'll have had a godly impact on the lives that you've touched.

And you won't leave some wreckage behind. You'll get it sorted. If there's things to sort with men and women, you know. And there'll be that divine nature that's residing in you.

You'll know a godly grace to help you make godly decisions. And you'll be godly change agents impacting our world. I know the world that we're living in, we're constantly bombarded by messages from the change agents, as it were.

[38:29] The worldly media trying to make us more ungodly. But we should be the change agents for God. We're ambassadors for Christ. He's parachuted us in behind enemy lines to be missionaries to our culture.

And we can impact our world because the divine nature is in us, changing us, shaping us. And so we see these three things.

For the godly. That there's a new direction, a new separation. And there's fruit that will abound. And will be like a tree planted by the rivers of water. God will sustain that.

It won't have to be manufactured. God will be the fruit of the spirit. Oh, I've got to try really hard to make love or joy, peace. I've got to try to manifest it.

No, it will be the fruit of the spirit. As the spirit fills you, the fruit will flow out of you. Let him have his way. It's simply that. Let him have his way.

[39:32] That you can have a God-centered life. That's godliness. And of course it starts as you put your trust in Christ. Let me please just not leave you unclear on this.

It's not about having goodly principles. And it's not about good characteristics of your life. It's knowing Christ.

That's the starting point. That your delight is to know God's will. It's to know your saviour. To trust him. It starts with you putting your faith in him.

To realize Christ died on the cross for your sins. He rose again from the dead. Confessing him as Lord and saviour. And receiving that. That divine seed, as it were.

That gospel seed. That will then, that faith that you receive. That you, that you engender. Will bring a fruit of a godly life.

[40:35] That he can change you from the inside out. And then add to your faith. And keep growing. That's the message today. Let us pray. Lord, we thank you for the great grace you've given each of us that trust you, Lord.

And Lord, help us to put it into action. In Jesus' name. Amen.