

Godliness - Part 1

Jim Downing

I. Introduction.

A. Godliness is the loving fear of God and Christ-likeness. (1 Timothy 6:11)

B. Paul uses the word 16 times. Peter uses it only three times. It is difficult to determine what godliness is, but Paul's life serves as an example of what godliness is.

II. Godliness is acquainting with the truth. (Titus 1:1)

A. Basic to godliness is the truth of the Word of God.

B. Being unable to uncover all the truth in the Word of God, it is important to zero in on the most important truth that Paul taught, which is where one is at in regards to his relationship with God.

1. Everybody sins daily in word, thought and deed. (Romans 7)

2. This is easily recognized.

3. Sin is what keeps us from God. Paul wrote more extensively on the problem of this than anything else.

C. Three words from Paul:

1. Propitiation: as a result of the work of Jesus Christ, God has turned the judgment seat into a mercy seat. For the person who knows Jesus Christ, there is no longer a judgment pending. (Romans 3:25)

2. Impute: God by a judicial decree says that things are true. When God says something is true it is true whether it was never true before or not. God has imputed the sin of Adam upon the human race, the sin of man on Jesus Christ, and the righteousness of Jesus Christ to every believer. Your record in heaven as a believer is Christ's record. (Romans 4:3)

3. Justification: while the Scripture counts 480 years between the Exodus and the building of the Temple, scholars count a greater number of years. God made the years of Israel's iniquity in the Judges disappear from the record. This is like justification. God can take a timeline, cut a segment out, join the pieces together and say that that period never happened. (Hebrews 10:17; 1 Kings 6:1)

a. When God sees our life he sees the whole thing and looks at events in the context of the entire life.

b. Although Abraham was not always obedient, God looked at the high point of his life and characterized him by it. Like a parent God always points to the highest point in his child's life. (James 2:21, 23)

c. God can choose what he remembers and what he forgets. This is what justification is about. God has just one file folder of you, and that was when in your lifetime you exercised your greatest trust in Him.

d. When an officer in the military performs a certain act of heroism he can never go below that point. Justification is like this.

D. We are plagued with guilt because we are egocentric. The Spirit convicts us when we sin, but we are much more conscious of a wounded ego since we have been proved to be incapable of not sinning.

1. We are supposed to confess and forsake the sin and then move on.

2. This is the “doctrine of instantaneous restoration.” God is the God of our present intention and is satisfied when we get right with Him even if only for a moment.

III. Conclusion.

A. We ought to be excited about our standing with God.

B. If we have confessed and forsaken, God has approved of us.

Application questions.

1. Distinguish between propitiation, imputation, and justification. What are the similarities? What are the differences?

2. How is the truth central to godliness? Why are the three words presented central to what Paul saw as being most important?

3. Are there issues in your life that you have not confessed? Are you suffering from guilt? Find a trusted friend to confess these sins. What should one believe in light of these circumstances?
