

## Godliness and God's Word

### A. What is Godliness?

*"You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, **created to be like God** in true righteousness and holiness." (Eph 4:22-24)*

**What will godliness mean for you? Think about Jesus, and then think about your life as a Christian man, perhaps a husband, a father, a son, a worker... where is God calling you to "be like him"?**

### B. How Do We Grow in Godliness?

#### Psalm 1

*"If I were the devil, one of my first aims would be to stop folk from digging into the Bible. Knowing that it is the Word of God, teaching men to know and love and serve the God of the Word, I should do all I could to surround it with the spiritual equivalent of pits, thorn hedges, and man traps, to frighten people off... at all cost I should want to keep them from using their minds in a disciplined way to get the measure of its message." (Packer)*

**"As for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." (2 Tim 3:14-17)**

#### Why?

John 14:6-7

John 14:15-21

John 14:25-27

John 15:1-4

**"You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life." (John 5:39-40)**

**"Communication from God is communion with God when met with a response of trust from us." (Ward)**

**Discuss: How might this affect the way you regard and read the Bible? Given what we have seen, what place should the Bible have in your own discipleship?**

### C. Spiritual Disciplines

“Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.” (Phil 2:12-13)

*See also Romans 15:18, 1 Cor 15:10, Col 1:29, Heb 13:20-21, 1 Peter 4:11*

## **D. The Discipline of Hearing His Voice (Bible Intake!)**

### **1. The Discipline of Gathering Under God's Preached Word**

*“When the Word of God, faithfully taught by the people of God and empowered by the Spirit of God, falls down, people become different. Lusting people become pure, fearful people become courageous, thieves become givers, demanding people become servants, angry people become peacemakers, complainers become thankful, and idolaters come to joyfully worship the one true God. The ultimate purpose of the Word of God is not theological information but heart and life transformation.” (Tripp, 51)*

### **2. The Discipline of Bible Reading**

Psalm 1... “His delight is in the law of the LORD.”

#### **a) Find the time**

#### **b) Find a plan**

#### **c) Find depth as well as breadth**

- *What is this telling me about God?*
- *What is this telling me about humanity?*
- *How is this leading me to Jesus?*

### **3. The Discipline of Bible Meditation**

Psalm 1 “He meditates on God's law day and night.”

*Meditation is “Deep thinking on the truths and spiritual realities revealed in Scripture, or upon life from a scriptural perspective, for the purposes of understanding, application, and prayer.” (Witney)*

#### **Steeping the Teabag...**

- *Emphasise different words in the text*
- *Rewrite it in your own words*
- *Work out what the verse is teaching*
- *Consider how it is pointing you to Jesus*
- *Think of a good word picture or illustration for the big idea*
- *Look for applications in various aspects of your life: Christian, Son, Father, Husband...*
- *Pray through each clause of the text for your own life*
- *Look for a minimum of 10 insights from the text*
- *Think of a specific item for prayer in your life – how does this text speak to it?*
- *Slow down... Enjoy basking slowly in the glorious truth of the text*

How can this become part of your routine?

**Any other thoughts on how we can encourage 'Bible Intake' in our lives?**



### **E. You Can Change!**

*"Hearing God speak to us in the Bible is the best possible defence against temptation. If we read the Bible, and hear it faithfully preached and taught, we will develop a God-centred world view and an appropriate moral compass. We will no longer be taken in by the lies and deceit of our culture and will be able to make judgements about whether our desires are godly or wicked. This will enable us to identify temptations so that we can resist them." (Stevens)*

***If there is a direct relationship between 'bible intake' and our growth in godliness what are the implications for us?***

***Think back to that area where you think God is calling you to grow in godliness... what one step of Bible intake could you take today to help you in the fight?***

**Finally, keep the end in view:**

*"Let the Word break over your heart and mind again and again as the years go by, and imperceptibly there will come great changes in your attitude and outlook and conduct. You will probably be the last to recognise these. Often you will feel very, very small, because increasingly the God of the Bible will become to you wonderfully great. So go on reading it until you can read not longer, and then you will not need the Bible any more, because when your eyes close for the last time in death, and never again read the Word of God in Scripture you will open them to the Word of God in the flesh, that same Jesus of the Bible whom you have known for so long, standing before you to take you for ever to His eternal home." (Geoffrey Thomas, Reading the Bible)*