

Basic Training: What Does It Mean? Lesson 6-1
What Does it Mean to Live Godly?

2 Corinthians 7:1 Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

I. Review

1. Back on February 12, we started a series: Basic Training: What Does it Mean? We took a break in March to focus on other topics but we are finishing up with a few more What Does it Mean lessons. “What does it mean?” is meant to help someone with the basics of beginning a relationship with God and what it takes to grow that relationship.
 - a. Lesson 1: What does it mean to receive the Holy Ghost? It is a personal life-changing experience where you become the temple of God with God living inside you and leading you into His righteousness on a daily basis. And each remaining lesson focused on ways to grow and deepen our relationship with God.
 - b. Lesson 2: What does it mean that God wrote a Book? God spoke through inspiration and moved the writers to record His Words, and then preserved those words for us in the Bible you hold in your hand. It is a Book which still has the power to change the lives of those who believe in it. With it, we can grow in relationship with God and learn what godliness is.
 - c. Lesson 3: What is the meaning of prayer? We studied the example of the Lord’s prayer and what it means to have a conversation with God that brings us through worship, repentance, seeking God’s will and His kingdom. Daily communication improves our relationship with God.
 - d. Lesson 4: What does it mean that there is one God? We found that there is one Creator and Savior named Jesus. There is one throne in heaven called the throne of God and the Lamb, and only one who sits on that throne, Jesus Christ. This one God is personal and wants to relate with us on a personal level.
 - e. Lesson 5: What is the meaning of worship? First we identified that our guidebook for worship is scripture which identifies worship as an action we participate in using our mouth (testifying, singing, shouting, speaking in tongues), our hands (raising, clapping, waving), our feet (standing, running, leaping, dancing), and posture (bowing, kneeling, falling prostrate). The deeper in worship we move, the more God can control the experience. The more we learn how to worship, the more intimate our relationship with God grows.
 - f. Tonight, our topic is, “What does it mean to live godly?” A person who prioritizes living godly, avoids things that damage and endanger their relationship with God.

II. Godliness starts with God in our hearts

A. What I Think or What He Said

1. As we addressed in the lesson about what it means to receive the Holy Ghost, God does not intend to rent a small room in our heart, but wants to inhabit our body, mind, thoughts, actions, habits, and how we relate to others. We are His temple to dwell in and govern.
2. And matters of godliness are covered in the Bible so that is our source.
3. I’ve heard people respond to issues of godly living by saying, “I don’t think God cares about what we wear or what we do, as long as we love Him. He knows our heart.”
4. Or they start with, “What I think, is…” or, “The way I see it…” or “I don’t see anything wrong with…” or “I’ve always heard…” or “I don’t feel convicted when I…”

5. What we should notice with that kind of reasoning is how predominant “I” is, and how absent “thus saith the Lord” is.
 6. Since God went through the trouble of writing and preserving the scriptures, and since He created heaven and set the rules for entrance, we should not give **what I think** the same level of authority as **what He said**.
- B. Starts in the heart
1. God is very concerned about our heart. That is why our walk in godliness begins when we are filled with the Holy Ghost, when Jesus inhabits our heart.
 2. But Jesus does not want to remain hidden only in our heart. Jesus on the inside works on cleaning our outside as well.
 3. There is such a thing as focusing too much on the outside and ignoring the inside, and Jesus dealt with that:
Matthew 23:25-26
25 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.
26 [Thou] blind Pharisee, cleanse first that [which is] within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.
 4. Those with extortion and excess inside yet a clean outside were hypocrites according to Jesus. But by beginning by cleaning the inside, it makes possible a more thorough cleansing on the outside.
 5. Paul also addressed that dual emphasis of inside and outside:
2 Corinthians 7:1 Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.
 6. Perfecting holiness includes cleaning both our **spirit**, or internal areas, and **flesh**, the external areas of our life.
 7. And outward appearance does matter to God, and we are urged to avoid what appears as evil:
1 Thessalonians 5:22 Abstain from all appearance of evil.
 8. So in this lesson we will cover one principle of **godliness** that pertains to the **heart: morality**; and two principles that pertain to the flesh: **appearance of modesty and gender distinction**. We will cover gender distinctions next time.

III. Morality

- A. It is essential
1. The Bible identifies morality standards, which, if we neglect them, will lead to the consequence of the lake of fire, that eternal judgment intended for the devil.
Matt 13:41-42
41 The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend [causes sin], and them which do iniquity [evil];
*42 And shall cast them into a **furnace of fire**: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.*
 2. When talking about morality, or godliness, another Bible word to describe that is holiness. Holiness is a characteristic of God that refers to His purity and lack of defilement.
 3. And it is never good enough to compare our goodness to someone else. It is easy to justify some bad habit of ours by saying, “At least I’m not as bad as so-and-so.”

4. When God called you to follow Him, He didn't make so-and-so the model to follow, but He himself.
1 Peter 1:15-16
15 But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation [conduct];
16 Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.
 5. Or as Jesus Himself put it:
Matt 5:48 Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.
 6. Because our standard is not so-and-so, but is God with all His perfection, an impossible standard for a human to reach, that shows us how important it is to rely on and lean on God as we pursue holiness. Simply put, we need a Savior!
 7. But if we want to see God, we cannot dismiss the topic of godliness as unimportant. It is essential to pursue:
Heb 12:14 Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:
 8. Set your standard high.
- B. Examples of moral violations [mature audience warning]
1. Let us look at some biblical moral standards not to be ignored, for missing out on the kingdom of God, what we commonly refer to as heaven, is the consequence of participating in these behaviors.
 2. Starting with sexual sins in v. 9 and then others in v. 10:
1 Cor 6:9-10
9 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators [sexually immoral], nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind [refers to both partners in a homosexual act, and Romans 1:26-27 adds that participation in lesbian acts is also sinful.],
10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers [verbally abusive], nor extortioners [swindlers], shall inherit the kingdom of God.
 3. A similar list with the similar consequence:
Eph 5:5 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean [impure] person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.
 4. And yet another with the same intense, moral force, beginning with sexual sins in v. 19:
Gal 5:19-21
19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness [depravity, debauchery, lewdness],
 5. Continuing with demonic evil, then bad relationship conduct:
20 Idolatry, witchcraft [sorcery], hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, [hostilities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish rivalries, dissensions, factions]
21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings [orgies], and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.
 6. And this next passage explains exactly what it means to not inherit the kingdom of God:
Rev 21:8 But the fearful [faithless], and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

7. As you see, God is serious about moral standards. The consequence of disobedience is missing heaven, and instead, having part in the lake of fire and brimstone—the second death.
8. So before you say, “I don’t see anything wrong with...”, make sure you are not trusting in what you see as wrong, but what God sees as wrong.
9. And this is also why leaning on and following the Holy Ghost is crucial, as well as our daily need for repentance.
10. And most of those passages we just read deal with sinful physical actions with others, but also included are sins of the mind.
11. So avoiding the physical act of adultery is necessary, but Jesus said that that sin can also take place in the heart:
Matt 5:28-29
28 But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.
29 And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.
12. That is why we are instructed to keep our hearts with all diligence (Prov 4:23).
13. You might ask why God asks that we keep such a high standard of perfection. Having such a high standard should keep any of us from taking a judgmental attitude toward others, for it doesn’t matter who we may beat in keeping some moral standards, we all fail God’s requirement of perfection.
14. If I could boast of beating the high jump record of 8 ft ¼ in, set in 1993¹, I would be able to brag that I was literally better than everyone!
15. But if God requires that we jump to the moon, what good is it to brag that I made it a measly 8 ft ¼ inch?
16. There are **other moral violations** with the consequence of hell fire, like **ignoring** the needy (Matt 25:41-46), **offending** little ones (Mark 9:42-48), **not obeying** the gospel (2 Thess 1:8-9).
17. Before we move on, let us read one more passage about **abominations** (something offensive, detestable, or disgusting to God):
Revelation 21:27 And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.
18. That is important because that puts us on notice of passages in the Bible that call an action an abomination to God. And what God calls an abomination will not enter into heaven. We will look at that more next time.
19. We read in 2 Cor 7:1 that we are to perfect holiness in **spirit and flesh**, and we just examined some examples of holiness in spirit in this discussion on morality.
20. Next we will look at perfecting holiness in flesh, which includes modesty and next time, gender distinction.

IV. Modesty

A. Definition

¹

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/High_jump#:~:text=Javier%20Sotomayor%20\(Cuba\)%20is%20the.of%20the%20men's%20high%20jump](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/High_jump#:~:text=Javier%20Sotomayor%20(Cuba)%20is%20the.of%20the%20men's%20high%20jump)

1. We will end on modesty.
*1 Timothy 2:9 In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in **modest apparel** [1 Pet 3:3 outward adorning], with shamefacedness [modesty] and sobriety [self-control]; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;*
2. Modest comes from the Greek word, kosmio, which means respectable, proper, suitable, well-arranged, seemly, modest.
3. The definition of **modest** from Webster's Unabridged Dictionary is:
Restraining within due limits of propriety; not forward, bold, boastful, or presumptuous; rather retiring than pushing one's self forward; not obstructive; as, a modest youth; a modest man.
Observing the proprieties of the sex; not unwomanly in act or bearing; free from undue familiarity, indecency, or lewdness; decent in speech and demeanor.
4. We find various descriptions in the Bible of what modest apparel looks like.
5. **First** there is a description of the "**holy garment**" in Leviticus 8 and 16 which shows what a modest garment should cover.
6. And **second**, we find the reverse. Several descriptions are found describing the **opposite of modesty— what is shameful**.

B. The high priest's holy garment

1. Leviticus 8 and 16 provide details about what Aaron, the high priest, wore in his service for God, which is described as "holy garments."
Lev 8:7 And he put upon him the coat, and girded him with the girdle, and clothed him with the robe, and put the ephod upon him, and he girded him with the curious girdle of the ephod, and bound it unto him therewith.
Lev 16:4 He shall put on the holy linen coat, and he shall have the linen breeches upon his flesh, and shall be girded with a linen girdle, and with the linen mitre shall he be attired: these are holy garments; therefore shall he wash his flesh in water, and so put them on.
2. The holy garments provided this kind of modest covering (based on translation notes of these verses in the NET):
 - a. The coat or tunic was like a shirt worn against the skin that covered the **upper body**
 - b. The breeches, or trousers, covered his hips and legs
 - c. The girdle was a sash that served as a belt that covered the waist
 - d. The robe was an outer shirt-like garment that reached below the knees
3. Exodus 28 also describes Aaron's garments which had the **purpose** "to cover their nakedness"
Exodus 28:42 And thou shalt make them linen breeches [trousers] to cover their nakedness; from the loins [middle of back] even unto the thighs [legs down to the knee] they shall reach:
4. So the holy garment provides a modest covering with the purpose of covering the nakedness.

C. Judgment of shame

1. We also learn more about modesty from descriptions of immodesty, when what should be covered is left shamefully uncovered.
2. What follows is a description of how captives were shamed by having them paraded immodestly before their captors:

Isaiah 47:2-3

2 Take the millstones, and grind meal: uncover thy locks, make bare the leg, uncover the thigh, pass over the rivers.

3 Thy nakedness shall be uncovered, yea, thy shame [private parts] shall be seen: I will take vengeance, and I will not meet thee as a man.

3. Here what is called “nakedness” to be covered is the upper part of the leg including private parts.
4. Other passages of this same type speak of other body parts that were shamefully uncovered, like the breasts in Ezekiel 16:7-8, the buttocks in Isaiah 20:4, the groin area in 1 Samuel 5:9 (called secret parts).

D. What is modest covering?

1. If we compile these verses that describe modesty and shame, we get a picture of what a modest garment should do:
2. Modest garments cover
 - a. Upper body—avoid sleeveless and low- cut tops
 - b. Waist—avoid tops and shirts that reveal any part of the belly or back
 - c. Hips—avoid drooping or short garments that reveal any flesh in this area
 - d. Legs to the knee—avoid garments that reveal the knees or any part above.
3. Principles of modesty govern how we are to cover ourselves in public, and primarily before members of the opposite sex, with the goal of not presenting our bodies in such a way as to cause temptation.
4. To the careful shopper, there are plenty of modest garments available.

V. Closing

1. So tonight, we have looked at the need to use the scriptures to answer the question, what does it mean to live godly? Not “What I think.”
2. True godly living begins with being filled with the Holy Ghost, which will lead you to holy living.
3. We talked about morality and modesty tonight.
4. The Bible guide on what morality is and clearly describes the outcome of living immorally—missing heaven and finding the lake of fire.
5. We looked at examples of how modest apparel properly covers our bodies.
6. Let us end by reminding us why living godly relates to what we do in and with our body and not just our spirituality:

Romans 12:1-2

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, [which is] your reasonable service.

2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what [is] that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

7. As Christians, we should not let conformity to the world’s standards distract us from biblical standards, because God does care about how we present ourselves, from heart and mind, on out to our actions and apparel.