

Flint Hills Bible Church  
Biblical Soul Care Sunday School  
*Growing in Godliness*

**I. Introduction**

Review:

Jerry Bridges defines godliness as “Devotion to God which results in a life that is pleasing to Him.”

1. What are the three components of devotion to God that we have discussed?

We have talked about the foundation that must be true in your life and mine if we are to be marked by God’s character. We must be devoted to God (God-centered), before we can be like Him in His character. How do we do that?

**Objectives:**

Our Goal today is to learn the practical ways that we can grow in our devotion to God, which results in our becoming like Him in character.

In other words we are learning how to build godly character on a foundation of devotion to God.

**II. Training for Godliness**

Before we get into the “What” of growing in godliness, we will look at the the “How”.

Paul gives Timothy a wonderful explanation of how he can be a faithful minister to the churches in Ephesus in the book of 1 Timothy. As we work through this passage we will see the kind of routines each of us will need to build into our lives if we desire to be godly.

We begin with your “diet”

**1 Timothy 4:6 (ESV) — 6** If you put these things before the brothers, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, being trained [NASB: constantly nourished] in the words of the faith and of the good doctrine that you have followed.

2. In verse 6 what is Paul telling Timothy to focus on?

3. What does that suggest about our growth in godliness?

**1 Timothy 4:7–9 (ESV)** — **7** Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather train yourself for godliness; **8** for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come. **9** The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance.

4. In verse 7 what is Timothy's responsibility?
5. What does training typically involve?
6. What should be the goal of our training?
7. Why is it worth our while to train?

**1 Timothy 4:10–15 (ESV)** — **10** For to this end we toil and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe. **11** Command and teach these things. **12** Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. **13** Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching. **14** Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophecy when the council of elders laid their hands on you. **15** Practice these things, immerse yourself in them, so that all may see your progress.

8. According to verse 10, how should having our hope set on the living God affect us?
9. What do Verses 13-15 teach us about this process of growing in godliness?
10. What will godliness require of us?

### **III. Applying Our Training -**

Training will be difficult, and will require consistent exertion of energy and resources. But without a plan - a systematic workout routine - we will be inconsistent in our efforts as well as our growth!

- a. The Word

Perhaps the most crucial part of our efforts is the diet that we will need to fuel our growth in godliness. The following are ways we must intake the Word of God to grow in our knowledge of Him.

If the following texts, identify the way we are to intake Scripture:

- **We must \_\_\_\_\_ the Word:**

**Acts 17:11 (ESV) — 11** Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.

**Revelation 1:3 (ESV) — 3** Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near.

**Ezekiel 33:30–31 (ESV) — 30** “As for you, son of man, your people who talk together about you by the walls and at the doors of the houses, say to one another, each to his brother, ‘Come, and hear what the word is that comes from the LORD.’ **31** And they come to you as people come, and they sit before you as my people, and they hear what you say but they will not do it; for with lustful talk in their mouths they act; their heart is set on their gain.

11. Why is this method important?

12. How do we do this?

13. Is there a wrong way to do this?

- **We must \_\_\_\_\_ the Word**

**Joshua 8:34–35 (ESV) — 34** And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessing and the curse, according to all that is written in the Book of the Law. **35** There was not a word of all that Moses commanded that Joshua did not read before all the assembly of Israel, and the women, and the little ones, and the sojourners who lived among them.

**Nehemiah 8:3, 8 (ESV) — 3** And he read from it facing the square before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand. And the ears of all the people were attentive to the Book of the Law. — **8** They read from the book, from the Law of God, clearly, and they gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading.

14. Why is this method important?

15. Why is this method important?

16. How do we do this?

17. Is there a wrong way to do this?

- **We must \_\_\_\_\_ the Word**

**Ezra 7:10 (ESV) — 10** For Ezra had set his heart to study the Law of the LORD, and to do it and to teach his statutes and rules in Israel.

**Proverbs 2:1–5 (ESV) — 1** My son, if you receive my words and treasure up my commandments with you, **2** making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding; **3** yes, if you call out for insight and raise your voice for understanding, **4** if you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures, **5** then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God.

18. Why is this method important?

19. How do we do this?

20. Is there a wrong way to do this?

- **We must \_\_\_\_\_ the Word**

**Psalms 119:11 (ESV) — 11** I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.

**Psalms 119:16 (ESV) — 16** I will delight in your statutes; I will not forget your word.

21. Why is this method important?

22. How do we do this?

23. Is there a wrong way to do this?

- **We must \_\_\_\_\_ the Word**

**Psalm 119:15 (ESV) — 15** I will meditate on your precepts and fix my eyes on your ways.

**Psalm 1:1–2 (ESV) — 1** Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; **2** but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night.

**Colossians 3:16 (ESV) — 16** Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

24. Why is this method important?

25. How do we do this?

26. Is there a wrong way to do this?

b. Prayer

It has been said that the true measure of the spiritual health of a person is his prayer life. How much does he pray? What does he pray for? What attitude toward prayer does he bring? Etc.

What do you notice about the content, and method of the following texts on prayer?

**2 Chronicles 33:12–13 (ESV) — 12** And when he was in distress, he entreated the favor of the LORD his God and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers. **13** He prayed to him, and God was moved by his entreaty and heard his plea and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD was God.

27. What do we learn about prayer? What do you notice?

**Psalm 5:1–3 (ESV) — 1** Give ear to my words, O LORD; consider my groaning. **2** Give attention to the sound of my cry, my King and my God, for to you do I pray. **3** O LORD, in the morning you hear my voice; in the morning I prepare a sacrifice for you and watch.

28. What do we learn about prayer? What do you notice?

**Psalm 116:1–4 (ESV)** — **1** I love the LORD, because he has heard my voice and my pleas for mercy. **2** Because he inclined his ear to me, therefore I will call on him as long as I live. **3** The snares of death encompassed me; the pangs of Sheol laid hold on me; I suffered distress and anguish. **4** Then I called on the name of the LORD: “O LORD, I pray, deliver my soul!”

29. What do we learn about prayer? What do you notice?

**Matthew 6:5–13 (ESV)** — **5** “And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. **6** But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. **7** “And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words. **8** Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. **9** Pray then like this: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. **10** Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. **11** Give us this day our daily bread, **12** and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. **13** And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

**Philippians 4:6 (ESV)** — **6** do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

30. What do we learn about how to pray?

31. What does Jesus teach about the content of our prayer?

**1 Thessalonians 5:16–18 (ESV)** — **16** Rejoice always, **17** pray without ceasing, **18** give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

32. What do we learn about prayer here?

c. Worship God

**Revelation 4:8–11 (ESV)** — **8** And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and within, and day and night they never cease to say, “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!” **9** And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him who is seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever, **10** the twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever. They cast their crowns before the throne, saying, **11** “Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.”

Isaiah 40:10-31.

Psalms 139:1-18

33. What do these texts do to our understanding of God?

34. What is the effect of this on a believer?

d. Fellowship with God

Fellowship with God encompasses the goal of all our training for godliness. We desire to spend time with God - communing with Him. We do this through all we have discussed so far, but this key component can be missing. When we are reading, meditating, praying etc., we must have as our goal to meet with God. To converse with Him - He speaks to us through His word, we pray to Him as we read and think. There is a fellowship with God that pleases Him and changes us!

**2 Corinthians 3:18 (ESV) — 18** And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

e. Obedience

Jerry Bridges says:

“There is still another area that is not an activity but an attitude of life: obedience to the will of God. This is the ultimate test of our fear of God and the only true response to His love for us...

If we do not fear God, we will not think it worthwhile to obey His commands; but if we truly fear Him— if we hold Him in reverence and awe— we will obey Him. The measure of our obedience is an exact measure of our reverence for Him.

**Luke 6:46–49 (ESV) — 46** “Why do you call me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do what I tell you? **47** Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and does them, I will show you what he is like: **48** he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when a flood arose, the stream broke against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built. **49** But the one who hears and does not do them is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. When the stream broke against it, immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great.”

**IV. Now What? Make a plan!**

We have covered a lot of material! There is a much for us to do. At first it may seem that we simply do not have the time, expertise, skill, discipline, to do all of this. And while we are on a path that will not be completed until Christ comes back or calls us home. We get the privilege of walking with Him and reflecting His character progressively here on earth! But we won't make much sustained growth without a plan. Use the following questions as a guide to build your plan for godliness!

1. What is your diet like? Take an honest look at how much time a day/week you spend taking in following things:

News:

Entertainment (movies, TV, music, etc.):

Social Media:

Scripture:

Do you find that you spend enough time reading and meditating on the word of God? (See Psalm 1:2-3, Psalm 119:9-11, Romans 12:1-2)

2. Select your diet: When, where, what and how are you going to intake "the words of the faith and of the good doctrine"?
  - What time of day will you carve out to intake the Word of God?
  - Where will this happen?
  - What will you read/listen to, and meditate on?
3. Set Your Goal: What are some particular areas where students forget God (or outright rebel against him)? What area do you struggle with the most? What would godliness look like practically for you in this area?
4. Show your Progress: is there a godly man or woman who you can ask to help hold you accountable for your growth in godliness?
  - Pray for the Holy Spirit's help as you discipline yourself for godliness
  - Share your gameplan with your friend/mentor
  - Ask them to pray with you and for you
  - Give them permission to speak into your life:
    - Ask you about your follow through
    - Ask you about progress you are making in your plan
    - Gently confront and encourage you when you fall short