

Letter, 1 Timothy 4:8

by John Nelson Darby

The sermon explores the relationship between godliness and happiness, emphasizing the importance of spiritual governance and deeper theological understanding for believers.

Scripture: Exodus 15:1-2, Psalm 34:12-14, Mark 10:30, 1 Timothy 4:8, 1 Peter 3:10-13, 1 John 1:9

Topics: "Godliness", "Peaceful Living"

Description

John Nelson Darby emphasizes the significance of godliness as a pathway to happiness and blessing in life, drawing from 1 Timothy 4:8 and its connection to Psalm 34. He explains that living a peaceful and upright life, while avoiding evil, leads to good days, except when facing persecution for righteousness. Darby contrasts the teachings of Peter with those of Paul and John, suggesting that many evangelicals remain limited in their understanding of God's governance and the fullness of forgiveness through Christ. He also highlights the importance of faith in Christ's work and the sealing of the Holy Spirit in believers. The sermon reflects on the transformative nature of God's goodness and holiness post-redemption.

Transcript

(Words in Season, Vol. 3, 1889, page 306.)

Dearest brother,

The passage in 1 Tim. 4:8, though referring to present blessing as Peter does (1 Peter 3:10-13) has a different, or at least more general basis. Godliness is the way of happiness in this life (save of course persecution with it, we read in Mark), but it is the way of blessing. Peter's writings, after redemption, are occupied with the government of God - the first in favour of the pious, the second in judgment - and hence the passage referred to has this character, and refers immediately to the peaceful and upright character which avoids evil, and gets quietly through the world in peace as a follower of good. If you wish to see good days, you must govern your spirit and walk so and so, and then - save persecution for righteousness or for Christ - if you live in peace, you will live peacefully and happily. But the life we love is life here, and so is 1 Tim. 4. It is a quotation from Psalm 34, and shews how far the direct government of God, which was immediate and dispensational in Israel, applies to Christians. I believe 1 John 1:9 to be, as all such statements in John, abstract and absolute for forgiveness at first coming, and for governmental forgiveness. In detail there is often delay; in general, the Holy Ghost is given to them that believe; but if we examine all that is said, I think we see that there must be faith in the efficacy of Christ's work, as well as His Person. But whenever a soul can say, Abba, Father, it is sealed - has the Spirit - though bad teaching

may mar its effects. The mass of evangelicals don't go beyond Peter's teaching, and enter neither into Paul's nor John's, and souls are thus kept down.

"Have you remarked that it is only the second time Moses went up that His face shone? The tables under pure law never reached the camp, but now, though put back under law, all God's goodness passed before Moses. It is a remarkable point as to holiness, that we never meet it at all till Ex. 15, after redemption and judgment." J. N. D.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/john-nelson-darby/letter-1-timothy-48/>

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