

# Exercise Yourself to Godliness

by Paul Washer

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*Paul Washer emphasizes the necessity of personal godliness and a biblically sound gospel in our lives and ministries to effectively fulfill the Great Commission.*

**Duration:** 1:10:41

**Scripture:** Matthew 5:3-10, Matthew 23:15, 1 Timothy 4:4-12

**Topics:** "Godliness"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of not getting caught up in worldly fables and distractions. He urges listeners to discipline themselves for the purpose of godliness. The preacher acknowledges the challenges of walking in the truth and warns against falling into false doctrine. He highlights the significance of receiving everything created by God with gratitude, as it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer. The sermon also addresses the current state of the world, emphasizing the need to renew the mind in the Word of God and make a break from secular culture, contemporary Christianity, and even evangelicalism. The preacher concludes by emphasizing that the world is disintegrating and coming apart at the seams.

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## Transcript

For more media content from Grace Community Church in San Antonio, Texas, go to [GCCSATX.com](http://GCCSATX.com). Media used by permission of HeartCry Missionary Society. Visit us online at [HeartCryMissionary.com](http://HeartCryMissionary.com). It is just such a wonderful joy to hear missionaries talk about their work. I was at that young lady's table yesterday with my wife, and I just looked at my wife and I said, Don't you wish you were young again? She said, I am.

You're the old guy. I said, Do you remember being out there so young, so naive and idealistic in all the right ways, believing that God can use you? And I so appreciate that question that came from somewhere over here about, Are you going to teach them the Bible? After talking to that young lady for a few minutes at her counter yesterday, we have no worries about that. She will teach them the Bible.

She knows that she's going over there not for temporal, but eternal reasons. You know, you ask a lot of questions about Africa. Africa is a beautiful place, beautiful people.

And maybe you would have thought, well, couldn't they train them or maybe a technical school or something like that? Yes, they could. If there were more people holding the rope, you know, missions.

There are a lot of people who have gone worthy people.

And there is a lot they can do. The problem is on this side. We forget.

We just forget even good Christians, people who love the Lord, truly born again. Just forget. I know a church in South Georgia.

I would say it has about, I don't know, maybe a hundred members. And no doctors, no lawyers, no businessmen, just blue collar. They're averaging about two hundred and fifteen thousand dollars a year that they're giving to missions directly straight to missions.

And I asked him, I said, I've never seen any place like this. Because you walk any place you walk into their humble abode, their buildings. Every hallway is covered in pictures of missionaries.

Every place except the closet in the auditorium, everywhere you go, you're confronted and reminded about the need. There are some of you here tonight that you love the Lord more than I do, much more mature than I am. But you have to admit in the daily routine of life, all the pressures that are on us, we forget.

But we forget about the great commission, the great commission, the great commission. Tonight, I want you to go to Matthew chapter twenty three. Before I read, I would like to pray.

Father, I come before you in the name of your son. And I know that you hear me because of him. Lord, I am aware that nothing happens apart from your decree, your will, your judgment.

Nothing happens apart from the power, the life of the Holy Spirit. And I pray that you would honor your son. By moving in the hearts of your people.

Moving them to you. To the center of your will. Moving them to the world.

To look outside of themselves. To a glorious reason for being alive. The redemption of men.

Father, take away the veil that the world glues upon our eyes every day. The fog. That causes us not to be able to see clearly.

Even the lusts of the flesh. The war against the spirit. That cause us to detour.

Father, set our minds upon Christ and his task. In Jesus name. Amen.

Go to Matthew twenty three. Verse 15. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you travel around on sea and land to make one proselyte.

And when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves. Let me read that again. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you travel around on sea and land to make one proselyte, one convert.

And when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves. I could say the Lord has given me a word for this church. He's given me a word for everyone who's gathered here this evening.

But it would be more accurate to say that a while back reading through this text, I discovered what kind of application it had for me. For me. Being no less or no greater than any other who's been redeemed, I must

believe it also has an application for you and our evangelistic and our missionary endeavors.

Now, from reading this, you would think that I'm going to come at you tonight with a hard word, with a judgmental word, with a condemning word. And I can assure you, I am not. I am going to simply speak to you the things that this text has done for me.

I read it one day, always just looking out from the text, seeing how it applied to the Pharisees, but not seeing how it could apply to me and how it could apply to my people, my Western Christianity, my evangelical community. I assure you, it ended up that day after much heartbreak, it ended up in blessing. And I will assure you that it will do the same for you tonight.

Now, first of all, I want you to look at something. The Pharisees were zealous. Even the Apostle Paul tells us that in the book of Romans.

They had zeal, but they had zeal without knowledge. They were active, very active in their religious duty, and they were very active in their missionary endeavors. Look what it says.

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you travel around on sea and land to make one proselyte. They did. There's not much written on this, but what is written lets us know clearly that these men were about winning converts to themselves.

To themselves. Now, the problem is not that they were active. That's not the problem.

Not that they were doing missions. The problem was found in what they were exporting. What they were doing to make proselytes, what they were teaching and the fruit of their endeavors, what those proselytes were becoming.

And in reality, the proselytes were becoming even worse than the Pharisees themselves. Now, what does that have to do with us? Well, let me ask you some questions. And I don't want this to be about some group outside of here, and I don't want this to be about some Christian sect, and I don't want this to be about the whole group of you.

I'm asking this to each one of us. Every individual. Don't hide in the group.

I want you to ask yourself these questions personally. Especially the men. Do we have, do you have a gospel worth exporting? Do you have a gospel? Do you so clearly understand the gospel? Is your gospel biblical and genuine so that it should be exported to the nations? Or should it be quarantined so that it doesn't infect other nations? I was speaking with one of the dear brothers who's here, who's going out to be a missionary, and we were talking about the great damage that has been done around the world by American evangelicalism.

The great damage that has been done by some missionaries. The great damage that has been done by many itinerant evangelists and short-term missionary endeavors. Where they will go over to a country for a week and run around and come back with stories that 10,000 people were converted.

But the preacher who's left behind in Romania or Zambia or Peru gives a different report. Those 10,000 people, hardly a one of them showed up to church the following Sunday. Or a gospel that is not a true gospel, but something reduced.

Do you want to go to heaven? Would you like to pray this prayer? Welcome to the family of God. Let's write that one down. Do we have a gospel worth exporting? I remember several years ago after the curtain fell in Romania, I was invited to Romania to preach.

And then as I was there, I was in Bucharest, and there's a Baptist church there called the Holy Trinity Church. Very established, very important church in that community. And as I was going up to the platform to speak, I watched the pastors.

And for some reason, it just seemed to me that they weren't too happy that I was there. And so I thought, well, who asked me? How did I get here? Because I really feel like they don't want me here. And so I got up and I said, open up the Bible.

And I preached on the gospel out of Romans chapter 3. Expository message, just word, word, word, word. And afterwards, the total attitude of all those pastors completely changed. They were happy, they were hugging me, they were doing all... I mean, they were just so excited.

And some of them were even broken. And I said, what's going on? And they said, we thought you were just another American coming to tell us that God loved us. We know God loves us.

We thought you were another American coming to tell some stories and get an emotional response from our people. But you actually preached. You actually taught us something about God that we had not understood so clearly.

A young man phoned me one time years ago. And this is going to sound a little hard, but I assure you, I did it in love. He phoned me years ago and he said, Brother Paul, I want to come to Peru and work with you.

I said, why? He said, I just want to give my life away. I said, well, young man, how are you in your studies? Where do you sit theologically? Well, Brother Paul, theology is just... Doctrine is not that important to me. I just want to give my life away.

I said, how are you in preaching? Well, I just want to give my life away. I said, young man, how are you in intercessory prayer? He says, I'm not much of a prayer warrior, but I just want to come there and give my life away. I said, young man, no one in Peru needs your life.

They need God and they need someone who can open up their mouth and tell them about God. Never forget, it is the gospel preached to men. So do we have a gospel worth exporting? Second question.

Now, this is more on a personal level. And I have asked myself this. And it's caused a stammering, at least in my heart.

Sir, sister, dear Christian, do you have a devotional life worth exporting? If you were to go overseas or witness to your neighbor and they came to know Christ, would you want them to have the devotional life that you have? Would you be happy to lead them to where you are devotionally with God, your passion, your consistency and meeting with him and reading his word and praying? Would you and I want for an angel to descend from heaven right now and just reveal? I suppose they know how to use multimedia. Just reveal up there the time that you and I spend with God. Do you can't do you really want to teach the world? To have the same devotion that you have, or should it rather be quarantined so that it doesn't spread any further? Another question.

Do we have a personal godliness worth exporting the evidence? And I know this is it's misunderstood in America. It's not believed in America, but it's biblical. It's true.

It has the greatest preachers throughout the history of Christianity standing behind it. And it is this. Without godliness, no one will see the Lord.

Without holiness, no one will see the Lord. It's not talking about a works based salvation. It's simply saying this, the evidence of justification that your sins have been forgiven, that you stand before God legally declared right with him.

The evidence of that of justification is the continuing ongoing work of sanctification. The God who saved you from the condemnation of sin is now saving you from the power of sin. Would you want your godliness, your personal godliness, holiness packaged in a box and sent to that orphanage? That those children might have the same degree of godliness that you bear.

Have I hurt you? This has hurt me. These are important questions. Again, another question.

Do we have a uniquely Christian lifestyle worth exporting? When someone, if someone, a co-worker who's an unbeliever, a relative, a friend who knows you, would they look at your life and see and bear witness that this life of yours is uniquely Christian? That Christianity, biblical Christianity, it pervades, it passes through, it permeates every aspect of your life. Or are you kind of compartmentalized? You have your religious life over here that's practiced a few hours a week, and then your secular life. Certain things that belong to God, certain things that belong to you.

Certain areas where scripture may have some influence, other areas where the great influence is the world. Do you have a Christian, a lifestyle that is so uniquely Christian that it's worth exporting? Would you want someone to honestly have what you have? You see, in the Christian life, there's no such thing as secular. It's gone.

The idea of a division between secular and sacred, it's all religious language. It has nothing to do with Christianity. In Christianity, the moment you walk into the kingdom of heaven, what do you have? Everything now is sacred.

To quote from the prophets, even the pots and pans are sacred. You see, everything you do, whether it is the most menial task, the most insignificant thing like eating or drinking, you are to do so unto the glory of God. You are to think unto the glory of God, see unto the glory of God, hear and speak unto the glory of God.

Your heart is to be guided by a passion for the glory of God. The working of your hands, the direction of your life, symbolic, your feet, the direction they move. Everything is about Him.

Your marriage, your children, your family, your job, absolutely everything. A uniquely Christian life. Do you have a Christian life worth exporting? Would you want someone to have what you have? Another thing.

Do you have a marriage worth exporting? Would you honestly want that on somebody else? Why do I keep bringing this? Because let's just face it, folks. There's nothing more central in the life of a man and a woman than their marriage. Tells everything about them.

It's humbling, isn't it? Humbling, but true. Would you want this Christian marriage that you live every day with this other person? Would you want that on someone? You say, only on my worst enemy. You see, here's one of the things, and let me share with you about missions, and if there are missionaries out there, let me instruct you on some things.

One of the things that's most overlooked on the mission field is just that. Marriage and family. One of the few times that I have preached, actually, I think of it the only time, that I have preached to a conference of nothing but missionaries and pastors.

It was in a foreign land, and I got up and preached, and I preached on marriage and the family. It was one of the few times that I actually saw the Holy Spirit sweep through a place, and almost everyone in the room was down on the floor, weeping, and could not be consoled. I mean, if your marriage and your family isn't Christian, you can't even be in the ministry.

Do you see that? I don't want to run a rabbit here, but let me just say this. I have become so disillusioned with everything about American Christianity. I just have to admit, you can say that I'm in a crisis point.

How did it all get so confusing, so loud, so noisy, so showy? Not only would I like to, I'm going to say, stop the carnival, I'm getting off. I don't just want to run around the world preaching this stuff. I actually just want to live it.

Can it be done? Yes, it can. Simplicity of Christ. Christianity is about the simplicity of Christ.

Simply seeking out his will, growing in his commands with regard to the aspects of our life. Do you have a marriage worth exporting? Let me ask you this. Do you have a family life worth exporting? In Eastern Europe, many of the pastors have been taught that it is a badge of courage.

It is a badge of, well, not courage, but godliness to neglect your family for the sake of the ministry. Of course, that's that's absolutely absurd. And why is that? Because you can't fulfill God's will in one area of the Christian life by breaking it in another.

In order to win the world, the will of God, I'm going to disobey God with regard to my family. That's like the young girl who says, I'm going to date this lost guy in order to save him. Doesn't work, does it? And so I remember at a conference.

Here's a missionary conference. In Eastern Europe, and it was all the missionaries that we support throughout Eastern Europe. Whole bunch of people there.

And I said, all right. I pulled rank on them. I said, I am the international director of the HeartCry Missionary Society.

And this is the way this is going to work. You are all supported by our missionary society. This is the way it's going to work.

Let's say that you've promised your wife and your children that you're going to take them to the park on a certain Saturday all day. And you're going to play with your children. You're going to spend time with your wife.

But as you're walking out the door at nine in the morning, I show up at your doorstep and I tell you, look, it has taken me 24 hours to fly here. I have very urgent business with you. I need to talk to you about

expanding the ministry and things such as that.

I said, if on hearing those words of mine, you turn around and look at your wife and your children and say. I'm sorry, I can't take you to the park today. Because some urgent things have popped up.

Then know this, you're fired, you're fired. I want you to look at me and I want you to say, Brother Paul, I will do absolutely anything I can do. But I have given my word to my covenant partner, my children.

They have looked forward this for a long time. I will not betray them. One of the most important things on the mission field is to teach about family.

Because the reason why the church is in such a terrible predicament here in the United States is because the families are disintegrating right before our eyes. And no, they're not Christian. Do we really want to export this stuff? And here's a question.

Do we have a church worth exporting, a church worth exporting? Is this the way church ought to be done? In the last year, I have sought out the study of the New Testament and through reading. Lord, if you want me to go out somewhere and start a church, what is it really supposed to look like? Here's the only thing I can tell you. Assume nothing.

Just because it's the way everybody else is doing it and just because it's the way it's always been done in America. Assume nothing. Go back to the text.

We must constantly. We must not only reform, but we must constantly be reforming. We must constantly be scrutinizing our lives, our ministries, our churches and saying, is this so? Or have I just accepted something that that my mentor accepted that he accepted from his mentor and so on and so forth? Is this really what Jesus wants? These are questions I have asked myself.

They're hard questions, but they're good, aren't they? They are. Now, I want us to go to First Timothy chapter four, verse one. But the spirit explicitly says that in latter times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons.

That's frightening. Very frightening. Timothy in the latter times.

Now, let's talk about the latter times for a moment, because there's something you should understand. The latter days began with the death, the resurrection and ascension of the Messiah. We have been in the latter days for two thousand years.

But as time goes on and goes on and goes on, we also see things turning somewhat darker and darker and darker, not on a localized level only, but throughout the entire world. He's basically telling Timothy, Timothy, listen to me. There's a real sense in which.

The world's going to hell in a handbag. The very foundations are being torn down. There is chaos.

There is confusion. There are people who will fall away that will apostatize. People who will identify themselves with Christianity, but they will fall away from genuine Christianity, proving that they never were of us to begin with.

But what's amazing here today in this country, you can apostatize, fall away theologically and ethically, and no one will hardly even notice. As a matter of fact, you can apostatize, go right down the street and

find a Christian church that will take you in. Theology is no longer that important.

We are told doctrine is not necessary and ethically, if anyone even begins to speak about a moral standard, they're labeled legalist. Difficult times, Timothy. He goes on and he says this.

Verse two, by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience, as with a branding iron that within Christianity there would rise up men who could do. Ludicrous things. Horrible, immoral things.

And still be followed. By countless people. Who identify themselves with Christianity? Isn't that amazing? Timothy, there's going to come a time when the lines are so blurred.

That even in the midst of those who identify themselves with Christ, men will rise up who have no conscience whatsoever, whose God is their belly and will mislead many. Timothy, you're going into a war. A terrible war.

He goes on and he says men who forbid marriage and advocated abstaining from food, which God has created to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the truth. Let me give you three things about a false prophet. Now, this is going to get back to missions, I promise you.

Let me give you three things about a false prophet. First of all, their message is not centered in Christ. It won't be all about Christ.

It'll be about little nitpicky things that are exalted. So that those things become the absolute marrow of Christianity. You must do this.

You must not do that. It's not all about Christ. It's all about all sorts of other things other than Jesus.

And when any group. Any Christian group gets under any banner other than Christ alone, they're in trouble. Can God prosper his people? Yes, he can.

But it's not all about prosperity. Can God heal someone according to his will? He can, but it's not all about healing. But let me throw this one at you.

I had a pastor that called me a few years ago from Texas, a dear man. And he said, Brother Paul, I want you to come preach to my church because I believe that many of them are lost. And I said, why do you believe many of your members are lost? He said, because they're homeschoolers.

Now I homeschool. So does he. And I said, brother, you homeschool.

He goes, yes, I do. But any time a group of people make homeschooling their banner rather than Jesus Christ, they have gone astray. Gotcha, didn't I? You see, you're off center unless it's all about Christ, all about him.

Do you know when someone is newly converted and it's not a honeymoon experience? It's just that they haven't lived long enough to grieve the Holy Spirit so much out of their life. But when someone has been newly converted and they may not be able to say things correctly and all this, but they're just glowing. And the only thing that comes out of their mouth is, is, is Jesus, Jesus, Jesus.

That's what kind of missionary we need to be. That's what kind of preacher we need to be. That's what kind of church we need to be.

It's all about Christ. Yeah, we do all sorts of wonderful things in this church. We have all sorts of convictions and ministries.

But none of it is our banner, not even missions. Christ is our banner. Goes on.

Says in verse four, for everything created by God is good and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with gratitude, for it is sanctified by the means of the word of God and prayer. Now, let me share something with you. The extremes.

One extreme is this. Groups of people who are truly swallowed up in legalism. In legalism.

Where everything is about their certain set of rules. They have heaped things upon themselves and other believers that Christ never commanded. And it's death.

But then the other side is. Just Jesus. As though Jesus never taught anything, as though Jesus never commanded anything, as though Jesus never demanded anything.

My dear friend, listen to me in the words of Conrad Murrell, a very wise preacher. He said this walking in the truth is like walking on the edge of a razor blade and you can fall off on either side. You can walk a thousand miles that way and be in false doctrine and a thousand miles that way and be in false doctrine.

But to walk in the truth is like walking on the edge of a razor blade. And we all taught her. Go on.

I love verse five says, well, verse four, for everything created by God is good and nothing is to be rejected. If it is received with gratitude for is sanctified by means of the word of God and prayer. There's three things I want you to notice here that are very, very important.

This will help you in your Christian life. What is what should you do and what should you not do? Well, look at our text is sanctified. You should do that which is sanctified by the word of God.

You can do that which God's authoritative word says you can do. And you better not do what God's authoritative word tells you not to do. I talked about do we have a Christianity worth exporting? I want you to know what was said.

In the book of Judges applies today. As in a way never before in the world, they did what was right in their own eyes. The one thing that I love, well, I love many things about the Puritans.

But one thing I truly appreciate about them not debating whether they went too far or not far enough. I'll tell you this. They were a group of men and a group of women who sincerely desired to conform every aspect of their life to the word of God.

They scrutinized scripture and they sought to apply it in detail to every aspect of their life. We are today we have a Christianity of vagueness. Of fog.

Everything gray. Nothing black. Nothing white.

We don't even consider in making a decision about the things in our life, about how we should talk, how we should walk, what we should wear, what we should listen to. We don't even think about going to the scriptures and say, God, what have you commanded? One of the things of knowing the will of God is that. The authoritative will of God.

Is revealed by the authoritative word of God clearly written, he has shown you, old man, what is good and what the Lord requires of thee. Also, thanksgiving prayer, how can we know? That something is acceptable. That we find it authorized in the word of God and we can prayerfully render thanks unto God for it.

With a conscience undisturbed. You know, in the in Christianity, in the scriptures and also throughout history, the conscience, especially among Baptists, is very important. The conscience.

But let me share with you something. Your conscience must be refined. You know, have you ever gone to one of those really, really expensive restaurants? Every once in a while.

I had an uncle. He's gone on to be with the Lord, but he would take my wife and me to one of those restaurants. One of the first things this country boy hillbilly noticed was in those really expensive restaurants.

They don't give you much food. I mean, it's like. What is this? I am brought up and go into one of those buffets that ought to be named just simply the trough.

Everyone recognizes the food is really no good. It's nasty. And it's no good for you, but you get all of it you want.

And then you go like my wife. She's much more refined than I am. She's sitting there and she knows what fork and everything and she's tasting it.

And I'm just sitting there going, this is rip off. She could appreciate the nuances. I couldn't even read the menu.

Now, what is the problem? Same problem is this. In spite of my upbringing, I love art. And I love the French impressionist, the beauty, love Monet, the water lilies, even love Van Gogh.

He was actually a Baptist. Can you believe it? But a lot of people can look at that. They don't see anything there.

They have to take an art appreciation class. So that their appetite for art will be refined so that they can appreciate what's being painted before them. It's the same way with regard to morality and the will of God.

We have been so influenced by paganism. We can swallow anything. We can't discern anymore what is right and what is wrong.

And that can only be remedied by what? Renewing the mind. In the word of God. And making a break.

Listen, if you're going to follow Christ, you're not only going to have to make a break. With secular culture. You're going to have to make a break with contemporary Christianity.

And you're not only going to have to make a break with contemporary Christianity. You're going to have to make a break with even evangelicalism. Because the term evangelical means nothing nowadays.

I'm not trying to be a rebel. I'm just saying this. We have to get back in the word of God.

And realize that all the things we swallow are not what are to be swallowed. Now, it goes on. Now, we're going to get to the part of this that is just so important.

In chapter 4, verses 1 through 5, we're understanding that this world is disintegrating. It's coming apart at the seams. Havoc is breaking out.

Now, what does he tell Timothy to do? He doesn't tell Timothy to start a missionary organization. He doesn't tell Timothy to get active with some new ministry. Some new way of doing things.

He doesn't tell Timothy to join some coalition. What does he do? He addresses Timothy in this matter. Timothy, the world is going to hell.

There's mass confusion. The devil is running rampant. Now, here's what you must do if you're going to be a force against it all.

You must be godly. One thing. And all how the preachers down through the ages have said that over and over.

For Wesley, who I greatly admire, he said, Give me men who fear nothing but God and sin. Godliness. Today, my great concern was not over the nuances in the Greek.

Today, my great concern was not about delivery. Today, my great concern there in the bed crying out to God was, am I clean? Am I clean? Am I clean? You want to be used of God? Then become usable. Become usable.

Never forget a track that Leonard Ravenhill gave me. Others can. You cannot.

You cannot. But others exercise their Christian freedom in this and that and every other thing. But if you want to be used of God, you cannot.

You cannot go to some of the places they go. You cannot do some of the things they do. You cannot listen to what they listen to.

One of my favorite illustrations. It may be an urban legend, but it works. I don't know.

Can't validate it. But the story of a man who is ending his career is one of the greatest violinists of Europe. Old man playing his last concert.

And as he lays down his fiddle, a young man walks up to him at the same concert and says, Sir, I would give my life to play like you. And he says, son, I have given my life to play like me. Do you see that? St. Timothy godliness.

I have seen missionaries with great promise. Brilliant intellects. Eloquent, even in street preaching.

Never used of God. And I have seen men who you thought, can they even put two sentences together? Can they even read the text coherently and yet mightily used of God? Clean vessel. He says, Timothy, first of all, in verse six, in pointing out these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus.

Pointing out what things? For them not to stray. From Christ. Pointing to Christ.

Warning them about things that will take their eyes off of Christ, that will distract them from Christ. Timothy, tell them about Christ. Point them to Christ.

Everything you do ought to be Christ, Christ, Christ. I believe that is the reason that God so exalted the ministry of Charles Hatton Spurgeon. I do.

Every sermon. Christ. Christ.

Christ. We have to point men to Christ, to Christ. People so sometimes misunderstand because I will preach a righteous standard.

But if I am down on the streets witnessing to a prostitute, I'm not talking to her about the length of her dress. I'm talking to her about Christ. Oh, dear.

Oh, dear, dear, precious little woman. Christ. Christ.

My children, they don't just need rules. They don't just need homeschooling and they don't just need moral character. They need Christ or it's all rubbish.

They must have Christ. Point them to Christ, point them to Christ. But you can't give something you don't have.

You can't instill a passion for Christ if you don't have a passion for Christ. I was preaching at Sam Waldron's church a while back. Ted Chrisman and the others.

Sam Waldron, theologian, a friend of mine. I counted honor to know him. I'm always intimidated when he's in the audience.

I can never preach when he's looking at me. And I was up there and I was just going at it. And I just felt so horrible because he's just so correct and intelligent.

And man, God's just blessed him with such a mind. And I came down and I felt so horrible and I said, I'm sorry. I just, I don't know my passion.

I just exploded. And he said, Paul, when you get back up there tomorrow morning, Explode over across every wall in this building. I don't have his mind.

I don't have his scholarship. I don't have his intellect. But I can explode.

I just love it when when there is so much passion in a man's heart or in a woman's heart or a child's heart for Christ that they almost seem like they're about to have a fit. And that every sermon for them is a sadness at the end because they know no matter from where they have pulled words, it didn't even begin to describe Christ, point them to Christ, pointing out these things to the brethren. You will be a good servant of Christ.

Jesus constantly nourished on the words of faith and the sound doctrine which you have been following. Now, I want us to look at two things here for our missionaries, for our church members, for everyone. Look, it says good servant of Christ.

Jesus, at the beginning of verse six and towards the end, it says nourished on the sound doctrine, which also is good doctrine. Same word. Let me share with you something.

And there's a lot of young people here tonight. So listen to me very carefully. You will not be a good servant of Jesus Christ apart from good doctrine.

You will not. This whole thing about I don't want any of that theology stuff or I don't want any of that doctrine stuff. What you're saying is.

Theology, it's a discourse, a study of God, you're saying, I want all the benefits of God, but I don't want a discourse on him. I don't want to know anything about him. Doctrine means teaching.

I want all the benefits of Christ, but I don't want to hear any teaching. Oh, my dear friend, we grow in grace. One of the ways is by growing in knowledge.

You want to be a good minister. Those who are going out on the mission field, let me tell you what is going to be your greatest hindrance activity. That is going to be your greatest downfall is activity.

And people around you who are active will try to pull you out of the prayer closet and they'll try to pull you out of the study and Satan himself will use them to make you feel guilty for seeking God. Do you know what this world needs? Some men and women who dwell more with God than they do with men. So when they come out, they actually have something to say.

I know this by experience and I know this by failure. Those missionaries going out, listen to me, what you need is you need a couple of hours a day in the word. You need to be in prayer.

You need you. I mean, read the life of praying Hyde of India. Read no about Robert Murray McShane and his godliness and the great revivals that broke out through him and Burns.

Understand the ministry of Hudson Taylor and George Mueller. No, that Spurgeon before he was a praying before he was a preaching man, he was a praying man. Dwell with God.

He's in Timothy. What you need to be is constantly nourished constantly. Let me tell you something.

Those of you missionaries and the like, if you are a man or woman of God and you are ministering in the realm of your gifts filled with the Holy Spirit, then when you minister, virtue will go out from you. Remember, the lady came up and touched Christ and virtue went out from him. Power went out from him, drained from him, for although he was the incarnate God in the flesh, he walked among us as a man in the power of the Holy Spirit.

If you are not constantly nourished, you're not going to be any good. You're just going to be a withered, dried branch with no fruit. You must be constantly nourished.

And that's the one thing missionary that Satan will steal from you. And I'll tell you this. Independent fundamental Baptist are the worst.

They're so active all the time doing so much stuff and they need to stop and they need to be with God, all of us to be with God. That's what we need. And you know it.

You know it. You know the difference. Missionary and layman alike, we all know the difference, don't we? When we are being nourished in the word of God, memorizing scripture, dwelling with Christ, praying, he goes on.

He says this, verse seven, we're going to have to skip through some of this, but have nothing to do with worldly fables fit only for old women. I'm sorry, but that's what it says. On the other hand, discipline yourself for the purpose.

Godliness, there are so many things out there. So many things, so many movements, so many strategies, just so much stuff that can distract you from Christ. Distract you from what is really important, but look what he's telling Timothy.

Timothy. In latter times. Even people who claim to be Christian will fall away from the faith, chaos will be everywhere, it will be as though the very foundations of knowledge and righteousness are collapsing around you.

And here's what I want you to do. To be effective. I want you to discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness.

I hope you can see this in light of a recommendation to a young man that would normally be made in this country in this day and age. Young man, you need to do this. You need to do that.

You need to be a mover and a shaker. You need to get this new system that this other guy used to make his church grow and so on and so forth. No, I tell you today in the United States of America, in 2009, you listen to me.

The world is collapsing. It is falling apart. And young man, if you want to be used of God, missionary, if you want to be used of God, here's what you need to do first and foremost above every other thing.

Discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness. Be godly. Let me show you something.

Just run real quick with me to Matthew. Just hold your place, but run quickly with me to Matthew. Look in chapter five, verse 13.

I want to show you something. If you grasp this, it's really going to help you. He says, you are the salt of the earth.

But if the salt has become tasteless, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. Now, this text is constantly used for missions, missionary activity, evangelism, that we need to come out of the salt shaker and get onto the world, that we need to be a purifying, we need to be a an influence out there in the world for change. It's used to to promote a militant sort of Christianity, a banging of the drums, a marching in the streets, Jesus parades and everything else.

We need to get out there, need to be salt. That's not what he's teaching. What he's saying is this.

Look, you're the salt of the earth. Now, salt has certain characteristics. If that salt loses those characteristics, it's no longer salt, you can even put other good characteristics in its place, in their place, but you're not going to have salt.

Salt has certain characteristics. So if you want to be salt, you must have the characteristics of salt. If you want to be a disciple.

And affect change on this planet, then you must have the characteristics of this salty disciple that affects change on the planet. Now, what are those characteristics? Remember, context. Go back to verse three.

Blessed are the poor in spirit. Blessed are those who mourn. Blessed are the gentle.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness. Blessed are the merciful. Blessed are the pure in heart.

Blessed are the peacemakers. Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness. How are you going to affect change in the United States? Christlike character.

Godliness. Godliness. Organizing a Jesus march is a lot easier.

But that's not what he's talking about. Godliness, you take one girl. Put her in an orphanage, South Africa.

She's godly. God will use her as a fulcrum to move the world. Godliness.

Now, we'll go back and we'll just made it halfway through the sermon, but we'll close here. It says. On the other hand, but have nothing to do with worldly fables.

But on the other hand. He's making a great contrast. Don't bother your mind with all these different things that are coming down the pike, the new fads and the new revelations and everything else.

Don't worry about that. Don't give that attention in contrast to this. Discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness.

Now, let me ask you a question. Do you do that? And if you say yes, then my question is, how do you do that? I sometimes, you know, you watch the Olympics when it comes on. I always feel like if there is evolution and I watch those guys, I'm somewhere down really low on the scale.

I mean, it's just like I'm not even a human being compared to these people. I'm some little paramecium that's called out of some primordial soup or something compared to them. But when I watch them, there's also a sense of sadness.

Why? Do you know that most of them found their sport when they were five and six years old? And let's say that they're competing now and they're 26, 20 years. They've had no life at all. None.

Before school, if they were if they were able to stay in school before school as a little kid, they were up at four in the morning and they were training and then off to school. And then after school training and in the night training and on the weekends, training and training and training for 20 solid years. And the sprinters are the ones that I most weep for.

For a race that doesn't last 10 seconds. And then when it's over. It's over.

For. Twenty years. For a medal.

Now, I admire those athletes and I'm not taking anything away from them, but here's my point. Just listen to this. Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize run in such a way that you may win? Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things.

They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, not even a gold medallion, but just a little wreath placed on their head. But we an imperishable one. Therefore, I run in such a way as not without aim.

I box in such a way as not beating the air, but I discipline my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified. Let me ask you a question. If I handed out a sheet of paper right now and had you to write down your training program for godliness now, not the one

that you want or the one you're dreaming about.

If I had you write down right now, write down for me your training program. Would it be a source of great conviction? Could I say that you are running aimlessly? I marvel. At the devotional life of Robert Murray McShane.

I marvel at his journals, his memoirs, I marvel at. He was he died when he was, I think, twenty eight. Yet used in tremendous revivals, him and Burns.

He and Burns, I'm sorry. And yet the preoccupation of his life was Christ likeness. To be godly.

And if you ever heard of Frank Lombok. Nobody, it's because there's nobody. Is there anybody here from the Philippines? No one.

That's why you haven't heard of Frank Lombok. You go to the Philippines right now, mentioned Frank Lombok and many people still know who he is. He taught the Philippines to read.

He taught the Philippines to read and he taught the Philippines to read so that he could then the Philippines Filipinos could read the Bible. That's why he taught them to the Philippines is a big place, a lot of islands. If you can ever find his journal, I found it in a used bookstore.

It may be the only one I don't know left. Do you know what his greatest goal in life, the greatest goal in life of Frank Lombok? Now, missionaries, listen to me. His greatest goal in life was to pass one entire day.

In uninterrupted thoughts about Christ. That was the goal of his life. Have you ever heard the saying? You're so heavenly minded, you're no earthly good.

Well, I think it would be better to say you're so earthly minded, you're no heavenly good. Now, here was a man practical. He taught an entire people to read so they could read the Bible.

But that wasn't his goal. His goal was to pass one day of uninterrupted thoughts with regard to Jesus Christ. A godly man.

A godly woman. A godly child. Godliness.

I would that you would be wild for missions. I would hope that you would be active in your family, in your local church and missions, that you would be all those things. But all those things is nothing.

There are nothing but hollow, empty vapors. Apart from godliness. It's going to take.

Men and women. Of exceptional Christ likeness. To be used.

In this day and age. You say, well, Brother Paul, I'm not there. Well, dear person, I'm not either.

But this is what we do. Laying aside. Past failures.

We march on. We strive. We carry one another.

We pray for each other. We push toward this great mark. To know him, to be conformed to him.

I do not believe in like some young people. I know what they're thinking. They think they see someone preaching that's being used of God.

And this is what they're thinking. He reached some spiritual level. And because he reached that spiritual level, God's now using him.

That is not true. I don't think there are any spiritual levels. There's just the day to day growth chasing after Christ.

Two steps forward. One step back. One step forward.

Four steps back. Six steps forward. But pressing on.

I love to meet the brothers in northern Peru, up in the mountains. In the providence of Pura. Oh, how God has planted like five, six hundred churches in the last thirty years.

Through these mountain men who wear sandals on their feet made out of thrown away truck tires. Amazing poverty. And yet the power of God in such a way.

One of the greatest privileges in my life was to be among them. But it's amazing. You're going up and you're coming down a mountain after preaching.

And maybe some believers coming up the mountain. And you meet them. Hermano, como estas? How are you doing? This is what they say.

Avanzando, hermano. Avanzando. Missionaries.

That's your greatest task. Advance in godliness and God will advance everything else. First things first.

Let's pray. Father, I pray. You would take this and use it.

For your glory. For the help of your people. And for the countless multitudes who have never heard.

In Jesus name. Amen.

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