

## **Sermon or Lesson: 1 Timothy 4:9-11** (NIV based)

[Lesson Questions included]

TITLE: Godliness Earns Extra Benefits In Eternity

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READ: 1 Timothy 4:9-11, with vv.6-8 for context

### BACKGROUND:

- - In the first part of 1 Timothy chapter 4, a warning is being given that churches are being infiltrated and infused with teachers of false doctrines who deliberately strive to lead people away from what God has established and approves of. (from vv.1-5)
- - In prevention and response, good ministers are to regularly teach their congregants the characteristics of false teachings and the tactics of false teachers that are occurring in their church or ministry. (from v.6)
- - To counter the intentions and activities of false teachers, a main and beneficial objective is for believers to learn and follow "the truths of the faith", which lead to godliness - a quality that produces value and benefits for its possessor both "in the present life and the life to come". (from vv.6-8)
- - Next, let's study what else God has to say about godliness.

### v.9 - READ

[Lesson Question: Discover and develop a description of the characteristics of what is being declared in this verse.]

SECTION POINT: God personally guarantees that godliness in one's life will forever retain its value and produce benefits for its possessor.

### **"This is a trustworthy saying"**

- - A direct and specific distinction is being made here in verse 9, to highlight the profound and beneficial truth that was stated in previous verse 8, "For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come".
- - This truth is "trustworthy" because it is a reality that spans across time, from the present forward into and endlessly through out eternity.
- - Godliness has value for all things in one's life, throughout all of present and future time.
- - By implication then, godliness produces value for its possessor because God ordains this to be so and He makes this to be so - continuously through all eternity.
- - In His "faithfulness", God Himself makes the principle within this saying and its ramifications trustworthy, valuable, and beneficial for its possessor henceforth forever. (Strong's #4103)

### **"that deserves full acceptance"**

- - Because this principle and its ramifications are guaranteed and implemented by God eternally, this principle "deserves full acceptance".

- - Every person who puts godliness into activation and implementation in their life will benefit and be blessed, starting in the present and continuing on throughout all of eternity.

- - And godliness is "suitable" to every person, being fully compatible to every human - even in fullness or comprehensively in every area of one's life. (Strong's #0514)

- - So, putting godliness into effect in one's life is an activity that is "worthy" and deserving of full, unreserved, and continuous implementation. (Strong's #0514)

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## v.10 - READ

[Lesson Question: How do each of the concepts in this verse motivate believers to pursue godliness?]

SECTION POINT: Believers are motivated to pursue godliness because God lives eternally, and He provides salvation for those who believe in His Son, Jesus Christ.

### **"and for this we labor and strive"**

- - Believers are to "labor and strive" "towards and into" achieving godliness in their life. (Strong's #1519 (omitted in NIV))

- - The ultimate goal, then, is to establish full godliness, comprehensively and solely reigning in every aspect of one's life.

- - From experience, we all can attest that godliness takes much work and "struggle" to establish in an aspect of one's life, let alone consistently maintaining it thereafter and comprehensively at that. (Strong's #0075)

- - Nevertheless, we "work hard" at moving toward and establishing godliness in our life, even though we may grow weary in our personal battle against our own sinful desires, passions, and shortcomings. (Strong's #2872)

- - Over time, with dedication, devotion, self-discipline, and God's help, we can progressively increase the godliness in our life; this is why we are rightly instructed in verse 7 to "train yourself to be godly". (Note: The theological term for this process is called 'progressive sanctification'.)

### **"that we have put our hope in the living God"**

- - Besides having both present and eternal value and benefit (as stated in verse 8), another motivation for pursuing godliness in one's life is because everything that exists resides in the hands of "the living God".

- - God lives eternally, and coupled with His divine nature, gives Him the ability to carry out everything He says, even at any time in eternity future.

- - So, when God states that godliness in our life "has value" and "holds promise for" "the life to come" (v.8), then clearly He has the means and certainly He will make this happen.

- - Therefore, people are wise to "set their hope, their expectations, their confidence" in the divine God who lives. (Strong's #1679)

- - And people are even wiser to prepare for a future that is based upon and completely dependent upon the divine living God.

### **"who is the Savior of all men, and especially of those who believe"**

- - The divine living God offers to humans the way He has provided to "deliver" them into spending eternity with Him, in His presence, rather than spending eternity

separated from Him in the place of punishment for their sins. (Strong's #4990; 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9)

- - When each person places his or her faith and trust in God's way of being delivered, the sacrifice of His Son, Jesus the Christ, on the cross to take the penalty for his or her sins, then that now-believing person is "especially or particularly" granted delivering salvation. (Strong's #3122; Romans 3:22-25a)

- - Essentially then, the divine living God brings into His presence each of those believing persons, and He further blesses those who have pursued and successfully lived in godliness during their time on the earth.

- - This impending future state of existence, being in the presence of the divine living God Himself and being delivered from the default and deserved eternal punishment for sins, are some more motivations that true believers "trust in, rely on, and adhere to". (AMP)

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## v.11 - READ

[Lesson Question: It is obvious why these things about godliness should be taught, but why should they be commanded?]

SECTION POINT: Godliness urgently needs to be implemented now, in this life, in order to accumulate blessings and benefits in the eternal future.

- - These declarations, promises, and activities by God of the impending future that He says He will certainly make into realities are basic, foundational, and important truths of the faith.

- - Therefore, these truths of the faith likewise (v.6) are to be intentionally and accurately "taught".

- - Logically, people need to hear these truths now in order to be able to prepare for what God says is certainly coming in the eternal future.

- - Matter of fact, these truths are so important and vital to be heard now, in the current present, that God instructs that they not only be taught now but also that they be "commanded", being "directed, and imposed with authority and emphasis". (from Strong's #3853 and AHD - 'enjoin')

- - This advance urgency indicates that God very earnestly wants to heap and lavish blessings on each of us, particularly in the eternal future, if we would implement godliness in our life now, in this life.

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BIG IDEA: Every true believer can accumulate extra benefits and blessings to be received and enjoyed in the eternal future if they earn them by implementing godliness in their life now, in this life.

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## APPLICATIONS:

- - Are you preparing for what comes in the next life, eternity? If so, how?

- - For those of you who are true believers, are you working on accumulating extra benefits and blessings in eternity? If so, how? And if not, why not?

- - Do you see that there exists now, in this life, a potential for believers to earn extra benefits and blessings that retain their value in the next life?
  - - Are you taking advantage of this potential, while it is available to you now?
  - - Or are you essentially letting it pass right on by you?
  - - When each of us believers personally arrive in heaven, will you become overjoyed forevermore because you have accumulated so many extra benefits and blessings? (cf. 1 Peter 4:13)
  - - Or will you be thereafter plagued with gnawing regret for having ignored or missed the offer in this life to accumulate such great benefits and blessings that last eternally? (cf. 1 Corinthians 3:11-15; Matthew 6:19-20)
  - - Now that we have studied the eternal value that godliness has, what worldliness or sinfulness in your life seems so important or so beneficial or so valuable to you only in this life that it displaces eternally valuable godliness?
  - - Is that wise to displace something that has great eternal value with something that has temporal and self-defeating value? (cf. Genesis 25:27-34; Matthew 16:26)
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[Additional Lesson Questions to ponder (optional, if time allows):

- - If implementing godliness in one's life now will earn extra benefits in eternity, then what else can a believer do now to earn extra benefits in eternity?
  - - If it is possible to do things now that earn extra benefits to be received and enjoyed in eternity, then is it possible to do things now that lose benefits that would have been received and enjoyed in eternity? If so, how?
  - - In what form do you speculate that extra benefits and blessings will be in eternity, that they would retain their value for all of eternity?]
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