

The Graces of Godliness

Psalms 4:1-8

“Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness! You have relieved me in my distress; have mercy on me, and hear my prayer. ² How long, O you sons of men, will you turn my glory to shame? How long will you love worthlessness and seek falsehood? ³ But know that the LORD has set apart for Himself him who is godly; the LORD will hear when I call to Him. ⁴ Be angry, and do not sin. Meditate within your heart on your bed, and be still. ⁵ Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the LORD. ⁶ There are many who say, “Who will show us any good?” LORD, lift up the light of Your countenance upon us. ⁷ You have put gladness in my heart, more than in the season that their grain and wine increased. ⁸ I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; for You alone, O LORD, make me dwell in safety.”

I want to speak to you today on “The Graces of Godliness.” Now when I speak about “godliness,” I am making reference to our **life-style. Things in us** that are becoming as a Christian. **Things about us that reveal God.** Things about us that show people around us that **we do indeed know Jesus Christ as our personal Savior!**

Now folks, we are instructed to live godly! Hebrews 12:14 says we are “pursue holiness.” 1 John 3:7 reminds us, “He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous.” I know from **experience**, but I know from a far more authority than that, **I know from the Word of God.** I know that when you **live right**, **I know when you do right.** I know when **godliness is the hall mark of your life** – God blesses your life with the “Graces of Godliness.”

Out of Psalms 4 there are 8 “Graces of Godliness” that will cause you to get closer to God, to be more of what you ought to be, and less of what we have been. Verse 3 of our text says, “The Lord has set apart for Himself him who is godly.” That simply means **God is looking for those that are “godly” to fellowship with!**

Therefore, the first “grace of godliness” is God will hear your prayer. Verse 3 says, “The LORD will answer when I call to him.” If there were no other reasons to live godly, it is worth it to maintain our prayer privileges! The Bible gives us this warning in Psalm 66:18, “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear.”

When we pray, we must start out on the authority of the Word of God. And when you have come to the Father in the name of Jesus, the first thing you ought to do is to confess your sin, as seen in 1 John 1:9, “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” Child of God, prayer is a time of fellowship with God, and is a “grace of godliness.”

The second “grace of godliness” that you will have peace of mind. Verse 1 says, “You have relieved me in my distress.” In my 50+ years of ministry I have come to realize very few people in this world are at peace with themselves! Most people carry a high degree of stress, of anxiety, and tension in their lives.

God has promised peace of mind because it is a fundamental need of your life. Jesus says three times in John 20, “Peace be with you.” And in John 14:27 He says this, “I am leaving you with a gift – peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is not fragile like the peace the world gives. So do not be troubled or afraid.”

I need to remind you that peace has nothing to do with problem-free living. If you have to wait until all your problems are solved to be at peace, you are never going to be at peace. Because Jesus said, “In the world you will have problems.” **You are going to have problems – count on it.** The truth is - much of your life is going to be marked by some kind of conflict. But God is offering you did you peace of mind in spite of the conflict?

The third “grace of godliness” is the ability to forgive. Verse 4 says, “Be angry, and do not sin.” Let me just remind you – you are

going to get your feeling hurt! Ephesians 4:31-32 says, "Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of evil behavior. Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you."

Listen very carefully – unforgiveness is a trap of the enemy! Those who have been offended and are unwilling to forgive have fallen into a trap and are held prisoner to do the devil's will. Even more alarming, many times they are unaware of their captivity!

No matter what the scenario is, we can divide all unforgiving people into two major categories: 1) those who have been treated unjustly or 2) those who believe they have been treated unjustly. Now, listen carefully, people in the second category believe with all their hearts that they have been wronged. Often their conclusions are drawn from inaccurate information. Or their information was accurate, but their conclusion is distorted. Either way they have been hurt, and their understanding has been darkened. And the result is that they judge by assumption, by appearance and by hearsay.

Ladies and gentlemen, the Word of God is simply teaching us this truth: If we do not deal with our own unforgiveness, it will produce even more fruit of sin, such as bitterness, anger and resentment. These attitudes reduce or even remove tenderness, creating a loss of sensitivity. Therefore, we are hindered in our ability to hear God's voice. Our accuracy to see the things of God is darkened. This is a perfect setting for deception.

The fourth "grace of godliness" is a clear conscious. Look at verse 4, "Meditate within your heart on your bed, and be still." There is nothing worse than a guilty conscious! Look at the words, "on your bed." Ladies and gentlemen, your "bed," can be the most miserable place in the world, or it can be the most blessed place in the world! Have you ever noticed how, when things are not right, you just toss and turn for what seems like hours on end? And many times instead

of instead of regulating our “heart” with God, we blame it on the cucumbers or on the pizza?

But when your “heart” is right with God, and your life is clean, and your conscious doesn’t condemn you, there is stillness in your life! Man, you are not frustrated. You don’t have any anxiety. You don’t worry. You don’t fret. There is calmness in your heart that cannot be explained.

In a world of turmoil, one of the “graces of godliness” is stillness and contentment! In other words, contentment makes you relax in the pleasures of the living God!

The fifth “grace of godliness” is a great faith. Verse 5 says, “Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the LORD.” Listen, if you live godly, you don’t mind offering a sacrifice of praise. If you have been living godly, you don’t mind lifting up your voice in praise.

Let me tell you something – one of the reasons our faith is weak is because our life is weak. You don’t get a great faith and then develop a great life. If you want a great faith to develop, then you start being obedient to the Will and Word of God!

The sixth “grace of godliness” is gladness of heart. Verses 6-7 says, “There are many who say, “Who will show us any good?” LORD, lift up the light of Your countenance upon us. You have put gladness in my heart, more than in the season that their grain and wine increased.”

Child of God, if you want to get happy, then just get godly! You don’t know what living is until you walk at peace with God! You don’t know what living is until there is nothing between you and your Savior! There is nothing like a glad heart. The Bible says in Proverbs 17:22, “A glad heart does good like a medicine.”

The seventh “grace of godliness” is peace and rest. Verse 8 says, “I will both lie down in peace, and sleep.” Now folks, don’t misunderstand what I am saying! I am not saying, **if you don’t sleep it is a spiritual problem!** I am not saying that at all – **but it probably is!**

I am not discounting there are certain physical problems that cause sleeplessness. But, more often than not, **when you live godly,** when **you have gotten rid of everything that you know is wrong,** you lay yourself “down in peace, and sleep.”

And last “grace of godliness” is this - there is safety in your circumstances. Verse 8 says, “For You alone, O LORD, make me dwell in safety.” The Greek word for “salvation” is “soteria” and it means, “deliverance, preservation, and safety.” Psalm 139:1-3 says, “O LORD, you have examined my heart and know everything about me. You know when I sit down or stand up. You know my thoughts even when I’m far away. You see me when I travel and when I rest at home. You know everything I do.” The Bible reminds us in Psalm 37:23, “The LORD directs the steps of the godly. He delights in every detail of their lives.” **Why? Because you are God’s special property!**

My friend, living godly is for your sake, it is for your benefit!
Stop avoiding the issue as say “Yes” to the Lordship of Christ.

If you have never been saved, why not today?

Please stand for prayer.

Father,

Your Word is true. Give me the courage to live godly in an ungodly world. I can because I am “more than a conqueror through Christ who love me! In Jesus’ name. Amen.