

SERMON SERIES: The Best Summer Ever

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DATE: July 28, 2024

Sermon Title

“Godliness”

Introduction

This week we continued our series called Best Summer Ever. During this series, we will explore the passage of 2 Peter 1:5-8 to help us close the gap between who we are now and who Christ is calling us to be. This week’s focus is *Godliness*. The greatest mysteries in our lives comes in two questions: Is Jesus worth following, and how does Christ live in me? These two mysteries, once solved, allow us to pursue godliness in our lives and in our faith.

- What are your favorite mystery stories? (Scooby-Doo, Sherlock Holmes, True Crime, Conspiracy Stories, etc.)

Seek the Word

- Romans 5:8 says, “But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” James explained that this is the gospel summed up in a sentence, and it is a key aspect of solving one of those mysteries. How does this verse show us why Jesus is worth following?
- James told us that the degree to which Christ lives in us depends on the degree to which we follow the leading of the Holy Spirit. With that in mind, read Ephesians 4:21-24. What does this verse teach us about the importance of the transformational power of the Holy Spirit in our lives?

Go Deeper

The Apostle Paul, after his transformation on the road to Damascus, lived a life fully sold out for the Gospel of Jesus Christ. So much so that it put him in situations and circumstances that he would have much rather avoided. But instead of complaining, he has a different perspective. Read Galatians 2:20, and then talk about these questions: How much are you letting Christ dictate your actions in your life? Are you focused more on your behavior, or on letting Christ live in and through you?

Talk About It

- It is easy for us to think that as long as we try really hard, we will eventually get closer to godliness. But James reminded us that godliness is not about trying harder, it is about letting God transform you. What are some areas in your life that you are keeping God from transforming? How can you open those areas up to the redeeming power of God to put you on the path of godliness?
- Read James 2:14-19. In this passage, James is repeating a common theme in the New Testament, that our belief in who Jesus is is simply not enough, for even the demons believe. Where are you at right now? Do you just believe in Christ, or have you engaged in the process of living for Christ through your actions? What are some steps you can take to begin moving towards living for Christ?
- Take some time to think forward in your life. If starting today, you began to live for Christ even more than you are now, what do you think your life would look like? What areas, emotions, relationships, etc, would be affected and improved by your focused pursuit to live like Christ and have Christ live in you?

Wrap Up

Reminder: Godliness is the decision to live for Christ, and for Christ to live in me. There is no amount of effort or good-natured action that can bring us closer to godliness in our faith. It is simply making a choice. Choosing to live for Christ and accepting Christ to live in you is all that is necessary to live a life of godliness. It is not necessarily an easy choice, especially with the fear and temptation in our lives. But when we make that commitment, and pursue godliness with extreme vigor, we can see our faith and our lives benefit tremendously through the love and grace of God.

Challenge: Identify 1 or 2 areas of your life where you are not living for Christ. These could be in your job, a relationship, with your finances, or maybe even your faith. Once you have identified those, ask God for strength and wisdom in living for Christ in those areas. And once you have prayed that, strive to live a life of godliness in those areas this week. Keep a keen eye out for what changes in you and the people around you as you do so, and thank God for his love and grace.

From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him. "You do not want to leave too, do you?" Jesus asked the Twelve. Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.