

A Passion for the Works of God

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❖ Recap

➤ Previous Sermons:

- A Prayer for the Fullness of God
- A Passion for Holiness: A Call to Repentance: Love of World Drives out Love for God
- A Passion for Jesus – Paul counted all as loss for Christ

❖ Intro

➤ Today: A Passion for the Works of God

- We have prayed for God to work in us.
- Prayed that we might understand the love of His Son Jesus Christ
- Prayed that we might be filled with all the fullness of God
- **Hopefully most of us have stopped and thought about our lives...**
 - And we have turned from the things that are breaking our fellowship with God
- **Hopefully we are beginning to see the Preciousness of Jesus...**
 - We see that He is the goal
 - To know Him and Love Him above all things...
- **As these things begin to line up in our lives...**
 - We will be about doing the Works of God.
 - The reason many of us are not about the works of God...
 - Is because we **do not see Jesus as worth it...**
 - ◆ **Waaaay** down deep, that is the **essence** of our disobedience
 - ◆ Jesus is not greater for us.
- **There is a great Evil that God's people can do...**
 - In the context I am going to share it was the people of Israel
 - Not Christians who have the Spirit of God living inside of them
 - **So, I do not see this happening to the extent it happened to Israel for the Christian**
 - But, I do think it happens... and it is something we must be **aware** of.
 - **Jeremiah 2:11-13** ¹¹Has a nation changed its gods, even though they are no gods? But my people have changed their glory for that which does not profit. ¹²Be appalled, O heavens, at this; be shocked, be utterly desolate, declares the Lord, ¹³for my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water.
 - **Notice what has happened here...**
 - ◆ 2 evils happened...
 - 1) They forsook God, the fountain of living waters
 - 2) They created for themselves new ways and gods
 - **God has placed inside all of us a desire and hunger for God**
 - ◆ Man forsakes God to find their own ways to Him
 - **Essentially what we see happening here is:**

- ◆ They lost their hunger for God... and they replaced it with something else
- ◆ Does this sound familiar?

- **People that are not Hungry for God, for Jesus**
 - Will not be hungry to do **good works** for Him...

➤ Define what I mean by Works of God

- Those things you do in response to God's grace in your life.
 - These are habits you form for **fellowship** with God and his people.
 - These are things you **do** because you love God and people.

➤ Practically I am speaking of what we call

- Spiritual Disciplines And Acts of Good Works

❖ We Are Called to do Good Works

- Ephesians 2:10 For we are his workmanship, **created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand**, that we should **walk** in them.
 - expound
- Colossians 1:10¹⁰ so as to **walk** in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully **pleasing** to him: **bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God**
 - expound
- 2 Thessalonians 2:17 comfort your hearts and **establish** them in every good work and word.
 - Paul's Prayer for this church that God would do this in them
- Titus 2:14¹⁴ who gave himself for us to **redeem** us from all **lawlessness** and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are **zealous** for good **works**.
 - expound
- 2 Corinthians 9:8 And **God is able** to make all **grace** abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may **abound** in every good work.
 - expound

❖ The Spiritual Disciplines And Good Works

- There are so many... But let's focus on just a few for time sake...
 - Hopefully you will see that you can branch out in many ways from each of these...
- Three Most Important of the Spiritual Disciplines
 - Hearing from God (Bible Reading and Meditation)
 - Speaking to God (Prayer)
 - Being With God's People
 - It is from these three that you can be prepared and ready to be full of good works...
- Solitude is considered another Spiritual Discipline...
 - But not solitude for the sake of being alone...
 - Because in reality you are not alone... You are with God.
 - This is the purpose of Biblical Solitude...
 - I mention this one and highlight it because solitude is the greenhouse for:
 - Hearing from God (Bible Reading and Meditation)
 - Speaking to God (Prayer)
- Let's Look at some Spiritual Disciplines and good Works separately
 - We can define it and show its importance
- Hearing from God (Bible Reading and Meditation)
 - Defined:
 - Importance:
- Speaking to God (Prayer)

- Defined:
- Importance:
- Being with God's People
 - Defined:
 - Importance:
- Journaling
 - Defined:
 - Importance:
- Fasting
 - Defined:
 - Importance:
- Evangelism
 - Defined:
 - Importance:
- Giving
 - Defined:
 - Importance:
- Serving
 - Defined:
 - Importance:

❖ Why Don't We do Spiritual Disciplines?

- Our hunger for God has been diminished.
- Remember what happened to Israel... they forsook the fountain of living waters
- They had lost their hunger and thirst for God
- This is the essence of our problem...
- Losing a hunger for God is the essence of evil

❖ Let's Look at Our Text and How We are to be about our Christian Walk

- 1 Timothy 4:6-11 In pointing out these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, *constantly* nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine which you have been following. 7 But have nothing to do with worldly fables fit only for old women. On the other hand, discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness; 8 for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and *also* for the *life* to come. 9 It is a trustworthy statement deserving full acceptance. 10 For it is for this we labor and strive, because we have fixed our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers. 11 Prescribe and teach these things.

❖ Background:

- Paul is writing to a young pastor named timothy... he is giving him instructions...
 - Don't think you are off the hook because he is a pastor
 - Don't say... this is for ministers, not just regular church goers...
 - No... it is for the Christian... Because we see Paul telling timothy to do these things
 - As an example for others to follow
 - Paul even tells churches to mimic how he does things...

❖ Be Disciplined:

- *discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness; 8 for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come.*

➤ **Let me ask you this question?**

- How important is physical fitness?
- Ask a doctor. What would they say...
- It is SO important right...? To keep the body healthy
- It is a great preventative to future sickness
- The health and fitness industry is growing by leaps and bounds...
- Paul does not diminish the importance of bodily discipline... And I will not either...
- He just compares it to something greater...
- So... without diminishing or lessening the importance of taking care of the body
- Consider what Paul says about Spiritual discipline

➤ **discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness;**

▪ **What does He mean by Discipline?**

• **At the end of the verse he redefines what he means...**

- ◆ After saying, discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness...
- ◆ He goes on to say... **it is for this we labor and strive**

• **Labor and Strive....** It seems that this is what he has in mind here by discipline

▪ **Discipline in the greek means: To Train or Exercise**

- And obviously... you all know this takes effort... it takes hard work...
- This is why he says labor and strive
- **Notice what the New American Commentary says about these two words...**

◆ (I use it because I cannot say it better: So let's give them credit)

- ◆ "The verb for "labor" (*kopiaō*) suggests a strenuous toil that saps energy. Godliness demands energy! Hiebert notes that the word for "strive" presents "the picture of the athlete putting the last ounce of his energy into the race in order victoriously to reach the goal." The use of a Greek present tense for both verbs suggests a continual outpouring of this energy. White says: "A consciousness that we are in a harmonious personal relation with the living God lifts us into a sphere in which labor and striving have no power to distress us."

➤ **Paul makes this point in 1 Corinthians**

- **1 Corinthians 9:24-27** ²⁴ Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run **that you may obtain** it. ²⁵ Every athlete **exercises self-control** in all things. They do it to receive a **perishable** wreath, but we an **imperishable**. ²⁶ So I do not run **aimlessly**; I do not box as one beating the air. ²⁷ But I **discipline** my **body** and **keep** it under **control**, lest after **preaching** to others I myself should be **disqualified**.

- What a picture... this should be our attitude
- But you may say... I am not a preacher... I do not preach to anyone...
- Why not? Were you not saved by the same Jesus as Paul?
- Were you not commanded to Go by this same Jesus
- Paul is teaching the Corinth church to be like this...
- You are to be about the Works of God

➤ **for bodily discipline is only of little profit,**

▪ **So here Paul is putting it into perspective.**

▪ **We know from experience and from modern science how important taking care of the body is**

- Right? Would Paul be contradicting it?
- No, Of Course not, He is putting it into perspective

▪ **Let me illustrate it to you...**

- **How much do good parents love their children?**
 - ◆ Oh my... it is hard to describe...

- ◆ Some of you that do not have children can never understand until you have them
- **But, do you know your love for your children should be like hate**
- ◆ In comparison to your love for Jesus???
- ◆ Our love for God should be so far above everything else that it is like hate...

▪ **This is what Paul is saying here...**

- It is of little profit compared to Spiritual Discipline...
- THEN IT MUST BE HUGELY IMPORTANT!!!!!!! Bodily Disciplines are great!

➤ **but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and *also* for the *life* to come.**

- **Bodily Discipline** is for now only... And when you die you die... It is for the present life
- **Discipline for godliness** is profitable for all things... and it is profitable for the life to come
- **Being Disciplined for Godliness or Spiritual Disciplines**
 - They make an **impact** now in your life and the life of others
 - But they also impact the **future** for you and others...
- **Walking in Discipline with God today**
 - Helps you make an impact into eternity
 - Maybe you help turn someone away from darkness and toward Jesus
 - In all, you bring glory to God
 - You are storing up treasures for yourself in heaven

❖ **Why are we to be Disciplined for the purpose of godliness**

- **For it is for this we labor and strive, because we have fixed our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers.**

➤ **Because our Hope is in God... our Hunger is in God**

➤ **Therefore we labor and strive....**

- We have fixed our Hope on the Living God...
- We have set it on God
- Our Hope is in nothing else...

➤ **Because we have a savior ...**

- If there is anything that should provoke us to discipline ourselves...
- To labor and strive for God
- It is because of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ
- He has saved you from your sins... He has brought you back to God...
- Therefore we discipline ourselves!!!

❖ **Invitation**

➤ **Admit to God your areas of weakness...**

- Ask God to help you Discipline yourself

➤ **This is not an overnight fix... this is a growth in maturity ok**

- You will not wake up and start doing it all tomorrow...
- But make yourself available to God and his leading

➤ **Hebrews 12:1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,**

➤ **Confess and Ask God for His Help...**

- Then start with one thing!