

Godliness Is Profitable

Have you ever wondered what profit or advantage there is to being a Christian? The rest of the world lives any way they want and you live by God's word. What profit is there in doing this? Paul wrote that "godliness is profitable" (1 Timothy 4:7-8). Let's consider five areas of our life that profit from godliness.

First, we will profit materially. We will follow the godly principles that involve a good work ethic (1 Thessalonians 4:11-12), honesty (2 Corinthians 8:21), and saving (John 6:12-13).

Second, we will profit physically. We will follow the godly principles that exercise self-control over our mind and body (1 Corinthians 9:27) and we will use our body for God's use, not for harmful substances (1 Corinthians 6:18-20).

Third, we will profit mentally. We will follow the godly principles that lead to a happy state of mind (Philippians 4:8).

Fourth, we will profit socially. We will follow the godly principles that lead to peaceful actions with others (Romans 12:18-19; 14:19).

Fifth, we will profit spiritually. We will follow the godly principles that lead to a right relationship with God and all spiritual blessings (Ephesians 1:3): forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38; 3:19), answered prayer (Hebrews 4:15-16; 1 John 5:14), inner strength (Ephesians 3:16), a way of escape (1 Corinthians 10:13), and God's providential care (Hebrews 13:5-6). We will also get "the life that is to come" – eternal life – heaven (Mark 10:28-30; 1 John 2:25).

Yes friend, there's profit in being a faithful Christian. Be one today! - *Chris Reeves*

Sentence Sermons

- Complete trust in the Lord puts anxiety at rest.
- Experience is the teacher who gives the test first, then the lessons later.
- While looking at the obvious it is easy to overlook the significant.
- To miss God's will is to sin.
- A task worth doing and friends worth having makes a life worth living.

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For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.
- 2 Corinthians 10:3-4 -

“You have heard that it was said, ‘AN EYE FOR AN EYE, AND A TOOTH FOR A TOOTH.’ But I say to you, do not resist an evil person; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. If anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, let him have your coat also. Whoever forces you to go one mile, go with him two. Give to him who asks of you, and do not turn away from him who wants to borrow from you”

- Matthew 5:38-42 -

Here, in this portion of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus is dealing with personal payback (see also Luke 6:29-30).

Verse 38. The Old Testament law legislated a “punishment fits the crime” (Latin, *lex taliones*) approach to law-breaking (Exodus 21:24; Leviticus 24:19-20; Deuteronomy 19:21). Its aim was to provide (1) equitable justice and (2) a control over personal vengeance or vendetta. Its execution was by a court of law, not an individual. Its punishment was often assessed monetarily, not literally (Exodus 21:30-32).

Verse 39. By Jesus’ day, some

Jews had perverted this legislation to mean that you could bypass the courts and personally retaliate against the wrong-doer (Leviticus 19:18).

Verse 40-42. Other Jews had perverted this legislation to mean that you should do only what is your duty or what is required, no more (note that Roman soldiers had authority at this time to “compel” [Gr. impress] civilians into service (Matthew 27:37).

Jesus is not teaching here that evil, wrong-doing, crimes, or injustices are to go unpunished (John 18:19-23; Acts 16:37; 25:11; Rom. 13:3-4). Jesus is not teaching that sin is to go unpunished (Galatians 2:11-14).

What Jesus is teaching is that one must abolish the desire to retaliate or seek vengeance for personal satisfaction. Jesus gives three illustrations of personal wrong-doing: insults, assaults on property, and forced labor. Jesus is teaching his followers to “go the second mile” in their attitude and conduct in order to get along with others around them.

We can certainly “go the second mile” today in our daily living. We can go above and beyond what we are required

to do in order to serve others and to serve God. Here are few examples of how we can do this.

We can “go the second mile” in our giving (Luke 6:38; 2 Corinthians 8:3-5), in our hospitality (Luke 10:30-35), in our personal injuries (1 Corinthians 6:1-7), in our personal scruples (Romans 14:13-21; 1 Corinthians 8:13), in our love (Ruth 1:15-18; 1 Corinthians 13:7), in our service (Philippians 2:25-30), in our employment (Colossians 3:23), and in our reconciliation (Philemon 15-21).

There will always be those people in society who do not want to “go the second mile”. These people are proud, angry, lazy, afraid, selfish, or self-satisfied. Let’s not be like them.

We need to “go the second mile”. Why? It keeps us from a bare-minimum, get-by religion (1 Corinthians 15:58). It keeps us from a wrong attitude toward our fellow-man (Matthew 22:39). It keeps us from returning evil for evil (Romans 12:17-21). It keeps us traveling with Jesus. He always travelled the “second mile” road and so should we as his followers! - Chris Reeves