



See the service sheet for the fuller service plan

Opening Scripture Hymn	MP 783 Ye Holy angels bright https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s7gVCTKnSQM
Scripture Reading	Psam 148
Prayer	
Reading	Titus 1:1-4 p.1198
Sermon	Leading to Godliness
Hymn	MP 529 O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FR4_rfi0mGo
Closing prayer	

Close -----
Listen to today's sermon by clicking on the link at www.knbc.org.

The audio file is [20_11_29.mp3](#)

Welcome, pray

- We once went to a friend's wedding in Edinburgh. We waited in the church for the bride who was late, very late, finally after 50 mins (my friend is a patient man) we all left the church and as we were walking down the street the limo approached. Not prepared, not a good start!

We come to the 3rd of the pastoral epistles, Paul wrote two to Timothy and one to Titus. They're full of help in the task of making Godly Christians in Godly churches, Christians prepared and ready, bride for Christ.

Paul is writing **To Titus, a Greek** whom he describes as **my true son in our common faith**: Here is a man dear to him, a man who came to faith through his preaching. He shared in the travelling ministry with Paul, a great preparation for the later church planting work he was called to. Paul wrote this epistle from Corinth around A. D. 65 on his way to Nicopolis, where he was arrested shortly before his likely martyrdom in A.D. 67.

Now Titus is called up, he has a job to do – that is to help others in the faith. All of us who are called of God are in the task of building up the body of Christ. Titus' work was to **straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town**. That is, says Paul, **the reason I left you in Crete**.

So this morning we have..... First an introduction, - then the subject Godliness, - then three ways that God gives to help us to Godliness.

[1st the Introduction - We are looking at the first 4 verses.](#)

Remember letter writing? Time was given at the beginning for polite and friendly greetings - sometimes they could be very lacking in substance.

While Paul greets those he is writing to, here there is no shallow niceness, nothing he wrote contained wasted words. Here is no empty pre-amble.

When you write a letter, or send a message, do you have a main point? Yes Something that is woven in to, and underscores, all that is said?

So does Paul here, can you see it? what is the big, the main theme of this letter? Read it through and see. - You don't have to look far it is here in v1.

“1 Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ for the faith of God's elect and the knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness—

He gives his credentials **an apostle of Jesus Christ** - then he says for whom he is writing **the faith of God's elect** - and then he says why **the knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness**, - there's the end aim **Godliness**, yes **godliness**.

So in this letter he explains the main point and then applies it to the church.

But first he cracks it open, he unwraps it, he shows us what the ingredients are to produce Godliness. Paul start by filling our minds with big words like: faith, election, truth, eternal life, God's promises, God's eternal counsel, God's word, preaching, light, here are the juggernauts, the grand schemes of our faith, here are the big doctrines of this most Holy faith.

It is not health, house, money and car that make a life – as the world would have you believe - but true life is built on the doctrines of God. Here are

walls and foundations that last, - made possible by the finished work of Christ - and secured in place through the unchanging promises of God.

How good it would be to go through each one, that would certainly be for our strengthening. [If I was the great postwar preacher Martyn Lloyd Jones it would take years!](#) And there should be good time given to them - I hope you do that in your own study. **You will be richer for it, - and stronger for it.**

Now let us link them together, let us grasp these essential truths and see how they are needed to strengthen the foundations and walls of your faith.

2nd now to the subject - Godliness.

To understand what Paul means by Godliness we have to look at the word and how it is used. The word translated godliness is *eusebeia* θεοσεβεια = reverence, respect, piety towards God, godliness. It is used to denote 'worship or reverence of God,' and a 'reverential fear of God.'

It is not the same as Holiness, *hagiasmos* *hag-ee-as-mos* 'os which means sanctified or separate, in other words we are to be Holy that is separated out - for godliness, God-likeness. That is character, to have a godly character.

Let me show you some places where it is used - firstly in the OT

Eusebeia, this same word is used in the LXX for 'the fear of God' for example in Genesis "Abraham replied, "I said to myself, 'There is surely no fear of God in this place, and they will kill me because of my wife.'" Ge 20:11

The word Eusebeia is used in Job 28:28 "And he said to man, 'The fear of the Lord—that is wisdom, and to shun evil is understanding.'" Job 28:28

Easton's dictionary describes it as the whole of practical piety as in 1Ti 4:8 "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."

"and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness;" 2Pe 1:6 That's s how we are to build our faith.

✚ Easton goes on to say "It supposes knowledge, veneration, affection, dependence, submission, gratitude, and obedience."

eusebeia is from the root 'to worship well' hence piety towards God.

In 1Ti 3:16 it is all summed up in Christ and his work. "Beyond all question, the mystery of godliness is great: He appeared in a body, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory." 1Ti 3:16

Now it is the theme of this letter to Titus - and sits in the middle.

2a

Titus 2:12 **It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, - godly lives**

We know who the Godly are by the way they reject ungodliness with its lusts and passions, - but are self-controlled, upright, different, yes distinct.

We live in an age of professional Christianity. People think they are something because they 'profess' or 'say' it. And sadly others believe it. Some say they are Christian, believe themselves to be so, and have even persuaded their husband or wife or other members of their family they are.

No Jesus says: you see someone's faith in bearing the fruit of godliness.

Now it's time to look at what three helps God has given us here, three things that lead you to Godliness: - Faith, Truth, Hope. x2

Notice it is leading, not pushing, although sometimes we definitely need a push, [One pastor of a church in Rubery said it was like trying to push elephants uphill.](#) When we read that the Spirit 'comforts' us, the word is 'paraklesis' definitely has something of the 'prod' to it.

UK shepherds go behind the sheep, in the middle east shepherds lead from the front **My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.** john 10:27. And who cannot say that so often the Lord has to take us by the hand.

So the Lord leads you to Godliness through: Faith, Truth, Hope.

Faith leads you to Godliness

for the faith of God's elect 2 a faith and knowledge resting on the hope of eternal life. What is faith? Faith comes by the Spirit of God.

When someone is born again into the kingdom of God, God's Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ reforms that person's character towards his own, towards Christ-likeness. Thus Faith, true faith is better called '**Christ in you**'. x2

This Godly character is only possible to have by God's Spirit and that through the finished work of Christ on the cross.

Do you display 'true' godliness? There is the Bible says a form of godliness, a pretense of Godliness, easy to put on if you have someone in the family who has influenced you, - or you are used to coming to church.

✚ MLJ describes that person by saying: **They appear to be Christian but they are not. They want to appear as Christians, but they are not functioning as Christians. They are as it were salt without savour, light without light. The formal Christian is a man who knows enough about Christianity to spoil the world for him; but he does not know enough about it for it to be of any**

2b

positive value. He does not go with the world because he knows just enough about it to be afraid of certain things; and the people who live right in the world know that he is trying to be different and that he cannot be wholeheartedly with them. On the other hand he has no real fellowship with the Christian. He has enough 'Christianity' to spoil everything else, but not enough to give him real happiness, peace and joy and abundance of life. I think such people are the most pathetic people in the world. Our Lord certainly says they are the most useless people in the world. They do not function as worldlings - or as Christians. They are nothing, neither salt nor light, neither one thing nor the other. And as a matter of actual fact, they are cast out; cast out, as it were, by the world and cast out by the Church. They refuse to regard themselves as of the world, while on the other hand they do not enter truly into the life of the Church. They feel it themselves, and others feel it. There is always this barrier. They are finally - outsiders. See [general.doc](#)

Is that you? living a lie, living a double life, living a life that is a pretense - then repent, turn to Christ now. The Cross is there, the power is there.

- I remember one young man, who spent some years sitting on the fence, not one side, nor the other side, neither, or both, in the uncomfortable middle. Then he made up his mind - now he is a Godly young man.

God gives true **faith** to God's people for a one purpose - so you and I can live a Godly life. Christ saved you from sin, that you may be godly. He cut the chains and set you free why? to godliness.

Remember the rescue from Egypt and the red sea. God wonderfully rescued His people so they could **leave** Egypt, leave that life of sin in the country of sin. And that they could enter the place of dependence on God, and advance into new territory for God under his banner as His righteous Godly people.

- When the armies have pressed ahead and the victory is had, the remaining work, which must not be neglected is the 'mopping up'. The searching out and removing for good all those remaining pockets of resistance. If this is not done they continue to cause trouble, and can do so for years in a prolonged rear guard action. So sin needs to be pursued.

Knowledge of truth that leads you to Godliness

We have had **faith** now **knowledge**. and the **knowledge** of the truth that leads to godliness.

The mind is for truth - and truth for the mind. God's word is truth. But it is not just an object something to look at [as if sitting in a glass case](#). No it is relational, something to relate to, to engage with as you would a person. Truth is there in a general sense, although many are blind to it. But full truth came into this world. Jesus as he headed to the cross said to Pilate: **for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth.**

Everyone on the side of truth listens to me." Joh 18:37

The mind is the great decision maker. [It is like a whole parliament in my head](#). It is there that all the debates take place, here everything is weighed up, until there is finally the division - that heading to the lobby as you chose your course of action. - putting into effect what we know whom we know: Peter: **His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.**

2Pe 1:3

Hope leads you to Godliness

resting on the hope of eternal life. Life. What is life? God is life. And because he cannot change that life cannot be taken away, it is by nature everlasting, eternal life. The wonder of the cross is that many men and women can now share in the life of God.

Knowing this (Him) is a work of the Spirit within a believer. Remember those other words for faith? '**Christ in you**' x2 = **the hope of Glory**.

This hope, this gift was ordained, purposed by God before the world began **which God, who does not lie, promised before the beginning of time.**

So Paul picks up this wonderful truth to Titus first mentioned in his letter to Timothy: "**who has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Saviour, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.**" 2Ti 1:9-10

As I say it was decided in the eternal counsel of God as the father, Son and Holy Spirit related together in love, and purposed that this love should find expression in enabling others to share in the life of God by granting grace to undeserving sinners and save some. These 'some' are **God's elect**

Chosen before the creation of the world, grace was given before the creation of the world. Determined then, allocated then, it is only now made known.

And how is it made known? Through the preaching of God's word. As God's word is preached his grace comes and alights on his chosen **elect** ones. It is now revealed, brought to light... 3..**through the preaching entrusted to me** Paul and every message carrier, every Christian **by the command of God our Saviour**. Still the same command today.

It was there in the OT but obscured, it couldn't be seen clearly.

- The billboard with the top missing so we have half the message.

Through the words of Christ, through preaching this whole message of who Christ is – He is made known in all his majesty and Holy Splendour.

If you are one who has this grace, then let your hearts be full of gratitude.

Think of what he has saved you from, think of what he has saved you for, and think of who you now are because of Christ.

You are a new creation, called apart to Holiness, called to be like Christ in all Godliness. This is who you are.

- Last week at home we watched the film "Bourne Identity". Here's a man who loses his identity, he forgets who he is. The idea is based on a real life man called Ansel Bourne 1826–1910 who forgot who he was. Ansel was an evangelical preacher living in Rhode Island. On 17th January 1887 he went to Providence, Rhode Island, then continued on until he reached Norristown, Pennsylvania. There he set up shop as a stationer and confectioner using the name A. J. Brown. On Monday, 14th March he woke in the morning not knowing where he was and with no memory of the preceding two months, still believing it was January. His nephew helped him return home where it was discovered that under hypnosis he could assume the personality of either Bourne or Brown, but neither personality had any knowledge of the other.

The moral of the story is don't forget who you are. Your true identity is the one that God's purposed for you before time, the one Christ purchased for you to be. It is your identity in Christ that is the lasting identity. That is what we have for heaven.

Live now as if preparing for heaven. [Meghan Markle married royalty but she has now gone back](#). As Paul says to the church in Philippi **"let us live up to what we have already attained."** Php 3:16 For us as Christians that means live a life of purity, don't spoil and dirty yourself with the world. [One Christian home I go into fairly regularly the TV is always on](#). No, we are called to

Godliness. That means you are completely honest, completely true to your word. It is obvious to those around that you are not like them, you are not self-serving but have another master, one who is invisible but one whom you love and with whom you will spend eternity.

- Before the wedding starts there is a huge amount of back room activity – so I believe, the bride is surrounded by an army of busy helpers, it's the time of meticulous preparation, and beautification, the bride is making herself ready for her husband. – and arrive on time!

Titus's job is the best in the world. He is preparing people for heaven.

Of course he is not calling people to an outer temporary beauty, but an inner lasting beauty. Not even to bear the name as one [early church historian whose name was 'godliness' = 'Eusebius'](#). It is the inner life of true Godly character, one of gentleness, grace, self-control, truth, purity, love a developed Godly character.

✚ "A good character is the best tombstone". Says Charles Spurgeon. "Those who loved you, and were helped by you will remember you. Carve your name on hearts, not marble."

A pastor friend told me he is known locally as 'the God man'. Even when no-one is watching then maintain that standard. As someone has said:

✚ "Character is doing what's right when nobody's looking."—J. C. Watts Jr.

Look ahead to God's new perfect kingdom to come in its fullness - how wonderful it will be to go there! [So look ahead](#), look forwards not backwards, that is why your [eyes are at the front!](#)

We are all soon to leave this world, so don't waste time on other things that will one-day count against you. Concentrate on Christ and that which builds for eternity. Then you will be welcomed when perfection comes, that is all that matters.

The Lord helps you and I to Godliness: in Faith, by Truth and with Hope.

Will you pursue Godliness?

May the Lord help you and I to do so, to be so.

Amen

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