

# Qualities of the Godly

## I Timothy 4:7-8

You may need some inspiration for the goals and resolutions you make this year so let me share with you Lee Clamps experience on losing weight last year.



(You might have already read this in the Baptist Courier) According to his scales he lost 30 pounds last year. But he also found 29 pounds. So he had a net loss of 1 pound. He said his New Year's resolution this year is to find a more accurate scale to weigh on.

He has a friend who lost 50 pounds last year by changing their lifestyle. He came up with the conclusion that rather than buy a new set of scales he probably needed to change his lifestyle. He said the reason most people do not make it very far in their New Year's resolution is they set goals, but do not change their lifestyle. Here's the line that jumped off the page as I read his article: ***They continue with their same habits and expect different results.***

That line certainly speaks volumes to many of us who want something different but haven't been willing to make the changes in our lifestyle to make it happen.

Speaking of lifestyle changes, Rafael Badziag interviewed 21 billionaires and found they had the same 6 core habits:

1. **They wake up early**
2. **They keep healthy and exercise regularly**
3. **They are avid readers**
4. **They take time to contemplate and think**
5. **They develop routines and rituals**
6. **They practice discipline and self-control**

\* I now know why I am not a billionaire!

Here's a question for us today:

**What are the core habits of a godly Christian?** Not the person who says they are a Christian but you cannot tell any difference in them and someone who does not follow Christ. I'm talking about the person you know they are a true follower of Christ and you can see it in their lives.

David Jeremiah wrote, ***"Being a billionaire is overrated, but building a biblical personality is vastly underrated. There's no value we can put on a godly lifestyle..."*** (Today's Turning Point devotion, October 10, 2019)

In our scripture we started with today, Paul states, ***"godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come."***

If it is this good and profitable we should want it.

**Godliness**- Jamison, Fausett, and Brown wrote this about godliness. “[H]aving its seat within, it extends thence to the whole outward life of a man.”<sup>1</sup> (In other words...)

\* Godliness is living according to religious standards and values (JFB). We all live according to some standard or value but the godly person lives according to God’s standard and values.

To somehow answer the question, **What are the core habits of a godly Christian**, I pulled up 4 messages I have brought over the years about godly people and why God used them. They were:

**Caleb, Joseph, Joshua and D.L. Moody.**

Moody is not in the Bible but was used of the Lord like very few people have ever been used to influence a whole nation toward God. I think it is important to understand it is not just people in the Bible that God uses. He wants to use you and me also.

Taking these four men, I circled common traits and actions that are in their lives. Here they are:

## **I. Prayer**

Very simply put, godly people talk to God on a regular basis.

R.A. Torrey, in his book, *“Why God Used D.L. Moody,”* wrote, **“People oftentimes say to me: ‘Well, I went many miles to see and to hear D.L. Moody and he certainly was a wonderful preacher.’”** To this Torrey agreed but added, **“out of a very intimate acquaintance with him I wish to testify that he was a far greater pray-er than he was preacher.”** (p.8)

Touring the Billy Graham Library in Charlotte, one the last things on the tour I remember was a recording of Billy Graham saying if he had it to do over again he would pray more.

You and I will never go wrong praying to God.

We can do much more by spending time with God in prayer than the many other things we choose to do.

Keith Stephens, a preacher who died (I believe) at the age of 34, once wrote saying is it possible that we have worried and called it prayer?

I believe it was Adrian Rogers who said, **prayer is not preparation for the work. It is the work.** We need to come to that understanding.

Jesus said in Luke 18:1 that **“men always ought to pray and not lose heart”** (Luke 18:1)

Jesus told Peter, James, and John in the Garden of Gethsemane, **“Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”** (Matthew 26:41)

How can a man or woman be godly without talking to God?

**Beyond what we believe about prayer it comes down to what we do with prayer.**

Another trait or quality of godly people is:

## **II. Bible Intake**

**“This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night”** (Joshua 1:8a)

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<sup>1</sup> Jamieson, R., Fausset, A. R., & Brown, D. (1997). *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible* (Vol. 2, p. 413). Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

If God would tell the leader of a nation he needed to be in the Book of the Law each day, should we also be in it?

Consider what God said would happen if Joshua did it: ***“that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.”*** (Joshua 1:8b)

Listen to Revelation 1:3 ***“Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.”*** (Rev. 1:3)

Torrey wrote, *“Mr. Moody used to rise about four o’clock in the morning to study the Bible. He would say to me: ‘If I am going to get in any study, I have got to get up before the other folks get up.’; and he would shut himself up in a room in his house, alone with his God and his Bible.”*

I wouldn’t necessarily expect you to study like a teacher or a preacher unless you are a teacher or a preacher. But how much time do you spend with your God and His Word?

Bible reading brings us closer to God, helps us know God better, gives us answers to life’s greatest mysteries, and most of all gives us the way of salvation... through the Lord Jesus Christ. It gives us peace, comfort, strength, and guidance on life’s journey. It is from God for the people of God. To ignore the Bible is to tell God, I don’t want to hear what you have to say to me.

- **God has a message for each one of us.**

- **God has a message for this world.**

This is why Paul told Timothy, ***“Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.”*** (II Timothy 4:2-4)

Our world has turned its ears away from the truth and are chasing fables.

What will we do with the Word?

### **BRINGING IT HOME to our lives:**

Satan will do all he can to discourage and keep you from praying and reading the Bible. He knows how powerful they are in the life of God’s children.

I have been so moved in my own heart while preparing this message. It has confirmed and strengthened some of my resolve to pray and be in the Word of God but it has challenged me also.

**Where are you at in your own life on these two things? Do you need to start praying more regularly? Do you need to begin an organized reading of God’s Word?**

We are talking about habits of a godly person. You cannot be godly without talking to and listening to God.

Going back to Lee Clamps statement in my introduction: **He said the reason most people do not make it very far in their New Year's resolution is they set goals, but do not change their lifestyle.**

Will we change ours to be godly?

### III. Obedience

I want to put other words with this to broaden our understanding: surrender, submissive, and servant. These 3 words are what I have in my other messages on these 4 men to describe them. They all are part of obedience. I won't obey unless I surrender to God's will and so forth.

**Surrender** - \* Henry Varley, a friend of Moody's, said he once told Moody, *"It remains to be seen what God will do with a man who gives himself up wholly to Him."* It is said that when Varley said that, Moody said within himself, *"Well, I will be that man."* (*Why God Used D.L. Moody*, p.7)

**Submissive** – When Joseph's father sent him to his brothers who were tending sheep in Shechem (Gen. 37:13) Joseph simply said, "Here I am." In other words here I am to do as you say.

**Servant** – Joshua showed a servant's heart as he was the assistant of Moses as is mentioned in the books of Exodus and Numbers. He was willing to serve before he was chosen a leader by God.

These three words, surrender, submissive, and servant are foreign to our culture. But God is looking for those who are **surrendered to Him, submissive to His will, and willing to serve not only Him but others.**

In Numbers 14:24, we read about Caleb. *"But My servant Caleb, because he has a different spirit in him and has followed Me fully, I will bring into the land where he went, and his descendants shall inherit it."* (Numbers 14:24)

Caleb's full obedience to the Lord not only brought the Lord's blessings to him but to his descendants as well.

### IV. Faith (Believing God)

*"Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said, 'Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it.'"* (Numbers 13:30)

Caleb had faith to believe God's promise concerning the land of Canaan. Caleb believed when the others doubted. David Jeremiah said, *"they believed their doubts and doubted their beliefs."* If we are not careful we will let the size of the task before us cause us to doubt God's leading.

In Genesis 50:24-25, Joseph has a message for his people just before he died which shows his faith in God.

*"And Joseph said to his brethren, 'I am dying; but God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land to the land of which He swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.' Then Joseph took an oath from the children of Israel, saying, 'God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here.'"* (Genesis 50:24-25)

He believed what God had promised to Abraham so much that he made the children of Israel take an oath to take his bones with them when they left Egypt.

When God is clear in His direction in our lives we must believe Him.

### BRINGING IT HOME:

The interesting thing that did not occur to me until I was close to finishing this message is **Joshua and Caleb** were:

- both spies sent by Moses to spy out the land of Canaan before Israel would go in.
- both believed God when all the other spies and the nation as a whole rejected God's command to go in and take Canaan.
- both remained alive when God let a whole generation die b/c of their unbelief concerning conquering Canaan.
- both allowed to go in and experience the victory God had for them in Canaan.

Three of the godly people we have looked at today **are leaders, warriors, a boy who was a favorite son, a slave, a prisoner, and finally the second most powerful man in the most powerful nation at that time.**

The fourth man's **formal education ended after the fifth grade. After leaving the family farm at 17, he became a shoe salesman who eventually was saved and later God called him to be a preacher.**

Out of these facts here are some questions:

**Are you letting those around you keep you from following God?**

**For our context today, are you letting others keep you from being a godly person?**

We can all be followers of God in our generation. No matter what God wants to do in your life, are you living in such a way to **allow** the Lord to use you or **are you living in a way that **hinders** God from using you?**

I did an online search for qualities of a godly person and a message from Charles Stanley come up titled, **"The Seven Habits of a Godly Life"**

- 1. A Life of Prayer**
  - 2. Faith**
  - 3. Meditation on the Word of God**
  - 4. Obedience**
  - 5. Dependence on the Holy Spirit**
  - 6. Giving to God and Others**
  - 7. Forgiving Other People**
- Dr. Charles Stanley

My points come from looking at the lives of those four men and covered 4 of Charles Stanley's 7 points.