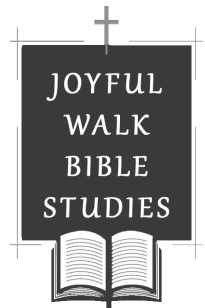


# *Adorn Yourself with* **GODLINESS**

A Study of 1 Timothy and Titus

*How could you be more beautiful than to adorn yourself with the very character of God so that your life displays the beliefs you claim to profess! You can choose to “dress,” act, and be like Him — for Him!*

Melanie Newton



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## Using This Study Guide

This study guide consists of 11 lessons covering two letters written by the Apostle Paul—1 Timothy and Titus. If you cannot do the entire lesson one week, please read the Bible passage(s) covered by the lesson.

### THE BASIC STUDY

Each lesson includes core questions covering the passage narrative. These core questions will take you through the process of inductive Bible study—observation, interpretation, and application. The process is more easily understood in the context of answering these questions:

- What does the passage say? (*Observation: what's actually there*)
- What does it mean? (*Interpretation: the author's intended meaning*)
- How does this apply to me today? (*Application: making it personal*)

### STUDY ENHANCEMENTS

*Study Aids:* To aid in proper interpretation and application of the study, five additional study aids are located where appropriate in the lesson:

- Historical Insights
- Scriptural Insights
- From the Greek (definitions of Greek words)
- Focus on the Meaning
- Think About It (thoughtful reflection)
- Dependent Living (illustrating what it means to live dependently on God)

*Other useful study tools:* Use online tools or apps ([blueletterbible.org](http://blueletterbible.org) or “Blue Letter Bible app” is especially helpful) to find *cross references* (verses with similar content to what you are studying) and meanings of the *original Greek words or phrases* used (usually called “interlinear”). You can also look at any verse in *various Bible translations* to help with understanding what it is saying. Feel free to add your own study at the end of each lesson.

### PODCASTS

Find podcasts coordinating with these lessons at [melanienewton.com/podcasts](http://melanienewton.com/podcasts) and most other podcast channels. Follow along with the “Podcast Listener Guides” for each lesson.

## NEW TESTAMENT SUMMARY

The New Testament opens with the births of John and Jesus. About 30 years later, John challenged the Jews to indicate their repentance (turning from sin and toward God) by submitting to water baptism—a familiar Old Testament practice used for repentance as well as when a Gentile converted to Judaism (to be washed clean of idolatry).

Jesus, God's incarnate Son, publicly showed the world what God is like and taught His perfect ways for 3 – 3½ years. After preparing 12 disciples to continue Christ's earthly work, He died voluntarily on a cross for mankind's sin, rose from the dead, and returned to heaven. The account of His earthly life is recorded in 4 books known as the Gospels (the biblical books of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John named after the compiler of each account).

After Jesus' return to heaven, the followers of Christ were then empowered by the Holy Spirit and spread God's salvation message among the Jews, a number of whom believed in Christ. The apostle Paul and others carried the good news to the Gentiles during 3 missionary journeys (much of this recorded in the book of Acts). Paul wrote 13 New Testament letters to churches & individuals (Romans through Philemon). The section in our Bible from Hebrews to Jude contains 8 additional letters penned by five men, including two apostles (Peter and John) and two of Jesus' half-brothers (James and Jude). The author of Hebrews is unknown. The apostle John also recorded Revelation, which summarizes God's final program for the world. The Bible ends as it began—with a new, sinless creation.

## DISCUSSION GROUP GUIDELINES

1. **Attend consistently** whether your lesson is done or not. You'll learn from the other women, and they want to get to know you.
2. **Set aside time** to work through the study questions. The goal of Bible study is to **get to know** Jesus. He will change your life.
3. **Share your insights** from your personal study time. As you spend time in the Bible, Jesus will teach you truth through His Spirit inside you.
4. **Respect each other's insights.** Listen thoughtfully. Encourage each other as you interact. Refrain from dominating the discussion if you have a tendency to be talkative. 😊
5. **Celebrate our unity** in Christ. Avoid bringing up controversial subjects such as politics, divisive issues, and denominational differences.
6. **Maintain confidentiality.** Remember that anything shared during the group time is not to leave the **group** (unless permission is granted by the one sharing).
7. **Pray for one another** as sisters in Christ.
8. **Get to know the women** in your group. Please do not use your small group members for solicitation purposes for home businesses, though.

*Enjoy your Joyful Walk Bible Study!*

**Recommended:** Listen to the podcast "[The What and Why of Godliness](#)" as an introduction to the whole study.

## The What and Why of Godliness

Every morning when you approach the mirror to get ready, do you wish that you could simply put on one thing, or do just one thing, that would present you to the world looking just the way you would like to look? You can do that! Each and every day, you can adorn yourself with godliness.

### WHAT "ADORN YOURSELF" MEANS

- The English word "adorn" translates the Greek word *kosmeo* from which we get our word "cosmetic." It means, "to arrange, to put in order, make ready, to ornament." We adorn ourselves in daily life to fulfill a purpose. Adorning yourself is a good thing.

### WHAT GODLINESS MEANS

Godliness is devotion to God expressed in a life that is pleasing to Him.

- Devotion to God means you are dedicated to Him. You are firmly attached to Him. Whatever He wants, you want. It is a loyal love for God.
- Godliness is devotion in action. Your loyal love for God expresses itself in a life that reflects His character. Who He is. And that is pleasing to Him.
- We adorn ourselves with godliness by first being completely devoted to Him, loving Him so much that we want to reflect His character as we live our lives. We take on His likeness—Godlikeness, not becoming God but presenting Him.
- Jesus is our example of godliness as a human. He presented the attributes of Father God to everyone who saw Him. He adorned Himself with godliness through humility, compassion, love, prayer, dependency on God the Father, good works, and many more ways. His devotion to God was expressed in a life that reflected God and was pleasing to God. *John 14:6*
- Devotion to God is not just living by a set of rules. God isn't interested in outward conformity. When our hearts are right, we will want to obey Him with our thinking and behavior. We will want to reflect Him well because we love Him so much.

### ADORNING OURSELVES WITH CHRIST

- Since Jesus is our example of what it looks like to adorn ourselves with godliness, we need to read through the Gospels, getting to know Jesus well. Then, we should continue reading through the whole New Testament to get the big picture of how those early Christians adorned themselves with godliness. We can learn from their examples.

- The absolutely wonderful news is this: We have been given everything we need for godliness. First, through knowing Him. Then, we get His divine power. The Holy Spirit begins to work right away at transforming you to look more like Christ. *2 Peter 1:3*
- From the time you are saved until you die and enter heaven, you are never without the ability to be godly. It's not based on your own ability but on His power working to bring about godliness in you. We CAN live a godly life because of His Spirit in us.
- But, it's a cooperative effort. He is always working. But, we can resist His work. That's why godliness begins with devotion to God—loving Him so much that you want to live a godly life that pleases Him.
- It's not perfection. It's loyal love for God that leads to obedience and humility and awareness of Whose we are and why we are here.

### WHY SHOULD CHRISTIAN WOMEN DESIRE TO ADORN OURSELVES WITH GODLINESS?

- You and I should desire to adorn ourselves with godliness ...
  - ✓ **For God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ** because of our love for them and gratitude for what they have done for our salvation (1 Timothy 4:10). This is our first and foremost reason.
  - ✓ **For ourselves and our fellow Christians** because godly behavior is good for us in every way (1 Timothy 6:6, 19; Titus 2:11-13).
  - ✓ **For others who are watching us** because godliness makes the teaching about Christ attractive and draws unbelievers to the God we know and serve (Titus 2:10).
- Among those watching are the “fashion police”—the ones who oppose Christ and the Gospel, looking for an excuse not to believe. When we adorn ourselves with godliness, there is nothing for “them” to accuse.
- Among those watching are the “shoppers”—with hearts open to God. They just need to see Him through you and I displaying His character. They want to believe.
- For anyone watching, when we adorn ourselves with godliness because of our love for Him, the word of God will not be dishonored or discredited.

### YOU CAN MAKE THE DAILY CHOICE TO ADORN YOURSELF WITH GODLINESS.

Every morning, as you look in the mirror, see **who you really are**, a woman of God who is totally loved and accepted by Him because of your faith in His Son Jesus Christ. What could be a more beautiful, worthwhile goal than to adorn yourself with godliness ... to put yourself in order with the very character of God ... to arrange to live your life properly displaying the beliefs you profess ... to dress, act, and be like Him for Him!

*Let Jesus satisfy your heart with such love for God that you will want to live a life that pleases Him.*

# 1: Introduction to 1 Timothy and Titus

## DAY ONE STUDY

Ask the Lord Jesus to teach you through His Word.

### ***The ABCs of 1 Timothy and Titus—Author, Background, and Context***

Like any book you read, it always helps to know a bit about the author, the background setting for the story (i.e., past, present, future), and where the book fits into a series (that's the context). The same is true of Bible books.

#### **AUTHOR**

The apostle Paul identifies himself as the author of the letters written to Timothy and to Titus. Paul, whose Hebrew name was Saul, was born in Tarsus, a major Roman city on the coast of southeast Asia Minor. Tarsus was the center for the tent making industry. Paul was trained in that craft as his occupation (his primary paying profession). As a Jewish Pharisee from the tribe of Benjamin, Paul was educated at the feet of Gamaliel, a well-respected rabbi of the day. Paul was an ardent persecutor of the early church until his life-changing conversion to Christianity

After believing in Jesus Christ as his Savior, Paul was sent by God as an apostle to take the gospel to the Gentiles. This was an amazing about-face for a committed Pharisee like Paul who ordinarily would have nothing to do with Gentiles. Paul wrote 13 letters that are included in the New Testament. Tradition has it that Paul was beheaded shortly after he wrote 2 Timothy in 67 A.D. (*You can glean more about Paul's background from Acts 8:3; 9:1-31; 22:3-5; 26:9-11; and Galatians 1:11-24.*)

#### **BACKGROUND**

During Paul's first two missionary journeys, he traveled through central Turkey, establishing several churches in that area, including Lystra. Timothy first heard Paul preach the gospel on Paul's first visit to Lystra and trusted in Christ, likely as a teen. His mother, Eunice, and grandmother, Lois, were devout Jews who became believers in Christ. Timothy's father was a Greek. We know nothing more about him. Paul became Timothy's spiritual father. Timothy may have seen Paul heal a lame man in his town. He may have watched the angry mob throw stones at Paul and leave him for dead (Acts 14:8-20). Yet, he also knew Paul survived. When Paul came back to Lystra a couple of years later on his second journey, Paul invited Timothy to travel with him. During that time, Timothy helped to establish churches at Philippi, Thessalonica, and Corinth. Six of Paul's letters to churches include Timothy in the salutations meaning Timothy was with him when Paul wrote the letters.

Like Timothy, Titus responded with faith in Christ as he heard Paul preach about Jesus In Antioch (Syria), Paul brought Titus as a Gentile (non-Jewish) Christian to Jerusalem to show the apostles and other Jewish believers how a Gentile was completely accepted by God through faith in Jesus Christ through the gospel.

During the 3 years Paul was teaching in Ephesus (his third missionary journey), both Timothy and Titus were there with him. Then, Paul sent Titus to Corinth to alleviate tension at that church and to collect money for the poor. Like Timothy, Paul thought of Titus as his spiritual son because he had led him to trust Christ.

At the end of Paul's third missionary journey, he traveled to Jerusalem in the spring of 57 A.D. to deliver an offering collected by the Gentile churches to help the impoverished Jewish Christians.

After being accused by the Jews of some technical violation of the Jewish Law, Paul was arrested by the Romans and spent the next two years in Caesarea as a prisoner (Acts 22-26). Paul appealed to Caesar so he was sent to Rome. There he lived under house arrest for another two years (Acts 27-28). Timothy was with him during that time.

After Paul's release from this first Roman imprisonment (around 62 A.D.), he and Timothy traveled to Ephesus. Paul discovered that during his absence, the church was plagued with all kinds of spiritual problems. The city of Ephesus, with all of its corruption and idolatry, was proving to be a spiritual battleground for the congregation of believers meeting in house churches there. As Paul moved on to Macedonia, he left Timothy in Ephesus to care for the church. Paul wrote 1 Timothy around 64 A.D. from Rome or Macedonia to encourage Timothy in his work.

While Timothy was in Ephesus, Paul and Titus traveled to the island of Crete to share the gospel and establish churches. Paul wanted to go visit the church in Corinth so he left Titus to continue teaching the new Christians and to appoint church leaders for each new church. Paul wrote the letter to Titus (around 65 A.D.) soon after writing 1 Timothy, probably while Paul was in Macedonia, on his way to Nicopolis (northwestern Greece). Titus rejoined Paul in western Macedonia and continued his missionary work northward into Dalmatia (now Albania).

## CONTEXT

In our New Testaments, we have nine letters of Paul written to churches (Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and 1 and 2 Thessalonians). We also have four of Paul's letters written to individuals (1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, and Philemon). Philemon was written during Paul's Roman house arrest. The letters called 1 Timothy and Titus were written a couple of years after his release. Paul wrote 2 Timothy later as he waited in a Roman dungeon for his certain execution.

Paul's three letters—1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus—are called "pastoral epistles" because for the most part they are Paul's counsel to his representatives to the local churches in the regions of Ephesus and Crete. The three letters address the issues facing local churches—by the pastoral leaders as well as the members.

1. What grabbed your attention from the ABCs above?

## ***Adorn Yourself with Godliness***

What comes to mind when you hear the phrase, "adorn yourself?" The English word "adorn" translates the Greek word *kosmeo* from which we get our word "cosmetic." It means, "to arrange, to put in order, make ready, to ornament." That's what women do when we style our hair, put on makeup, and dress ourselves.

Have you ever thought that as you were applying your make-up, you were actually putting your face in order? When you get ready for a big job interview, you're actually arranging yourself in such a way by what you wear and how you act to demonstrate that you are truly the right person for the job. And, if you are married, you might make arrangements for a special dinner with your spouse and adorn yourself with his favorite dress, hairstyle and perfume. We adorn our homes to reflect who we are. We adorn ourselves in daily life to fulfill a purpose. Adorning yourself is a good thing.



“Adorn” is also an important word in the Bible. That Greek word *kosmeo* is used 12 times in the original language of the New Testament. In Luke 21:5, the disciples remarked to Jesus about how the temple was adorned with beautiful stones and with gifts dedicated to God. In Revelation 21:2,19, the apostle John described his vision of the new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, “prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband,” adorned “with every kind of precious stone.” And, it is used three times (1 Timothy 2:9; Titus 2:10; and 1 Peter 3:5) about believers adorning themselves in such a way as to please the Lord and make the gospel attractive to nonbelievers. Adorning fulfills a purpose. We are to adorn ourselves with something called godliness.

So, what does it mean to adorn yourself with godliness?

Godliness (from the Greek *eusebeia*) conveys the idea of a personal attitude toward God that results in actions that are pleasing to Him. This personal attitude toward God is devotion to God. But, it’s not just a warm, emotional feeling about God that we get when we have private Bible reading and prayer or sing worship songs. It is always devotion in action. Something results from our devotion.

True devotion to God always results in godly character. Your love for God expresses itself in a life that is pleasing to God. So, godliness can be defined as ***devotion to God expressed in a life that is pleasing to Him.***

We adorn ourselves with godliness by first being completely devoted to Him, loving Him so much that we want to reflect His character as we live our lives. We take on His likeness—Godlikeness, not becoming God but presenting Him. Attributes of godliness are those same ones found in our Lord Jesus—humility, compassion, love, prayer, dependency on God the Father, and many more.

God isn’t interested in outward conformity. He doesn’t just want us to act properly. He’s interested in our hearts first. When our hearts are right, we will want to obey Him with our thinking and behavior. We will want to reflect Him well because we love Him so much. Godliness begins in the heart and mind then is lived out in words and behavior.

We adorn ourselves with godliness for God the Father and Jesus Christ because of our love for them and gratitude for what they have done for our salvation (1 Timothy 4:10). We adorn ourselves with godliness for ourselves and our fellow Christians because godly behavior is good for us in every way (1 Timothy 6:6, 19; Titus 2:11-13). And, adorning ourselves with godliness makes the teaching about Christ attractive, drawing unbelievers to the God we know and serve (Titus 2:10).

What could be a more beautiful, worthwhile goal than to adorn yourself with godliness...to put yourself in order with the very character of God ... to arrange or live your life properly displaying the beliefs you claim to profess ... to dress, act, and be like Him for Him! That is our hope for each of you as you learn from God’s Word through Paul’s letters to Timothy and Titus.

2. What grabbed your attention from this introduction to adorning yourself with godliness?

***Respond to the Lord about what you learned today.***

## DAY TWO STUDY—GET THE BIG PICTURE OF 1 TIMOTHY AND TITUS

Ask the Lord Jesus to teach you through His Word.

In all of our *Joyful Walk Bible Studies*, we follow the inductive process for Bible Study. The inductive process starts with observation, looking carefully at what the text actually says. **What does the Bible say?** The next step is interpretation, which is trying to understand the author’s intended meaning—to him and to the audience who would read or hear it. **What does it mean?** Once you know what the Bible says and what it means, then you are ready for application, which is learning how to live this out in your life. **What application will you make?** When you follow the inductive process for Bible Study, you will be able to confidently dwell in that truth.

### **What does the Bible say? (This is the “Observation” step in the process of Bible Study.)**

Where do we begin? Have you ever heard the saying: “You can’t see the forest for the trees?” The best way to study any book of the Bible is to begin with the “forest” (survey the whole) and then proceed to the “trees” (the individual parts). We will start by getting an overview of what Paul wrote in both letters. Several common themes are woven throughout Paul’s instruction to Timothy and Titus. We will read them both as they were intended—letters from one dear friend to another. Ready to get started? Let’s go!

Today, read the letter called *1 Timothy* at one sitting. It will take about 12 minutes. You can read the letter in any translation of the Bible you choose. A copy of 1 Timothy (NIV translation) is included in this study guide before Lesson One. Feel free to mark anything that grabs your attention. Then, answer the questions below.

3. What do you remember most from your reading of this letter?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. What were the main subjects that Paul covered in this letter?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. After reading this letter, do you have a better understanding of what godliness looks like in contrast to that which is ungodly?

6. What questions do you have after reading 1 Timothy that you would like to have answered in this study?

**Scriptural Insight:** This letter of Paul's has more references to women than any other one. There are some verses that are difficult to understand and may remain a mystery until we get to heaven. But, there is plenty of truth revealed for us to know and apply in our lives on earth now. We will dwell in truth we can know and must humbly accept that which we don't know or understand. 😊

***Ask the Lord to show you what He wants you to learn through this study of 1 Timothy.***

### **DAY THREE STUDY**

Ask the Lord Jesus to teach you through His Word.

***What does the Bible say? (This is the "Observation" step in the process of Bible Study.)***

Today, read the letter called *Titus* at one sitting. It will take about 7 minutes. You can read the letter in any translation of the Bible you choose. A copy of *Titus* (NIV translation) is included in this study guide before Lesson One. Feel free to mark anything that grabs your attention. Then, answer the questions below.

7. What do you remember most from your reading of this letter?
8. What subjects did you see in this letter that you also read in 1 Timothy?

9. After reading this letter, do you have a better understanding of what godliness looks like in contrast to that which is ungodly?
10. What questions do you have after reading Titus that you would like to have answered in this study?

***Ask the Lord to show you what He wants you to learn through this study of Titus.***

## **DAY FOUR STUDY**

Ask the Lord Jesus to teach you through His Word.

***What does it mean? (This is the “Interpretation” step in the process of Bible Study.)***

Remember that our definition of godliness is “***devotion to God expressed in a life that is pleasing to Him.***” Godliness begins in the heart and mind (devotion to God) then is lived out in words and behavior (expressed in a life that is pleasing to Him).

Jesus confirmed in His teaching that devotion to God begins with loving God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mark 12:30). In order to love God, you need to know Him. Right? In order to be devoted to God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, you need to know the truth about them and the truth about the gospel message that is the foundation of your faith. Truth enhances your devotion to God. Error takes you away from your devotion to Him (2 Corinthians 11:3). So, one of the major themes in all of Paul’s letters, and especially in the pastoral letters, is this: *teach and maintain truth and sound doctrine while guarding against error.*

**TEACH AND MAINTAIN TRUTH AND SOUND DOCTRINE WHILE GUARDING AGAINST ERROR.**

What you believe about God and about yourself in relationship to God directs how you think and, therefore, how you act. As you read in Titus 1:1, knowledge of the truth leads to godliness. “Truth and sound doctrine” refer to the truth we get from God’s Word and, especially, the truths about the Christian faith (1 Timothy 3:9). You have to know what it is in order to teach and maintain it. This theme really breaks down into positive versus negative aspects.

11. The **Positive**: “teach and maintain truth and sound doctrine.”

- Read 1 Timothy 2:4-6 and Titus 3:4-7. What truth about the Christian faith must be upheld?

- Read 1 Timothy 3:9; 4:6, 10-11, 16 and Titus 1:9; 2:1. What is repeatedly emphasized?

12. The **Negative**: “guard against error.”

- Read 1 Timothy 1:3-4 and Titus 1:10-11, 13-16. What can generally happen when we allow those who teach error into our church community?

- Read 1 Timothy 6:20-21 and Titus 3:9-10. What are we supposed to do when we encounter error?

Truth leads to godliness (Titus 1:1). So, another major theme of the pastoral letters is this: *adorn yourself with godliness versus ungodliness.*

ADORNING YOURSELF WITH GODLINESS VS. UNGODLINESS

Remember that our definition of godliness is “**devotion to God expressed in a life that is pleasing to Him.**” Godliness begins in the heart and mind then is lived out in words and behavior. As you read the two letters, you saw a repeated emphasis on godliness in thought and behavior as the way to please God and impact the world around you.

**Scriptural Insight:** You may have heard someone say, “Cleanliness is next to godliness.” That is not biblical. No amount of disinfecting spray or wipes can cleanse a human heart. God does the cleansing of the heart who puts its trust in Him by faith in Jesus Christ.

13. Let’s look at several New Testament verses that include the quality of godliness in them. The translators use “godliness” (noun) and “godly” (adverb, adjective). Godliness and godly all refer to the devotion to God expressed in a life that is pleasing to Him.

- Read 2 Peter 1:3. What have we been given?
  
- Read 2 Peter 1:5. What are we to do?
  
- Read 2 Peter 3:11-12. How are we to live and why?
  
- Read 1 Timothy 4:7-8 and 1 Timothy 6:11. What action are we to take regarding godliness?
  
- Read Titus 2:11-12. What does the grace of God teach us to do?
  
- Read Acts 3:12-16. Possessing godliness always points to whom?

**Think About It:** The “form” or appearance of godliness may include going to church, knowing Christian doctrine, using Christian clichés, and following a community’s Christian traditions. Such practices can make a person look good, but if the inner attitudes of belief, love, and worship are lacking, the outer appearance is meaningless. Paul warns us not to be deceived by people who only appear to be Christians. It may be difficult to distinguish them from true Christians at first, but their daily behavior will give them away. (*The NIV Life Application Study Bible*, note on 2 Timothy 3:5)

14. Read Titus 2:10 (especially the last part) in several translations, including the NASB. What is one of the purposes of pursuing godliness in our lives?

***What application will you make to adorn yourself with godliness? (This is the “Application” step in the process of Bible Study.)***

15. *Truth versus error:* If Paul made so many comments on the same subject, it should be taken seriously and seen as a pattern woven throughout each letter.
- What could happen to the local church...therefore you...if we do not seriously apply Paul's message to Timothy, Titus, and the church to stay faithful to God's truth and guard against error?
  
  - What specific actions can you or do you take in your daily life to ensure that you don't wander away from God's truth and your sincere devotion to God?
16. **Respond to the Lord about what you learned today:** Adorning yourself with godliness will not only benefit yourself but will also benefit everyone around you. Know also that we are never left on our own to try really, really hard to be godly. We have the Holy Spirit inside us who teaches us how to live godly lives. He has the power and the purpose to transform us to look more like Christ than our old self-centered selves. We cooperate by desiring Him to change us and depending on Him to do that in our lives. Will you ask Him today to give you a desire for godliness in your life and to work in those areas where you do not reflect the life of Jesus well?

***Respond to the Lord about what you learned today.***

***Recommended:*** Listen to the podcast [“Grasping God's Truth Is Essential to Godliness”](#) after doing this lesson to reinforce what you have learned. Use the listener guide on the next page.

## Grasping God's Truth Is Essential to Godliness

Truth enhances your devotion to God. Error takes you away from Him. Both influence how you adorn yourself. Grasping God's truth is essential to godliness.

### **TEACH AND MAINTAIN TRUTH; GUARD AGAINST ERROR.**

- Any error that persists is like a spiritual infection in the Body of Christ. And, like an infection in the human body, it always affects life so it must be addressed.
- The answer to all spiritual infections is the truth that has been given to us in the Bible, especially in the New Testament. The historical reliability of the Scriptures can be investigated to show that the biblical records are trustworthy.

### **DWELL IN TRUTH YOU CAN KNOW.**

- To dwell in truth is to make your home there. That means God's truth dominates your thoughts and attitudes, governs your life, and satisfies your heart.
- Read through the Gospels, getting to know Jesus well. Then, continue reading through the whole New Testament to get the big picture of what your salvation is all about. Then, go back and read through the Old Testament to get the grand picture of God and His plan throughout the ages.
- God gives us plenty of truth in the Bible that we can know and trust. 66 books, 1189 chapters!
- God wants us to know the truth He has revealed to us, to make our home in that truth.

### **HUMBLY ACCEPT WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW OR UNDERSTAND.**

- Some things we read in the Bible we don't understand now but might in the future. There is much we can know now. But, there are things we'll never know or understand. *Deuteronomy 29:29*
- We can do our best to try to understand what is written. When you run across something that you can't seem to understand from a Bible passage, make the choice to humbly accept what you don't know or understand.

### **DISCERN ALL TEACHING THROUGH THE COMPLETE REVELATION OF GOD'S WORD.**

#### **1. Evaluate what you read and hear by comparing it with the whole Bible.**

- Read any verse in the context of the passage where it is found—the paragraph, the chapter, and the book.



- Look at other verses with similar content to let the Bible interpret itself. And, you should always ask the Holy Spirit for understanding.
- Remember that even the best teachers are not infallible. Most are 80-90% right in what they teach and would love to know where they are wrong so they can change it. Always check what you read and hear with what the Word of God says.

## **2. Avoid the “look-imagine-see dragon” when viewing any verse.**

The “look-imagine-see” dragon shows up this way: someone *looks* at a verse or passage, *imagines* what they want it to say, then in their mind *sees* what they have imagined through twisting word meanings and interpretations. Once it starts, it’s like a fiery dragon burning truth in its path. Cultural influence on Bible study feeds this dragon.

- Tame the “look-imagine-see dragon” by considering the Bible as sufficient on its own, not needing our “improvement.”
- Tame the “look-imagine-see dragon” by basing your faith on what **is** in God’s Word, not something you’ve just heard about it and not something you’re imagining to be there.
- Tame the “look-imagine-see dragon” by following the inductive process for Bible Study—observation, interpretation, and application. Then, you can confidently dwell in that truth you can know.

## **CONCLUSION**

Grasping God’s truth is essential for godliness. Grasping truth protects you and preserves your freedom. Believers in Jesus Christ should never stop learning His word and learning from His word. Everything we go through adds to it as we make the right decisions and learn to avoid the bad ones.

The Bible is the greatest of all books; to study it is the noblest of all pursuits; to understand it, the highest of all goals. (Charles Ryrie)

Receive the word of God. Accept it not as a human word, but as it actually is, the word of God. Then, let it permeate your whole being so that you will not only be devoted to God but also be able to adorn yourself with godliness.

*Let Jesus satisfy your heart with such love for God that you will want to live a life that pleases Him.*