

"ISN'T HE SOMETHING MORE"

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Palm Sunday Story - (Vs) *Matthew 21:1-11*

Today we're going to learn specifically about the quality of godliness...

- Palm Sunday is really a celebration of human godliness at its finest...
(Vs) 2nd Peter 1:6c – "...and to perseverance godliness"

Question:

What is "godliness?"

Answer:

Godliness refers to, "The God-ward attitude that results in the duty which man owes to God."

A bit deeper:

"Godliness is a posture, which is characterized by a God focused attitude for God's own sake"

- Let's look at these aspects of godliness displayed by Christ, specifically within the story we just read, The Triumphal Entry...

The First aspect of godliness is that there is a "God-ward attitude."

"Godliness as an attitude is the quality of the inner person that recognizes that the all-powerful Creator exists, and therefore actively seeks to develop a spiritual relationship with Him because of Him."

- In this way, Godliness is a mind set on spiritual matters...

(Vs) Rom. 8:5-6 – "For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace."

- 1st Timothy says this inner spirituality is to be preferred over even physical "bodily exercises."

(Vs) 1 Tim. 4:8 - "... for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come."

- Now Consider: As Jesus rode into Jerusalem... What was on His mind?

(Vs) John 8:50 - "Yet I do not seek my own glory; there is One who seeks it, and He is the judge."

- Meaning: Christ's mind was clearly "God-ward" in its first focus...

In his booklet on "The Christian Graces," James Tolle writes, "Indeed, the graces of virtue, knowledge, and self-control, as well as of patience, must be hallowed and inspired by godliness, so that the thought of God is brought into them all, so that they begin and end with God."

- Before all else... Jesus is riding towards His death for the sake of God...

(Vs) Heb. 12:2 - "...looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God."

- Whose Joy was set before Him? His Holy Father's...
- Meaning: "Throughout the entire triumphal entry, Christ is putting on display His God-ward focus for no greater reason than for God's own sake."

Personal: Do you first serve God for God's own sake, or do you serve God for the health benefits to your life?

- No wonder so many can't seem to live their faith Out Loud... Out Loud Cost!
- And yet, "Godliness is required, for those who seek God and for those who seek to be more like God"... We are called to live "God-Ward" focused lives!

The Second aspect of godliness focuses on the second part of our godliness description...

- Def: Godliness refers to, "The God-ward attitude that results in the duty which man owes to God."
- Meaning there is always a "doing" involved when pleasing God...

(Vs) James 2:14 – “What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him?”

(Vs) James 2:17-18 – “So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. But someone will say, ‘You have faith and I have works.’ Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.”

A life pleasing to God results in what we may call “Spiritual Fruit of a well ripened vine.”

(Vs) Gal. 5:22-23a – “... but the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control...”

(Vs) Gal. 5:25 – “If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.”

- As Jesus continues through town. He sees all these people crying out for salvation.
- He knows this is what has been asked of Him... This is His human life’s duty!

(Vs) John 3:16-17 – “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through Him.”

- Jesus follows God’s desires, and so receives the fruit of His own life’s sacrifice.
- Salvation for those He loves.
- Note: As we translate this to our own lives, we need to be careful.
- We must be careful, not to mistake the actions “of good people” as the same actions of a godly person....
- Morality alone is not godliness.
- Not every display of "spirituality" or "religion" is motivated by the desire to please God.

“Godliness is only motivated by reverence for God because of God.”

- Many in the Christian world have claimed godliness and spirituality as their own to hide deeper, darker motives...
- They "appear" godly (proudly wearing crosses, WWJD bracelets, etc.); they "speak" godly ("Praise the Lord!" "Having a personal relationship with Jesus," etc.), and their lives seem to exemplify godliness (morality, doing good deeds, etc.).
- But without real fruit, the scriptures would say they practice a "form of godliness" and not true godliness and the duties that come with it!

(Vs) 2 Tim. 3:5,7 – "...having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people... always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth."

The Fruits of Godliness can always be seen and tasted...

(Vs) Isaiah 3:10 – "Tell the righteous that it shall be well with them, for they shall eat the fruit of their deeds."

When it comes to duty... "A godly person is one who acts properly and reacts properly to God for God's own sake."

- God is seen in this person from the inside out and from the outside in.
- I believe all throughout His Triumphal Entry that Jesus knew His duty and what was being asked of Him.
- Because of this, I also believe that He found great strength, even in this difficult place, ending this day with a God-ward prayer regarding His mindset and desire at this time...

(Vs) John 12:27-28 – "Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? But for this purpose, I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name." Then a voice came from heaven: "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again."

Perhaps this Palm Sunday you can evaluate your own spiritual attitude and duty...

- Are you functioning in a way that brings glory to God in your spiritual life's attitude and duty?
- Is Jesus Christ, as the opening video asked, something more than what you are allowing Him to be within your life? Is He?