

DISCUSSION GUIDE

The
PRACTICE
of
GODLINESS

JERRY BRIDGES

NAVPRESS®



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How to Use This Discussion Guide

This Bible study is designed to be used in conjunction with the book *The Practice of Godliness*. It may be used for personal Bible study, Sunday school classes, or Bible study discussion groups.

Please notice that the lessons in this study guide don't correspond directly to the chapters in the book. Some of the book chapters are combined in the study lessons. We created the study guide this way to compress the lessons into a shorter amount of time (twelve weeks, if you do one per week) than the book would allow (eighteen chapters).

Although intended as a companion to *The Practice of Godliness*, this study is designed to direct you first into the Scriptures and then into the author's text. Seeing and understanding what the Scriptures say on a subject is much more important than demonstrating that you know what the book says. For this reason, please complete the study questions based on Scriptures pertaining to each chapter before reading the corresponding chapters in the book. Ideally, the author's text will simply reinforce what you have already learned directly from the Bible. If, after reading the author's text, you wish to revise any of your answers, do so in the margin of this study.

The goal of any Bible study should be the *application* of practical, biblical truths to your daily life. As James says, “Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says” (1:22). For this reason, the last question of each lesson is an opportunity for you to write down a personal application from the study. To be of value, this application should be specific and practical, with some personal checkup built into it. Only in this manner will we avoid the danger that James warns us about.

LESSON 1

The Foundation for Godliness

(Chapters One and Two)

1. Godliness is more than a character trait. It is a foundational spiritual quality that makes the entire Christian life dynamic, effective, and pleasing to God. To gain a clearer picture of this vital quality, look up the following verses of Scripture and write down the key thought about godliness found in each passage.

1 Timothy 4:7

1 Timothy 4:8

1 Timothy 6:6

1 Timothy 6:11

Titus 2:11-12

2 Peter 1:3

2 Peter 3:10-12

2. Thinking about the information you compiled in question 1, how would you summarize the value of godliness in two or three sentences?

3. What two important facts do Genesis 5:21-24 and Hebrews 11:5 tell us about Enoch?

How do these two passages describe a godly person?

4. Read chapter 1 of *The Practice of Godliness*. How is godliness defined on page 17?

Does this definition differ in any way from what you have understood godliness to be in the past? What is new to you about the book's definition?

What are the three essential elements of devotion to God? (See pages 15–16.)

What other elements do you feel are important in devotion to God?

Write down any other truths from chapter 1 of *The Practice of Godliness* that are especially meaningful to you.

5. Some people consider the “fear of God” to be basically an Old Testament concept. How do the following passages demonstrate that the fear of God is still important for us today?

Isaiah II:1-3

Acts 9:31

I Peter 1:17

6. The Bible describes two apparently contradictory attitudes the Christian ought to hold toward God: fear and confidence. What insights do the following passages suggest to you about how you can hold both these attitudes in your heart at the same time?

Romans 8:15; I Timothy 6:15-16; Hebrews 10:19; 12:28-29

7. What does I John 4:8-10 teach us about the extent of God's love?

Can you think of other passages of Scripture that teach the same idea?

8. How personal did Paul believe God's love was, and what effect did this personalized love have on him? (See 2 Corinthians 5:14-15; 1 Timothy 1:14-16.)

9. How do the following verses describe the desire the writers of Scripture had for God?

Psalm 27:4

Psalm 42:1-2

Psalm 63:1

Philippians 3:10

10. Read chapter 2 of *The Practice of Godliness*. What additional important truths do you see there concerning devotion to God?

11. A good way to make your study of godliness practical is to plan specific applications you can make in your daily speech, attitudes, and behavior. Take a moment to think out and write down some applications of godliness that could challenge you this coming week. As you do this, consider which Scripture passages used in this study or in chapters 1 and 2 of *The Practice of Godliness* would be helpful to keep in mind for these applications.