

7 Marks of Godliness

“He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?”

Micah 6:8

Humility is the true hallmark of spirituality. Humility is the character of true servanthood (Jn 13:14-17). Humility honours and exalts others above himself (Phi 2:3,4). Lowliness is a true expression of a humble walk (Eph 4:2). This trait expresses the nature of Christlikeness (Mk 11:29).

The characteristic of a man of God is clearly spelled out in 1 Tim 6:11,12,17. Firstly, the man of God is known or marked by what he flees from. The word ‘flee’ is in a present imperative, which means a continuing action, a continual action being commanded. The Greek verb, *pheugo*, from which we get the English fugitive. When the temptation of sin comes, we begin to behave like fugitives. We are ‘running’ men. We are running relentlessly. We are running all the time. We are fleeing from evil all the time. The question is, what things are we fleeing from? Look back the previous verses of 9 & 10. We flee from the love of money and all the attendant corruptions that accompanied it. Greed corrupts good morals.

The greatest snare of this evil age: *“flee sexual immorality”* (1 Cor 6:18). If one is to be a man of God, he is a ‘running’ man. He must flee from the self-indulgence of moral vices. 2 Timothy 2:22, Paul said, *“Avoid youthful lusts”*. Let no lust corrupts your soul. The will of God has clearly defined the boundary of our conduct. *“For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality...For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness.”* (1 Thes 4:3,7)

Paul added, *“Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry.”* The love of money or the worship of self-achievement (fame) can be idolatry. The scripture declares, *“covetousness, which is idolatry.”* (Col 3:5) When you have no reins over your appetites, unbridled desires will make you a slave. It will become an addictive behaviour pattern. It will ruin your life completely.

Thirdly, the man of God is known not only by what he flees from but what he follows after. The word ‘pursue’ in New American Standard (NAS) is an active verb tense. While we fleeing from worldliness, we are running after spiritual virtues. We are fleeing carnal vices and pursuing spiritual virtues. And this instruction was also in the present imperative indicating continual action under command. We are commanded to be always fleeing and always following. The negative side always fleeing the corruptible things and always following after, pursuing righteousness and godly things. Pursue this one goal: to be well-pleasing in His sight (2 Cor 5:9).

Righteousness is about doing what is right in His eyes (Eph 6:5-9). Godliness is an internal matter, our thought life and the motives of our heart.

Fourthly, he is marked by love, *agapen*, volitional unselfish love, unrestrained, unrestricted love towards God and men. He is a lover of God, devoted fully to the Lord, committed to self-sacrificing service on behalf of the Lord to people. He loves men in the service that He gives His life away to them. The love of God is his motivator. He does everything with a pure motivation.

Fifthly, he possesses patience, another golden virtue of godliness. It refers to perseverance in the New American Standard. It has to do with being steadfast, *hypomone*, to remain under. *Hopo* mean under, from the verb *meno* to remain, to stay under. He has an unflinching ability to endure. He has an ability and long stamina to hang in there, to remain unmoved under the burden and weight of distress.

Sixthly, the fight of faith. The man of God is known by what he flees from, what he follows after and what he fights for. Throughout history, biblical truth is always under attack, we must fight to preserve the holy standard of truth. Chapter 6 verse 20: "*Guard what has been entrusted to you*", that is your assignment and holy duty. "*Retain or guard the standard of sound words*" (2 Tim 1:13). It is a matter of guardianship (2 Tim 2:15).

Seventhly, the man of God is a lover of one book (Bible). Paul has a good reading habit, "when you come, bring me the books, specially the parchments." (2 Tim 4:13). Paul knew that the source of wisdom is the Holy scriptures (2 Tim 3:15-17). Paul admonished us to fill and saturate our mind with scriptures (Col 3:16). The word of life purify and cleanses our life (Eph 5:26; Jn 15:3)

As we remain faithful to the above matters, godliness will be the adornment of our spiritual walk before God.