



## CHEERFUL GODLINESS

### “The Disciplines of Godliness” 1 Timothy 4:1-16

No. 4129

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Paul understood the importance of athletics in the lives of his contemporaries. Accordingly, he found it helpful to use athletic terms to define and contrast the difference between “physical training” and the need for believers to “train (themselves) in godliness.”

#### I. Ascetic Discipline Which Contradicts the Gospel. vv. 1-4

- A. The emphasis of the ascetics.
  1. All matter, including the human body, is evil.
  2. Spirituality, therefore, requires the subjugation of the body.
  3. This includes abstinence from marriage and sexual activity.
  4. It also includes a strict vegetarian diet. See Romans 14:1ff
  5. Ascetic discipline believed to be the pathway to salvation.
- B. The errors of the ascetics.
  1. They had abandoned the faith and given in to demonic influences.
  2. They knew better but persisted in their hypocritical teaching.
  3. They had allowed their consciences to be “seared.”
  4. They were repudiating the basic teachings about creation and salvation.

#### II. Athletic Discipline Which Has Limited Value. v. 8; 1 Corinthians 9:24f

- A. The “upside” of athletic training.
  1. It encourages respect for the human body.
  2. It teaches discipline, channels desire, encourages determination.
- B. The “downside” of athletic training.
  1. It can overemphasize the physical at the expense of the spiritual.
  2. It focuses on the temporal at the expense of the eternal.

#### III. Authentic Discipline Which Contributes to Godliness.

- A. “Godliness has value for all things.” v. 8
- B. Godliness holds “promise for the present life and the life to come.” v. 8
- C. Therefore, “train yourself to be godly.” v. 7
  1. Be ready to commit to following “the truths of the faith.” v. 6
  2. Be intolerant of “godless myths and old wives tales.” v. 7
  3. Be willing to “labor and strive.” (Gk. “Agonizomai”) v. 19; Colossians 1:19
  4. Be careful to set an example of winsome consistency. v. 12
  5. Be diligent in the development and exercise of your gifts. v. 14
  6. Be focused in your pursuit of a godly life; it benefits everyone. vv. 15-16

**Point to Ponder:** Are people able to see my progress in godliness? v. 15