

28b ACTS

Let's pick up our study in Acts. We're striving vigorously to get into chapter 11, but in chapter 10, when Peter opens his mouth and begins his sermon to this assembled group of Romans, this is really the focal point of this section, because with the foreshadowing we've seen with Aeneas and then Tabitha, and the fact that the gospel is going to open the plan of God up to all nations. It isn't restricted to Israel.

You don't come to join Israel. You don't start trying to heed the law of Moses as a civil code and so on. This is the first Gentile audience sermon that you find in the book of Acts.

It's right after this three-fold vision. It's right after the supernatural bringing together of Cornelius at his hour of prayer and Peter up in Lydda and coming down to Joppa and so on. So, in verse 34 when it says, Peter opened his mouth and said, and of course this is a summary.

He said a lot more than this on this occasion. No one could resist a captive audience. He probably went on for a few hours.

Refreshments were served, breaks were taken, and questions were asked. But this is the sonation. In truth, I perceive that God shows no partiality, but every nation, whoever fears him and works righteousness, is accepted by him.

And what we want to get hold of here is the perspective that God looks at a Christian life. He doesn't look at us from the side and say, here's this unbeliever. I want to get them saved.

He looks at it from the standpoint of completion and he says, there's a person that I want to be acceptable. Salvation is one step in that process. It's the necessary first step.

But God doesn't consider it as separate and distinct from growth, maturity, fruitfulness, production, persevering to receive an inheritance and share the glory of Christ, rule and reign with him in the millennial kingdom, reflect the glory of God throughout the eternal future. As I have said many times before, a company doesn't go out on job day. They had a big job fair over here in Grapevine or Irving or somewhere.

Huge job fair. Might have even been down at the place across from the Infomart. What's that big place down there? The market center.

I think they had a big job fair at the market center. Well, all of these companies come and they say, we're looking for people we're trying to hire. There's a new thing that's hiring 1,500 people over there further west from us.

It's a hotel, conference center type of thing. I forget the name of it. They need 1,500

people or 1,300 people, I believe, to run that.

They're hiring people to work in the kitchens, people to guide people who are there for conferences and things. Huge. Well, so you need all these people.

And so you go to the job fair, you go to a recruiting thing and you say, all right, you people want a job? And they say, yes, I do. And you say, all right, fill out this application. Take the test.

Everybody gets a drug test now. Passed the test. Got the application.

You're hired. Well, great. And so then the big resort over there opens, the big conference center and hotel complex, and no employees show up.

Hired 1,300 people. Nobody shows. And they say, hey, I mainly just I wanted a job.

I'm employed. You hired me. I'm on your rolls.

I'm expecting a check to roll in sometime in a couple of weeks. But what do you mean show up for work? Why do I have to do that? Well, the purpose of the employer is not just to get people hired. It's to get the work done.

Right. This is how God views salvation. God has a program.

God has a plan. He's got things he wants to do. And he's not getting us saved just because he kind of feels sorry that we're all headed for the lake of fire.

The lake of fire is supposed to be a motivation to look to God, lay hold of his grace and his salvation and grow in grace and knowledge of the Savior and become productive. Be someone who bears fruit. And when you bear fruit, God will trim and prune and enable you to bear more fruit.

God is looking for fruit bearers, not just people to save the whole Christian world. Notwithstanding, when you look around, you think that it's all about getting saved. When you look in the Bible, it's all about working righteousness.

This is the theme. This is the opening statement. Every year they give Mayberry awards and different kinds of awards for books that come out.

Or maybe it's the Newberry. We were watching Andy Griffith the other night. So I got Mayberry on the brain.

It's the Newberry Medal. But there are awards for different things. And when you talk to people who write fiction, any good writer will tell you that the most important line that ever gets written in the book is the very first one.

In fact, they have a contest every year where they try to write the most creative,

attention grabbing, opening sentence. You can make it as long as you want. It can only be one sentence and it's supposed to be the opening sentence of your purported, alleged book.

And then they have a contest to see which one is the best. Well, this is the opening statement in Peter's sermon. Doesn't matter what nation you're from, fear God, work righteousness, and you'll be accepted, dekotos, received by him.

It's not a matter of not being shoved into the lake of fire. It's a matter of being received by God. How many parables have we seen? The sitting down at the table and the master of the house, rising up and shutting the door, people pounding and saying, let me in.

I'm sorry, I never knew you. Depart from me, you workers of what? Iniquity. Whatever is not of faith is sin.

Whatever is not a work of righteousness is a work of either sin, human good, or evil. That's just three classifications of what is not acceptable to God. There is a difference between human good, sin, and evil.

Very quickly, we know what sin is. That's pretty straightforward. Evil is a pattern of sin perpetuated over time.

It is one thing for someone to tell a lie. It's something else for them to be a liar. To tell a lie is a sin.

To be a liar is evil. It's one thing to break a rule or rebel against an authority. It's something else to be a rebel and to be lawless and to perpetuate that as a pattern and a climate in one's life.

That is the difference between sin and evil. What is human good? Human good is works of righteousness that we do. We think it's good.

We judge it to be righteous. I see this person sleeping off and drunk on my lawn. I will wake them up, bring them in, give them a bowl of Wheaties and a fresh coat and ten bucks and send them on their way.

Why? Well, in the why determines whether it is divine good or human good. If I think in my heart of hearts that this is pleasing to God, that it's in accordance with everything I've learned from God's Word, that it is an opportunity for me to be sacrificial towards self and beneficial towards someone else, I do it in the name of the Lord Jesus, that's one thing. If I say, boy, the neighbors are looking, I better get this guy off my lawn, hustle him on his way, or boy, won't this be a great story for me to tell when I get together this afternoon with these other people and say, oh, let me tell you, I had a homeless man on my lawn this morning and I took him in and gave him this and that and the other, and it's a story I can tell to elevate my standing supposedly amongst those that know me, that's

human good.

I haven't broken a commandment of God. I haven't committed a sin, but I've generated good that is good in the eyes of people. This is Pharisaic type of righteousness, giving money because it is deemed to be good.

That's human good. So you've got these three categories. That is not what is acceptable to God, working righteousness.

So, you and I, in contemplating meeting Jesus, who has been given all authority in heaven and earth to judge, he's going to be running the judgment seat of Christ at which each one of us will stand all by ourselves, no curve, no group grade. Well, let's just take all of you together and we'll just kind of average you out and everybody can kind of go in rubbing elbows. We each stand there alone.

How can we stand? What is the way that we can show up with that righteousness? How can we be acceptable, in other words? Well, let's see what the Bible has to say about being accepted by him. Psalm chapter 15, verse 1 and 2, gives us an idea, O Lord, who may abide in your tent? Who may dwell on your holy hill? He who walks with integrity and works righteousness and speaks truth in his heart. As we think about it, it's a higher standard than the righteousness of the law.

It's not visible and external. It is invisible and internal. If you look at that entire psalm, who may dwell on your holy hill? He who walks with integrity.

He who works righteousness and speaks the truth in his heart. He who does not backbite with his tongue, nor does he do evil to his neighbor, nor does he take up a reproach against his friend, in whose eyes a vile person is despised, but he honors those who fear the Lord. One of the problems in our society is we are trying to take vile people and get them to not be despised.

Homosexuals are being shoved at us right and left. Ellen DeGeneres is back on television with a program and they've got some kind of a mop-haired guy that keeps showing up on one program and another. They've got five or six homosexuals that are on some kind of a prime time show.

I haven't seen any of those, so I don't know what they do. I just know that they are on the schedule and the world is pushing homosexuality as a sort of normal alternative when it is in fact an abnormal, abominable aberration that in Israel was punishable by death. That is not changed in the New Testament.

Read Romans chapter 1. That is vile. It is vile behavior and it spreads. What they don't tell you, it's like the things we were talking about on the break, why do people want to try to brand something as anti-Semitic when it is just factual in going back to New Testament days and who put Christ on the cross.

We can't say the Jews had anything to do with the crucifixion of Christ. For heaven's sake, who else was there? He didn't go preach to the Romans for three and a half years and they didn't get upset. It was the Jews.

Why did God destroy the nation in 70 AD and leave not one stone on another at the temple in Jerusalem? It wasn't because the people were kind and good and loved Jesus and there was a handful of Pharisees and priests that had him put to death. Do you think God is so ham-handed that he can't specify who to discipline? Well, I can't really figure out which of the Pharisees I'll just wipe out the whole nation. I haven't got a 22 handy, I'll just use a shotgun and get them all.

It's just incomprehensible that people will say, well, you can't leave the Bible. Look at your modern English translations. They won't even say the Jews where the Greek text says the Jews.

They say the leaders of the Jews because it's politically incorrect. Well, it is not anti-Semitic because, listen to me now, if you're going to be anti-Semitic, who are you anti-Semitic against? Living Jews or dead Jews? Do you go down to the cemetery and find the headstones that have the Star of David and rant and spit and carry on and try to insult them? Anti-Semitism is a fact and it's an awful thing, it is an evil, but it occurs with living people. Now, if we are reading the Bible about Jews who lived 2,000 years ago and saying the Jews of 2,000 years ago put Christ on the cross, this is not anti-Semitic.

This is history. This is the truth of the word of God. They did it and go back further, go back 3,400 years to the time of the Exodus and the ones who were dancing around the foot of the mountain where Moses was getting the law around the golden calf.

Did they worship the golden calf or not? Well, it's anti-Semitic to say they worshiped the golden calf. You're saying they weren't faithful, they didn't love their God and didn't appreciate their heritage and how dare you say that about the nice Jews at Mount Sinai? It's just incomprehensible. But look at verse 4 of Psalm 50, in whose eyes a vile person is despised.

People carry this judge not lest ye be judged so far that we no longer discern, we're afraid to label things for what they are. It is evil to take something bad and call it good. Look with me at 1 Timothy chapter 4. The Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons.

Speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron. In other places Paul talks about people giving heed to fables. I got a shortwave radio for Christmas.

I literally cranked it up this afternoon. It's a hand generated thing and it runs for an hour. You turn the crank for a little while and it's self powered.

The guy that you can practically pick up without a radio, you can get him in your fillings and put your ear up to any kind of a metal object in your house. His shortwave is all over the bandwidth is Dr. Gene Scott out in LA in his temple of the University of Los Angeles or whatever it is. The guy is a purveyor of fables.

He is hounding people for money, get on the phone, send me money, this, that and the other. And yet what is he teaching? The Great Pyramid, British Israelism and who knows what all. He went on for an hour and a half that I heard this afternoon all about the Great Pyramid and how it echoes human history and here is a bend in the tunnel and that's when Jesus came.

Well that's all fine but what is God interested in? The pyramid? No. Fruitfulness, working righteousness. You can learn about the Great Pyramid until you can build one of your own and it doesn't enable you to work any righteousness.

What happens? Why are there so many Christians producing so little righteousness today? Because of what Paul warned Timothy about in chapter 4, departing from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits, doctrines of demons, speaking lies and hypocrisy, their own conscience seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry. This has always confused me. However long in human history you rove back and forth through the centuries and through the ages, when can you think of anybody ever saying don't get married? Can you think of a time? I can think of a time right now.

I can't think of any other time when people forbade to marry but what do people say now? Well you need to live together. You need to try out. You need to see if this is going to work or not before you get married.

Don't get married too soon because you're just going to get divorced. Don't get married at all, it's a waste of time. You've got to get a prenup.

You've got to do this, you've got to do that. It's much better to just live together. The tax advantages and things just aren't worth it.

Regardless of what any individual does or what any couple may do, this is a trend of society. Our society encourages non-marriage. Because they say marriage is just ending divorce, what's the point? Let's just be roommates for a while and have fun and then we'll go our separate ways.

Our society, it doesn't exactly forbid but it discourages marriage. And it's just going to get worse. Why do we have the Defense of Marriage Act coming up and trying to define what a marriage is? Because it's under attack.

The institution is under attack. If you want to keep track of this, watch what Chuck Colson produces. He's got his thumb on the pulse of the homosexual agenda and all of the inroads they are making and how they are attacking state legislatures and trying to

get this law overturned to redefine marriage so that it means nothing.

And that will be the end. And this is the attack on marriage. Abstaining from foods which God created to be received with Thanksgiving.

Everybody ought to eat healthy, eat bran, eat oatmeal, eat vegetables, stay away from your saturated fats, etc. That's all fine and good. But it's just like we were talking about on the break.

There is a difference between seeing something and saying that is prudent and that is wise, that's good stewardship of my body, and making something a religion. There are people who make their diet plan their religion. Their faith is in it.

They believe that their life is going to be extended by it. Jesus said, which of you by worrying can add a cubit to your stature? Can you turn one hair white or black? Can you determine your life span? All of these things are determined by God. You can be prudent and you can eat healthy and you can do all kinds of wonderful things.

If you are prone to diabetes, then watch your sugar. If you are prone to getting heavy, then watch heavy producing foods. Don't go off on a donut binge and say, well, it's all in God's hands.

But, commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with Thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. We were talking about this study they are doing on Alzheimer's, trying to figure out why has there been such an upswing in Alzheimer's? It's because people aren't dying of anything else. Staving off heart attacks, recovering from strokes, living longer, reducing lung cancer and all that.

The cost yearly in Alzheimer's and senility and that kind of thing is up in the billions. But, they say this is just the calm before the storm because when the baby boom generation all gets up in their seventies, it is going to quadruple and quintuple what we are spending now on geriatric care and senile people care. And they say we are frantically trying to find a cure and get this thing licked before all these people come in and sink our economy and sink our society because what's your alternative? When people go nutty, it's either euthanasia or pay to care for them.

And people have to quit work, people have to take a second job, people have to find a way to pay for care if they can't provide the care themselves. And they are expecting that in about fifteen years from now it is going to be a crisis of unimaginably large proportions. Nobody wants to think about it right now, but just do the math.

Well, part of the problem is if you are such a health fanatic that you studiously avoid silting up your arteries so that you can do like a normal American and walk around and just keel over right in the middle of being totally healthy, you are going to live to become senile. So, it isn't a promotion or a denial of any particular lifestyle choice that you want

to make. The principle is, is your faith in God or is your faith in your procedure, in what you prioritize and in what you choose.

I will extend my life by living on bird seed or whatever it is. If that's where you are putting your faith, you are entering into the realm of non-righteousness. It's human good at best, it may be sin and evil at worst.

Trust God. What is Paul promoting here? He says, listen, people are going to tell you don't eat that food. God created food to be taken with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.

If you believe and know the truth, I don't go around eating a box of donuts a day, but I don't avoid normal, traditional American food either. I eat my pieces of bacon, I drink my coffee, I eat my eggs, I drink my milk, I eat a balanced smorgasbord of food that is available and I thank God every time I eat it. He has made it possible for us to live in tremendous abundance.

Solomon in all his glory didn't have a refrigerator. Solomon never had a single bite of Jell-O. I love Jell-O.

I love Jell-O with fruit in it, I love Jell-O with whipped cream on it, I love Jell-O along with ice cream, mix almost anything in it. The only thing I don't like is lime Jell-O with carrots diced in it, which I have had and that's rough. Almost anything else made of Jell-O is great.

Solomon never had Jell-O, we have it, and I am thankful for it. I am thankful for red meat, I am thankful for bacon, I am thankful for the occasional hamburger, whatever it may be. God created food to be received with thanksgiving.

Let God figure out the length of your life. Patty's grandfather was a coal miner, smoked like a coal stove, ate whatever came to hand and lived to be 95, because that's just how long God detailed his life to be. Ewell Gibbons lived on pine cones and health food and died of some weird kind of indigestion in his early 60's.

The runner Jim Fix was a health nut. He ran more miles than any three of us combined. I think he was 50 something, he keeled over.

Take what comes, be prudent, be wise, make your choices, but don't put your faith in those choices. Don't think that your life is going to be determined by diet, by exercise, by any of these things. We rest our hope and our confidence in God.

Those who believe, those who are trusting and know the truth, that's how we live, that's how we bear fruit. How do you become acceptable to God? Fear Him, work righteousness. How do you fear Him and work righteousness? Right here.

Receive with thanksgiving what God provides, believe and know the truth. Take everything else with a grain of salt, be balanced. Don't think that this one thing or this one area or this one approach is the be all and end all and without it all is lost.

Without God all is lost. With God all things are possible. I personally hope and pray that I may keel over right in the middle of doing something fun with all of my faculties and not get so old that I can't think.

I just would rather have a total massive cardiac arrest than outlive my brain. I just don't think and pray God. You can pray it for me.

Because how could you go in and learn the word of God if your mental faculties start to leave? How can you remember what you have learned? How can you make application? I think the grace of God to a growing healthy believer is to give you access to the truth that you love the most for as long as possible. If you love that, I don't believe God will take it away. I've never seen it happen.

I don't think it will happen. If you instruct the brethren in these things, notice verse 5, the food you eat, every creature of God is good. Nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving.

If you go over as a guest and you're trying to be vegetarian and somebody cooks up a great big old fat ribeye, just say grace, thank God that through no fault of your own you're going to be forced to eat this delicious piece of steak and put it in God's hands. You don't have to do it as a regular thing, but don't make an issue. Don't say my life is over if I eat this piece of red meat.

All of my antioxidants are going to go awry. By the way, I think there may be something to that antioxidant thing. Little free radicals.

I think free radicals are a bad thing. I always have, ever since the 60's. Ever since Kent State, I think free radicals ought to be eliminated.

I think somebody ought to go take care of them. So I'm all for the antioxidant thing. And when I think about it and if somebody can label one as such, I'll be happy to take it with thanksgiving.

Nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving. Just relax. Your life isn't what you eat.

Your life isn't what you wear. Jesus said this, right? Take no thought for what you will eat or what you will wear. Don't worry if your shoes aren't the latest style.

Don't worry if your suit is...wow, some of mine are like 25 years out of date. People look at it and say, whoa, did you come out of a time machine from the 70's? Where did you

get those labels? Where did you get that tie? Everything is to be received with thanksgiving. It is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer.

You know what the word is there, sanctified? It is set apart. It is distinguished from everything else that goes on in the world. Same word that is used for the saints.

It is sanctified by the Word of God and by prayer. If you're thankful, you see it as from God, let God sort it out. Let God deal with the oxidants and the radicals and the fat and whatever else is in there.

People go all haywire about, oh, they're giving growth hormones to the cows and we eat the cows and then we get the growth hormone. You know, would that kind of a thing work? You could give the cow all your shots and then eat the cow and you wouldn't have to get them? You know, that doesn't work. A lady tried to tell me once that you can't eat pork because they're scavengers and they don't have the right kind of stomachs and they have all of this trash in their system.

Well, okay, so then cows that eat grass and have a complete vegetarian diet are all full of cholesterol and they didn't eat that. It was manufactured in their system and their diet didn't help them. A piece of pork isn't made of what the pig ate.

The pig ate it and digested it and his system built all new tissue out of it. It isn't made out of slop. It isn't made out of whatever he rooted around and ate, corn cobs and so on.

It's pseudoscience. It's superstition and myth. It is fables.

Lies and doctrines of demons. God built creation. He knows we're in a fallen world.

It will all work out fine. Understanding this is part of working righteousness. The contrast we're seeing here in the Word of God is don't think that you've got to go out and create a ministry.

Sam Hull Ministries, Joseph McCusker Ministries, Patty Hull Ministries, Jared McCusker Ministries Incorporated. We think that working righteousness is going out and doing good deeds like a knight errant with our shiny shield and so on. Working righteousness is our thinking.

Remember Psalm 15? Speaking truth in the heart. The truth is God controls history and God controls our lives. We need to be prudent.

We need to exercise wisdom. But our faith is not in our prudence and our faith is not in our wisdom. Our faith is in God.

God will make up for our mistakes. He did it at salvation. He'll do it after.

God will sanctify whatever we eat, whatever we accept in our lives. Eating is just a

metaphor for what you take in, what comes your way, what you're forced to swallow. There's a lot of... there's an old saying about guys that have to put up with a lot of flack and a lot of grief in their job or in their life or whatever.

And so they go in the evenings to the pub or to the bar and they wash that down with beer. I'm having to wash down the organic fertilizer that characterizes my life. And I'm just washing that stuff down with the beer.

It's what you eat means what am I having to consume? What am I having to put up with in my life? And the Bible says, whatever comes, take it with thanksgiving. It's sanctified by the Word of God. It's sanctified by prayer.

Don't decide that you've got a constant diet of evil. If you're in the Word of God and you're in prayer with God, God will convert that to good. God will sanctify it.

Every creature of God is good. Nothing is to be refused. If it is received with thanksgiving, it is sanctified.

Look at verse 6. The Apostle Paul talking to Timothy, a pastor, says, if you instruct the brethren in these things, you will be a good minister of Jesus Christ. You will be nourished in the words of faith and of the good doctrine which you have carefully followed. Verse 7, but reject profane and old wives' fables.

What does it mean to be a profane fable? Does it mean it's got bad language in it? Profane means of the world. There is the holy and the profane. There is that which is spiritual and that which is earthly.

Profane just means it's of the world. It's the world's diet. It's the world's view.

It's the world's take. It's what the talking heads say. Reject profane and old wives' fables and exercise yourself toward godliness.

How do you do that? You say, okay, I'm going to exercise myself toward godliness tomorrow. Tomorrow is Saturday. How am I going to exercise myself toward godliness? Everybody think of a way.

We've got an entire day stretching before us tomorrow and Saturday. What's one way we can exercise ourselves toward godliness? We have to know what godliness is, right? What is godliness? If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship each with the other. The blood of Jesus Christ, his son, cleanses us from all sin.

If we confess our sins, he's faithful and just to forgive our sins, to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. To be cleansed and to be in the light is to be godly. You're where God is.

You're in the environment and in the fellowship of God. That's godliness. You're like God.

Be ye holy for I am holy. Be sanctified. I am sanctified.

Live with a view toward the eternal because God is eternal. So what can we do tomorrow? Seek to work righteousness. Eschew evil and human good, good that's just good because people say it's good, and sin.

Seek the work of righteousness. Take what comes with thanksgiving and prayer. Whatever comes our way, bad circumstance, abuse from people, bottom comes out of the hot water tank, floods your house, carpeting soap.

The worst thing I ever saw in that regard was when my buddy went home to Colorado for Christmas and I was still in Lawton and he said, watch my house. I said, okay. Had a big cold snap.

I went over to his house, skated over on the ice, used my key, unlocked his door, walked in, and just as I opened the door, his entire living room ceiling fell to the floor, soaking wet because the water feed pipe to his refrigerator ice maker was routed by some oaky through the attic instead of through the wall and it got too cold up there, froze, split, and then proceeded to rain water liberally all over the insulation, all over the sheet rock, all over the entire structure of his ceiling and the tremor produced when I opened the door, brought the whole thing down, pink insulation and all, all over his furniture, all over his carpet. His house and everything in it was just a complete mess and I had to call him and he had to cut short his Christmas leave and come back and deal with insurance and all that. But that's the kind of thing, sometimes stuff happens.

It's what we take. We just give God the glory. Well, at least I wasn't standing there when it came.

I was thankful that I was at the doorway and not in the house trying to figure out where the water was coming from when it came down because that stuff is heavy. I don't know if you, I tried to move some of it and get his stuffed turkey and some other things out from under the debris there and wet sheet rock and insulation is exceedingly heavy. If I had been standing under there, I would have been injured.

And so in the midst of something like that, you can be thankful that no one was hurt, be thankful that the damage wasn't worse, be thankful that the valuables that were in the other end of the house didn't get wet and soaked and ruined and that it wasn't any worse than it was. Whatever comes, prayer and thanksgiving, it's of God. God loves us.

He's our Heavenly Father. Use the meal as a metaphor, as an analogy. Everything is sanctified by the Word of God in prayer.

Bodily exercise, verse 8, profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come. Most of us in here work out to a greater or lesser extent and it is beneficial, but it's sort of a temporary benefit. I've

looked at it in the grand scope of human history.

We're sustaining our little temporary body here for a few years. It's ultimately all going to break down. The thing that concerns me is the more I run and the farther along I get, I start feeling more and more creakiness in my joints.

And then I heard, you know, this was sort of a phobia building in the back of my mind. And then President Bush had to go in because he's been a runner and his knees wore out. So they had to go in and put him on some glucosamine chondroitin and try to build his cartilage back up.

I'm already on that. My dad suggested it because I've had a bad knee forever and it helped his knees and it works. But whatever we do to sustain this physical plant, nothing wrong with doing it.

He doesn't say it doesn't profit at all. He says it's a little profit compared to preparing for eternity. Godliness is profitable for all things.

Godliness is acceptability. Peter said, you know what, the meaning of this vision is everyone has a shot at being accepted by God. You don't have to be a Jew.

You don't have to join Israel. You and I can be accepted by God and the criteria is very simple. Fear God.

Take Him into account in the day. Take Him into account when we tackle a project. Take Him into account when we're in the midst of conversation.

Take Him into account when we are exhibiting attitudes and when we're looking at something and forming an opinion and our emotions are starting to get a hold of us and we say, I'm violently disliking that or I'm violently upset about this or I'm going off of my balance point over this issue, either to the good or to the bad. Fearing God means I'm going to stop and remember that I am in the view of the Holy One and I will stand at the judgment bar of the Lord Jesus Christ and answer for what I am about to do. Let me rethink this.

The Lord Jesus wouldn't approve of me thinking this way or acting this way or making this priority. So, that's godliness. Fear God.

Work righteousness. It's one thing to say that. It's something else to really get a sense of what it means to live it out day by day.

I hope that the scriptures we've looked at in Psalm 15 and in 1 Timothy 4 have given us at least an inkling of what it means to be accepted, to be dektos, received. I like that idea of dekomai. God will receive us.

He will take us in. We will get to sit at that great table. The Lord Jesus, it says in

Revelation, will gird Himself and serve manna to those who are seated there.

What a privilege. What an honor. What a great thing to look forward to.

It's ours for the asking. It's ours for the taking. If we just remember who we are and why we're here.

Let's close in a word of prayer. We'll begin, I promise, in Acts 11 next time. Father, thank you for the privilege of receiving these truths from your word.

We pray that God the Holy Spirit will minister them to our hearts, help us to see their application in the daily challenges, the daily decisions that we make in our lives. We pray it in Jesus' name. Amen.