

Session 1: Determined Godliness in a Godless World

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Preacher: Guest: Terry Wragg

[0 : 00] Well, thank you, Jeff. I think this is on. Everybody can hear it if it's working. Thank you for that introduction. I feel somewhat of a humble privilege of just being in Jeff's life for so many years.

Almost like a friendship like David and Jonathan had when they were together in the Old Testament. And so it's been a sweet friendship over the years. We connect as we have moved across the country in different places from time to time. And so it's been great to reconnect with him.

And then out of the blue, he called me and wanted me to come up here and shepherd and be with you guys. And so I said, absolutely, I'd be glad to do that. And so we're thankful the Lord has orchestrated that for us to be up here with you.

The airlines are still flying and we made it without any delays. That was a good thing. We're hoping we can make it home to the same thing. But it's wonderful to be here with you this weekend and to just open the Word of God together as we get to think about disciplining ourselves for godliness.

I want to start our conference in the book of Psalms. If you have your Bibles, you want to turn to Psalm 101.

[1 : 17] Psalm 101.

What would become the modern Olympic Games in Paris. Sullivan had no coach to train him. No nutritional plan that he was following as his regime for his own training.

No structured training program. In fact, history tells us that many athletes of that time believed that natural ability alone was what you needed to carry you to victory in any kind of sporting event like that.

However, as the competition intensified, it obviously became clear that those who were trained with a disciplined and intentional training program, they far surpassed anybody who didn't have any of that.

Anybody who was just there on their sheer talent was pale in comparison to the rest. And over time, the entire athletic world was transformed, learning that greatness is not inherited.

[2 : 53] That it is cultivated through the practice and through the perseverance and through determination. And I was thinking about that in light of the conference because the theme verse of this conference shows that the Apostle Paul understood that truth long before the Olympic Games ever came to be anything.

Writing to Timothy, a young pastor serving in a church that was located in a godless culture filled with all kinds of theological confusion, he gave an exhortation not grounded in emotion, not grounded in self-made talent, but in discipline.

And he said that verse that you men have chosen for the theme of your conference, have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives tales, rather train yourself for godliness.

And that verse is interesting because the language Paul uses there is athletic language. It's the original word *gudonazo* in the original language.

It's a word that means training. It reminds us of the rigorous effort it takes when you go to the gymnasium. When you're in the workout place, in the gym, the place where your body is strengthened through repetition and resistance and deliberate effort.

[4 : 28] However, Paul wasn't concerned when he was talking to Timothy about physical effort. He wasn't concerned with physical fitness. His intent was on spiritual formation.

And his words really should remind us as we begin our time in this conference that holiness is not incidental.

Godliness is not something that comes by talent. It's not inherited by your own family line. It's not developed through proximity to religious things.

It's not achieved by some mere profession. It's cultivated and shaped. It's gained in the crucible of spiritual training.

It's gained through the practice of obedience to the scriptures. Just as athletes have to submit to discipline in their own life for a perishable crown.

[5 : 36] So today, we as Christians, and I would say even at the forefront, Christian men, because we're called by God to be the leaders.

As Christian men, we must consider what it means to reject the trivial and to resist spiritual complacency. And to exercise our faith, not casually, but rigorously.

Why? To train ourselves for godliness. Why? Because the world encourages everything but that.

So I want us to begin our time in Psalm 101.

But like I said, before we get to that passage, I want us to go to the book of Daniel for a moment. Go

to the book of Daniel for a moment. It's an important text for us just to kind of lay some groundwork.

You remember the beginning story of Daniel's life. He had, along with many others, been taken captive around 586 B.C. by the Babylonians.

[6 : 48] They were under the rule of King Nebuchadnezzar. And he had conquered Jerusalem and had taken over rule. And he was using the Jewish young men in his own kingdom for his own royal rule.

And this is what it says here in the first seven verses of Daniel chapter 1. I'll just read it for us just so we have it in our minds. It says, And then the king ordered Ashpenaz, the chief of his officials, to bring in some of the sons of Israel, including some of the royal family and of the nobles, youths in whom was no defect, who were good-looking, showing intelligence in every branch of wisdom, endowed with understanding, discerning knowledge, and who had ability for serving in the king's court.

And he ordered him to teach them the literature and the language of the Chaldeans. And the king appointed for them a daily ration from the king's choice food and from the wine which he drank, and appointed that they should be educated three years, and at the end of which they were to enter the king's personal service.

Among them from the sons of Judah were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. And then the commander of the officials assigned new names to them.

To Daniel he assigned the name Belshazzar, to Hananiah, Shadrach, to Mishael, Meshach, and to Azariah, Abednego. Of course, we know the story of those three young men that were with Daniel that got thrown into the fiery furnace that God certainly rescued out of that.

[8 : 48] But Daniel is who I want to focus on here, because in light of the reality that he's captured and taken into captivity, notice what it says in verse 8.

But Daniel made up his mind that he would not defile himself with the king's choice food or with the wine which he drank, so he sought permission from the commander of the officials that he might not defile himself.

It's very interesting as we think about the topic at hand in which we are going to be studying. Daniel here makes up his mind not to defile himself, not to pollute himself.

That means he determined in his own heart to live a godly life. I think some of your other versions say it maybe a little better than even the New American Standard says it, because the New King James says, but Daniel purposed in his heart.

The NIV and the ESV say Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself. I like those words.

Those are picturesque words for us to think about, because they seem to carry the meaning of the original with all of the force that is intended in the word.

[10 : 18] The word in the original language is a word that's pronounced sum, if you will, S-O-O-M. It's a Hebrew word, obviously. But it means to put in place, to set in place so that it's immovable.

In other words, it has the idea of setting in place so that no matter what happens, it's not going to be moved. It's like concrete.

It's solidified concrete. Putting something in place so that it can't be moved by anything. I currently live in Florida. I've lived in Florida before, and when a hurricane comes, there's a lot of things movable.

The wind blows very strongly and moves things. That's why they build houses out of concrete, out of block, because the wind has a harder time moving it. They anchor it to the ground.

This is Daniel's heart. He set his heart to not defile himself. That means Daniel set his heart to only obey God.

[11 : 24] He set his heart to pursue what it means to be godly. And we know that God blessed Daniel in this practice. In fact, it even says in chapter 6, just go over there for a moment, in Daniel's latter days.

He has gone through the training. Of course, God blessed him in his request with the commander back in chapter 1. He didn't eat the food, and yet he showed himself to be far beyond all the others. But it says over in chapter 6 that after many years, a new king comes on the scene. And his name is Darius. And it says in chapter 6, verse 1, it seemed good to Darius to appoint 120 satraps over the kingdom so that they should be in charge of the whole kingdom and over the three commissioners of whom Daniel was one, that these satraps might be accountable to them and that the king might not suffer loss.

Then this Daniel began distinguishing himself among the commissioners and the satraps. Why? Because he possessed an extraordinary spirit and the king planned to appoint him over the entire kingdom.

And the commissioners and the satraps began trying to find ground to accuse Daniel in regard to governing affairs, but they could find no ground of accusation or evidence of corruption inasmuch as he was, notice, faithful.

[12 : 58] He was faithful and no negligence or corruption was to be found in him. So you notice that in the ensuing years of Daniel's life, as he was living out his life, he was living out this reality of godliness which showed in a personal integrity in his life.

He was a man who was faithful. He was a man who had integrity in all that he did. Why? Because that's the outcome of pursuing godliness.

That's one of the outcomes. Personal integrity is quickly becoming extinct in our society. It doesn't take long for any of us to look around and find that which was once highly esteemed that is no longer esteemed.

It's being thrown by the wayside. You can just pick up any news feed you want and turn on your local news and scandals dominate. They're all over the place.

Over the last several years, even in our own country, we have seen bribery take place within our government. We have seen corporate executives blatantly deceive their shareholders.

[14 : 18] Most politicians today seem to be professionals at one thing, lying. Our country is producing a nation of people who are more skilled at distorting and covering up the truth more than they are living out the truth.

What we need is people who are like Daniel. We need Daniel-like people, people who will set their hearts to pursue godliness that produces faithfulness, a godliness that produces in their life and integrity of life.

As believers, we have to be different than the world, man. We cannot look like the world. We cannot act like the world. We cannot be like the world. If we are going to make a difference in our world, we must be different.

And this is what we find in Psalm 101. This is what we find here in this psalm. David has become the rightful king of Israel.

And it is here in this psalm that we find David being like Daniel. He is setting his heart to pursue godliness in his life and specifically in his leadership of the kingdom itself.

[15 : 42] There are those within the kingdom who want to get rid of David. They don't like David. They're trying to buddy up to David so that they can appear as if they like David so that they can push Saul aside even though David's the rightful king.

They don't like Saul either and they want to get rid of David so that they can do the kingdom. And so David has this quandary going on. And you notice in this psalm, let me just read it for you just so we hear it.

He says, I will sing of loving kindness and justice. To you, O Lord, I will sing praises. I will give heed to the blameless way.

When will you come to me? I will walk within my house in the integrity of my heart. I will set no worthless thing before my eyes. For I hate the work of those who fall away.

It shall not fasten its grip on me. A perverse heart shall depart from me. I will know no evil. Whoever secretly slanders his neighbor, him I will destroy.

[16:51] No one who has a haughty look and an arrogant heart will I endure. For my eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land that they may dwell with me. He who walks in a blameless way is the one who will minister to me.

He who practices deceit shall not dwell within my house. He who speaks falsehood shall not maintain his position before me. Every morning, I will destroy all the wicked of the land so as to cut off from the city of the Lord all those who do iniquity.

Now, I hope you notice, as I read that, how many times it says, I will. I will. David says, I will nine different times.

He says the word shall six different times. So you have these 15 statements that David makes that are a clear indication to us that godliness begins with a determined heart.

If we're going to be godly, if we're going to pursue godliness, then we have to have a heart that's determined to be godly.

[18:09] This was David's heart. Practical godliness, guys, isn't just going to happen. Let me say that again. Practical godliness, the exercise of faithfulness and integrity in our life isn't just going to happen.

It's a determined reality. It will not come to us by divine osmosis. I know we would like to take our Bibles, put them under our pillows, lay them in at night, and all of it soak into our heads.

That would be wonderful, wouldn't it? That's not how God designed it. Why? Because God wants us dependently following Him.

He wants us determined to do what He asked us to do. So it isn't going to come to us that way. Practical godliness is going to take a determined, resolute, fixed heart that is after the things of God.

Before David could ever expect to see that kind of life in others, he had to live it himself first.

[19:21] Before David could go to others and say, hey, you're not living godly. You need to live godly. He had to be determined to live it in his own heart first. So like Daniel, David determined to live and to reign in faithfulness.

And I want us tonight to evaluate our determined godliness. This is where I want us to begin. Evaluation. Evaluate our own determined godliness through Psalm 101 as we watch David's resolve.

And I want to do that by looking at four primary areas that we see here in this text. There's four primary areas. I'll just list them for us and then we'll walk through them tonight.

First, we see David's determined delight. David's determined delight. That's verse one. Second, we see his determined direction.

His determined direction, verses two through five. And I'll just let you know there's going to be three sub points under that just so you leave some space if you want to. Third, his determined companions, verses six through seven.

[20:41] And then last, his determined conviction. So as we evaluate these things, we're really talking about our determined delight, our determined direction, our determined companions, and our determined conviction.

This is what we're evaluating as we look at David. So let's look first then at this first one, his determined delight. He says in verse one, I will sing of loving kindness and justice.

To you, O Lord, I will sing praises. This is where we need to begin. The heart of godliness, the heart of faithfulness, the heart of godly integrity begins with a heart of praise.

begins with a heart of worship. In other words, a heart of godliness begins, as we've used the word delight, it begins with a delight in God for who God is, a praise to God for His unmatched character. David says, I will sing of loving kindness and justice. To you, O Lord, I will sing praises.

[22:00] I want to say something. Nothing, nothing will begin to drive us on the straight path of godliness more than knowing that we have the availability of unbroken fellowship with God.

unbroken fellowship with God. I just want to show you this for a second. Go over to Ephesians chapter 3. The Apostle Paul.

This reality of understanding that it is a relationship with our holy God that drives everything we are. as Paul writes to the Ephesian church and he's wanting them to understand all that they have in Christ Jesus. Paul, in chapter 3, kind of enters into this parenthetical kind of area where he's now,

he's told us everything about our salvation in chapter 1 and chapter 2.

And in chapter 3, he starts out by saying, for this reason I Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you, indeed if you've heard of the stewardship of God's grace which was given to me for you, that by revelation there was made known to me this mystery, I wrote about it in brief, and by referring to this you'll know when you read it you can understand my insight into this mystery of Christ which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men but now has been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets in the spirit to be specific that you Gentiles are fellow heirs with the Jews in Christ.

[23 : 40] Paul's saying, listen, I want you to understand that this whole reality of our salvation is so wrapped up in Jesus Christ that you're in this because of what God has accomplished, nothing of what you have done and Paul is so overwhelmed at this in his own mind that he says that to me in verse 8, to me the very least of the saints this grace was given.

Paul says, this unfathomable riches of the relationship I have with God is so overwhelming to me as it comes to you through me I'm so overwhelmed with that I want you to understand that you have that same relationship.

I want you to think about your life in such a way that you go to me this grace was given. Almost shocked that you're even in. Shocked that God would bring you into this family.

In fact, Paul even turns back to this connection with chapter 3 verse 1 and he says for this reason I you notice in verse 14 he says for this reason I here we go now he's back to it that detour he took about the unfathomable reality of his relationship with God is now what drove him to this place where he says I'm praying that you that you would understand the full depth breadth length height and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.

You notice that in verse 18 and 19. He says I want you to be in that same kind of relational way in your mind in your worship to God as you live it out.

[25 : 34] That's why he could say in chapter 4 I therefore the prisoner of Christ exhort you to walk in a manner worthy of your calling. Strive for godliness that's what he's saying.

Well this is what we find in the words of David here in Psalm 101 there is determined godliness there. It's like you and I moving into a new neighborhood and realizing that God's our new neighbor. You would be shocked by that. Wow I get to have access to that? His gracious loving kindness is a constant theme that's right before me? His unailing and impartial justice is always to be on my heart?

Yes. That's where determined godliness has to begin. Why? Because it has to begin with the right view of God.

It's utterly necessary that we know God and it's utterly necessary to know this only true God because man fell when he lost his right view of God.

[26 : 44] Right? Man said I know better I'll believe the lie more than the truth he lost his view of God and when the knowledge and acknowledgement of God goes out of the mind of man he begins his progressive degeneration downward that's what Romans 1 tells him but as long as man sees God rightly and trusts him in all of his character as he defines himself in his word then everything goes right A.W. Pink said this several years ago quote I sometimes feel like walking out on a lot of what passes as Christianity today they talk about prayer as going into a huddle with God as if God is the coach or the quarterback they all gather around and God gives the signal and away they go he said what a preposterous abomination when the

Romans sacrificed the sow on the altar of Jerusalem they didn't commit anything more frightful than when we drag the holy holy holy God down and turn him into a cheap Santa Claus that we can use anytime we want he said Christianity has lost its dignity and we'll never get it back unless we know the dignified holy God the one who rides on the wings of the wind and makes the clouds his chariots we've lost the concept of majesty and the art of worship the church is moving away from worship I wonder if we're getting away from God unquote he's right why because we worship the God whom we know so the best we better be determined in our hearts to know and worship the God whose loving kindness is everlasting and whose justice is always right

David says this is the one I'll sing praises to David says this is my determined delight it's my heart I'm going to sing praises to that God and only that God so this is the first resolve this is the first determination in the heart of David but the second the second is this his determined direction and I said to you there's there's three directions that he took in verses two through five notice the first one

in verse two I will give heed he says to the blameless way when will you come to me I will walk within my house in the integrity of my heart we might label this the determined direction of personal holiness personal holiness in fact if you have a King James Bible it says it this way I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way in other words David purposed to pursue personal holiness in his life he was determined to worship God the only true and living God and he was determined in his direction by pursuing personal holiness what does that mean well it means that he set his heart to have a life that was faithful and obedient to God a life that was pure a life that was without stain one in which blatant sin could not be justifiably charged to his life I will walk within my house in the integrity of my heart not only will I live righteously that's the blameless way but I will live with a clear conscience in my own heart I've determined

David said to live a blameless life a life of holy integrity and you notice notice in that verse he's even implying and saying I can't do it alone I can't do it alone right when will you come to me you notice that in his pursuit he's expressing his desperate prayer that God as he's walking and striving in obedience and walking in a clear conscience in his heart that God would strengthen his determination to pursue the very thing he's determined to pursue Lord I'm determined to pursue this but I know that's going to fail if you're not with me in other words his determined holiness would begin in the privacy of his own heart in the privacy of his own life the sphere of his influence but he would not do it alone he knew that he needed

[32 : 07] God to be with him every step of the way if he didn't have that he was going to fail it's like the farmer that goes out to plow his field and sow the seed right all the while he knows that he's in the doing the work and yet in the final analysis he's utterly dependent upon forces outside of himself to accomplish the very end task that he hopes to have that's you and I every successful harvest of godliness in our lives we are dependent upon God can't do it ourselves that is simply to say that our godliness is really a joint venture it's a joint venture between God and us we cannot do it without God we cannot do what God must do and yet at the same time we cannot expect God to do what he has given us to do you can't say

Lord make me holy and then not do anything to be holy God make me a better Bible scholar or give me better understanding of the scriptures well God's given us the scriptures he's done his part now he expects us to study the scriptures do our part know what he says that is simply to say that our godliness is that joint venture between us and God so we like David must determine to be blameless we must be determined to walk in integrity that's our responsibility and God has in Christ been faithful to his part right he's made us righteous before him he has given us all we need for life and godliness as 2 Peter chapter 1 verse 3 said so his first determined direction was just that personal holiness but he had a second determined direction you notice here in verse 3 he says I will set no worthless thing before my eyes I hate the work of those who fall away it shall not fashion its grip on me this we can call personal discernment this is determined direction of personal discernment there is a whole lot of theologians that say that the eye is connected to the heart in fact for the Hebrew writer that meant that the eye was the place where information came in the heart was where it was stored the heart was the inner man the heart is the real you it's it's the place where what was learned and being taken in is stored the real you and so David is saying that he is determined to choose wisely what is set before him I will set no worthless thing before my eyes why because

I don't want it to come into my life I don't want it to get within my being those things that are worthless Those things that cause us to doubt God for who God is those things which do not lead to greater understanding of God David says I'm not going to put those before me in fact you notice he uses stronger words I hate the work of those who fall away I hate them he says not only do I hate that I hate those who bring it and they'll not grab hold of me this sounds a whole lot like the theme verse of our own text of our own conference right that we have to we have to be diligent to pursue and not let anything else hold against us in fact even in Hebrews 12 it says in running this race we are to set aside the things that encumber us the things that entangle us we are to! first put that aside all those things that cause distractions this is determined discernment that's what it is determined discernment maybe it's wise to ask the question what is discernment well discernment is the ability to perceive and understand and judge things rightly that's a simple definition perceive understand and judge things rightly especially in situations where truth is mixed with error when there's a little bit of truth but a whole lot of error or when there's a little bit of error and a whole lot of truth it's discerning the error where choices require wisdom rather than the

obvious facts maybe all the facts are right but you need wisdom to choose which path to go so!
[37 : 20] discernment involves all of that evaluation of everything that's there it involves wise judgment about what is being taken in and it involves a spiritual sensitivity to the things that are true and right that is simply to say the discernment is the spirit empowered capacity to distinguish between truth and falsehood right and wrong God's will human impulse it's not just something intellectual it's moral and spiritual insight maybe a simple way to put it is this discernment is wisdom in action but it's wisdom in action that's guided by the truth it's it's a determination not to allow ourselves to be drawn down the road of doubt by those who don't trust God this is what

David is saying I hate the work of those who fall away I'm not going to be drawn down that road so discernment is that determination not to allow that or to be drawn down by those who have turned their backs on God in fact the word here worthless!

fall away! those words carry the implication that these are people who actually at one point were following God or at least said they were these are in many ways the apostates faithless people who fail to remain steadfast to God and his word so David's pledge is to be pure his pledge is to be faithful by allowing the faithfulness of God to lead him and not the faithlessness of others to pull him down this is his determined discernment the Bible tells us it's interesting the Bible tells us in 1 Corinthians 15 33 what bad company corrupts What good morals right I always thought that was an interesting word because those that aren't discerning think they can hang around with a bunch of things that are bad and change them right

I'm going to go and hang out with all these bad friends because I'm the good friend and I'm going to change them well let me ask you a question I live in Florida there's a lot of swimming pools down there you get into a swimming pool down there and you're swimming and someone comes with an why because it's polluted the bad has now corrupted the pure well if you have a pool of cyanide and you drop a little dry dropper of pure water in it did it change anything you're not jumping in that pool it's the same thing bad company corrupts good morals right what kind of company are you keeping! That's the question David says I'm not going to get into that I'm not going to send any worthless thing before me I hate those who fall away I'm not going to let it fasten its grip on me that's the question that's the probing question are what kind of company am I keeping what kind of things are before the information center of my life what kind of worthless things!

[41 : 14] ungodly things have been let by you into your life so that now it has a grip on you that's the question do you have a determined discernment David determined to be discerning about what he led into his life so he had determined holiness determined discernment and third under that second category is personal separation this was the third direction personal separation notice verses four and five a perverse heart shall depart from me I will know no evil whoever secretly slanders his neighbor him I will silence or destroy so here you have David talking about perversity and philosophy you say

I don't see those words there well David says I'll personally separate myself from anyone who willfully lives in those ways you say how so well perverse are those who live a way that is blameless a perverse heart is a blame heart a heart of blame a heart that is impure the evil and corrupt of the world in fact it's an interesting word here in the original language ra is the Hebrew word but the Greek translation of the Old Testament the word is paneras you know what word we get from that pornography pornography David says I a perverse heart a heart filled with that kind of filth David's culture was filled with sexual sin like David's day our own culture is drowning in that kind of filth in fact

I read recently a stat according to one report they said five empire state buildings filled to overflowing could not contain the pornographic material sold in a single year in the United States can't imagine what that looks like even with the electronic age the internet is rampant with that kind of stuff you can't even turn on an innocuous simple thing on your iPhone or otherwise that some ad comes up and it's some kind of filth guys we have to determine personal separation from those things David knows better he's determined not to allow any practice of any kind of perversity or wickedness enter or remain in his life well if we're going to be godly we have to do the same purity would be his pursuit purity is his pursuit and separation from the philosophies of the world whoever secretly slanders his neighbor him

I will destroy I will know notice in end of verse four no evil at first glance you might think David's talking about just staying away from people who gossip and it's true it's true the first part of verse five he who secretly slanders his neighbor David talks about he's determined not to have anybody

like that in his life anybody who whispers in the corners of his kingdom he's saying I'm going to get rid of them and clearly we understand the Bible teaches us to do that to not have any fact unwholesome words come out of our mouth Ephesians 4:29 says we're not to have anything that is the science project sitting in the back of the refrigerator that's been there for three weeks and you! open it up! that's but more importantly than that David is here speaking more particularly in the latter part of the verse notice no one who has verse 5 a haughty look or an arrogant heart will I endure David's saying listen I'm not going to be open minded to any of those kinds of things I have a single mind on the truth that's it there's no greater danger to our Christian life than being open minded you say what do you mean well I mean to allow the destructive philosophies of the world into our life those things which contradict the truth of God do nothing less than to dilute your own personal convictions about godliness and the things of

[46 : 21] God you allow those things into your life it's just a seduction into worldly thinking the things that you once had a sharpness about the truth become dull they're no longer defined as clearly they become blur why because you've allowed the philosophies of the worldly thinking into your mind in fact I was reading one commentator John Phillips who said this this country is suffering from severe open mindedness there never was a country like America for openness of heart for open handed generosity for tolerance and for giving the enemy the benefit of the doubt unquote he's right our openness has caused us many a problem but if we're going to be godly people then we have to determine to separate ourselves from any doctrine today that says hey tolerate anything that goes that's not discernment that's not holiness we have to be determined in our separation so

David had a determined delight he had a determined direction which produced itself in those three areas and the third notice he had determined companions verses six and seven my eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land that they may dwell with me he who walks in a blameless way is the one who will minister to me he who practices deceit shall not dwell within my house he who speaks falsehood shall not maintain his position before me of course remember David's dealing with guys in his own cohort that were wanting to get rid of him trying to deceive him so that they could get rid of Saul and then get rid of him and he's saying look none of that's going to happen in my place David has set his heart to be around faithful people faithful friends and I think this is an important principle for godliness if our godliness!

is going to grow then we have to determine in our own hearts to water it in the garden of faithful friends you say what do I mean I mean being around people who are going to prod you in the right direction those who are going to challenge your decisions for the right reasons those who are themselves determined to be godly see for David that meant to keep a watchful eye on those for whom he kept company because they were being deceptive those who practice deception and lying he says they're not going to make the final cut in my kingdom tolerating those kind of things without any kind of confrontation is going to bring problems for him in his kingdom so he says I'm not going to do that and I was thinking about this I have three children they're all married and out of the house but when they were younger I used to tell them listen you either pick your friends wisely or I'm going to pick them for you why because I wanted them to be around people who were going to prod them in the right direction and so if your kids can't or won't choose wisely

I'm saying to you guys then you ought to be choosing their friends for them they're going to say I don't want that my kids didn't want that I said well you better choose wisely then and I'm going to be evaluating every one of them why because the consequences are too great David's companions would be those who were determined to be godly in their own lives anybody who was practicing otherwise he wasn't going to have around anybody who practiced deceit I'm not going to have them in my house anybody who speaks falsehood they're not going to have any position before me I'm going to separate myself from anybody like that liars cheaters those who don't want to walk righteously I'm not part of my life so David had a determined delight before God he had a determined direction before God he determined what kind of companions were going to be in his life and then lastly notice this determined conviction determined conviction verse 8 every morning I will destroy all the wicked of the land so as to cut off from the city of the Lord all those who do iniquity I love this because David's determined conviction was that each and every day he would wake up and the first order of business was purge the kingdom of anything that's wicked get rid of anything that might be a distraction get rid of anything that might cause me to go in the wrong direction get rid of anything in my way that was evil for those who worked under David this was a purging and a purifying force we better be right or we're gone if you do evil if you don't walk in

integrity you're going to be snuffed out literally destroyed I thought about that as we were [52 : 04] I was pondering our conference this week I wonder what would happen to us if we determined right here right now tonight in our own lives if we determined put a stake in the ground and determined to remove every day when we woke up I'm determined today to remove those things in my life those things that I know violate the word of God and destroy any way in my walk of discipline to godliness what would happen if we did that for every guy here thinking about their own life thinking about all the details of their life all the ways they're living their life and said you know when I wake up in the morning I am going to determine have no wickedness no evil nothing before me that would violate the word of God nothing before me that would draw me away entice me away in my pursuit of godliness think we change think it'd be different absolutely so ask yourself this question how much more holy will I be tomorrow than I am today if I do that how much more holy will I be well a pursuit of godliness guys sounds very intimidating doesn't it sounds very intimidating and it may seem in fact to some of us absolutely impossible there's no way I can do that but you and I must never forget this statement made many years ago godliness is the everyday business of every

Christian it evidences itself in the decisions we make and the things we do hour by hour day by day unquote so my charge to us tonight as we begin this conference is let us determine to be godly for God's glory and for our good that we might be men that they could say of us those men are godly men let's pray together father thank you so much for just this rapid fire really look at your word and exhortation to us from your servant David thank you for the privilege we have to be here and to think about it even in modern terms of our own life and how each one here is being brought up in Christ likeness and yet Lord we must admit there are times when we frivolously just do not do what we are asked and so Lord I would ask you tonight to work upon our hearts this weekend may it begin tonight when we lay down our heads that we tonight like David determine in our hearts and say tomorrow when I wake I am pursuing with every intent of my heart godliness to have nothing in my way that would distract that nothing in my way that would cause me to trip up knowing that I need you every step of the way that you've given me all I need for life and godliness and that as I pursue that you and your gracious faithful mercy! will grow me into Christ likeness may that be our heart's desire this weekend Lord may we dress in the clothes of godliness all for your glory so that Christ would be honored in us in Jesus name we pray amen