

Man of Knowledge; Man Moved by Faith

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Preacher: Jason Webb

[0 : 00] Last week we did start a series in the book, *The Godly Man's Picture*, by Thomas Watson. Thomas Watson, on the other hand, was a 17th century Puritan pastor in England.

He was a Puritan by conviction, which just means that he was not satisfied with the way the Church of England was behaving or carrying itself.

And so he was looking to purify the Church of England. He began to preach in 1646 at 26 years old. He had very strong Presbyterian views as opposed to Church of England views.

But unlike many, many Presbyterians at the time, he did not think it was good or wise, righteous to overthrow King Charles I.

So what was going on at the period in England was a civil war was happening. And there were people who were on the king's side and then there were people on the commonwealth side, so to speak.

[1 : 44] Anyways, King Charles I was arrested and executed, and that put an end to the royalty in England at the time.

He, along with many others, complained to Oliver Cromwell, who was the Lord Protector. And as the years went on, he became more and more of a dictator.

He complained about that. He was somehow involved in a plot to, Thomas Watson was, to bring back King Charles' first son, King Charles II.

And so he was thrown into prison for a short time when that plot was uncovered. The ringleader of that plot was a man named Christopher Love. And Christopher Love was executed.

And everyone else involved in that plot begged for mercy and received it. So he was married to a pastor's daughter named Abigail.

[2 : 44] They had seven children, four of which died while they were young. So while they were children. In 1662, he was ejected from his pulpit along with over 2,000 other Puritan ministers.

And it was on one single day that 2,000 Puritan pastors said they had their last Sunday with their congregations. And they preached their farewell sermons all on this one day.

Interestingly enough, in our church library, there's a book of the sermon, at least not all of them, but some of those sermons that were preached on that day.

They collected them together. And it's really good, heartfelt stuff. Because what do you do as a pastor when you're saying your goodbyes to your congregation? What do you want them to know and hear?

Well, that's what 2,000 of these ministers were preaching on this one single day. And Thomas Watson was one of those. For 10 years, he had to minister privately until 1672.

[3 : 51] In 1672, he was able to begin preaching in a public hall. It wasn't really a church building, but it was a public hall. There was a congregation. He preached there for several years.

After three years, he was joined at that church by Stephen Charnock. And if you remember that name, Pastor John has been using Stephen Charnock or been reading a lot of him for the goodness of God study.

And so Thomas Watson and Stephen Charnock preached together and ministered together for several years. And so in a way, Thomas and Stephen are back together again for a short amount of time here at Grace Fellowship Church.

Thomas kept working until his health failed. He retired for a short period. And at age 66, he died while in private prayer.

He passed away. Now, what should you take from all that? The thing I want you to take away from it is as we're going through this study on the godly man, I just want you to remember Thomas Watson was not some sort of closeted, secluded pastor that never got out, that never had any experiences.

[5 : 12] That he's talking about these things in theory. He he he are guide through the study on the godly man's picture is is not a new believer, an inexperienced believer, even so to speak, unworldly.

Are he is very much a man of his time. He participated. He was involved. He's sort of like David in the Psalms. He knew what he was talking about.

He knew that of what she spoke. And so that's Thomas Watson. I hope and that you begin to appreciate him more and what God did through him as we go through the series.

Just as a real aside, if you want to begin reading the Puritans, Thomas Watson is a wonderful place to begin. He has a very clear and very simple style and you can read him and it's fairly easy.

Well, today we're getting into the heart of the book on the godly man's picture and it's 24 characteristics of the godly man. And our plan is for each teacher, each man to take two of these each week.

[6 : 27] And so we'll get through the heart of the book, hopefully, Lord willing, in 12 weeks. And then there's going to be some finishing up lessons at the end. And so two characteristics.

That's my job this morning. And so we're going to begin with faith and knowledge. Faith and knowledge. So what does, how do you know a godly man when you see him?

What's he look like? Remember we talked about holding up that picture and comparing ourselves and saying, do I look like him? Do I look like her? So what is a, how do you know a godly man when you see him?

How do you know a godly woman when you see her? Well, she's a woman of faith and a woman of knowledge. He's a man of faith and he's a man of knowledge.

So we're going to talk about faith first. Habakkuk 2, 4. Does anyone happen to know what that verse says? The just shall live by faith.

[7 : 38] It was a Luther favorite. It was. And it was a Pauline favorite. Paul quoted him. He's quoted three times in the New Testament.

Romans 1, 17. For in the gospel, a righteousness from God is revealed. A righteousness that is by faith from first to last. Just as it is written, the righteous or the just will live by faith.

Galatians 3, 11. Clearly no one is justified before God by the law because, and he quotes Habakkuk 2, 4. The righteous or the just will live by faith. And then Hebrews 10, 38.

He who is coming will come and will not delay. But my righteous one or my just one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him.

So how do you enter into the Christian life? By faith. That's how you begin the Christian life. And then how do you live the whole Christian life?

[8 : 45] Is faith just for the beginning? Is it just the first step? No, it's the whole of the Christian life. The just will live by faith.

Not only will he inherit life by believing in Jesus Christ, his day-to-day walk is marked by faith.

So faith cuts us off from the wild olive tree of nature, and it grafts us into Jesus Christ.

Another way of saying this is faith is the artery of the soul of the Christian life. Christ is that heart pumping blood.

He's that heart. Boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom. He's full of life. Now how does that life come to us? Faith is the artery that comes to our souls.

[9 : 46] And so without faith, there is no life. Because without faith, there's no Christ. Without faith, there's no life. There's no strength. There's no godliness. So you've heard of people, maybe you've been one of these people.

Maybe you've seen these people, where they have a blocked artery. And they're lethargic. And they're tired.

And they don't have any energy. But then they go in there, and then they open up that artery. And all of a sudden, the blood is pumping freely again. And they're invigorated.

Well, that's faith. So there's no godliness without faith. Because there's not Christ in our souls and our hearts except by faith. And he dwells in us by faith.

Ephesians 3.17, I pray that out of his glorious riches, he may strengthen you with power through his spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.

[10 : 49] faith in your heart. Faith in your heart. So, I guess listen to Watson again. Faith enlivens the graces.

Now, what does he mean by graces? He means the fruit of the spirit. Love and joy and peace and self-control, etc.

Kindness. The graces of the Christian life. Faith enlivens the graces. It fills them with life. Not a grace stirs till faith sets it working.

Faith excites repentance. When I believe God's love to me, this makes me weep that I should sin against so good a God.

Ah, that's interesting. We repent when by faith we see the goodness of God. Faith is the mother of hope.

[11 : 56] First we believe the promise, and then we hope for it. Faith is the oil which feeds the lamp of hope. Faith and hope are two turtle dove graces, which you take one away and the other one languishes.

Faith is the ground of patience. He who believes that God is his God, and that all providences work for his good, patiently yields himself to the will of God.

Impatience and difficult providence is a sign that we need to believe. We need to trust him more.

And so what do you need for true godliness? You need a living, active faith. So what is the whole of the Christian life? It's this living out faith working by love.

It's the living, active faith. It's not theoretical faith. It's not faith just in your mouth where you say, I believe, but you actually, in practice, in principle, you don't ever act it out.

[13 : 00] You don't ever live it out. You don't ever act as if the things that you say are true are true. But what the Christian life is, is saying, I believe these things, and then I act accordingly to that faith.

So it's a real loving trust of everything that Christ is for me. It's a real loving trust for everything God is for me in Jesus Christ.

He's my father, and I live that way. He's my guide. He's my Lord, and I live that way. And so where does godliness come from when you are in prison like Watson was for a while?

Where does godliness come from when four of your children die, and you're in that situation? Your heart is broken. Where do you get godliness in the midst of the push and the pull of public life?

Well, surely he will never be shaken. A righteous man will be remembered forever. He will have no fear of bad news. His heart is steadfast, trusting in the Lord.

[14 : 20] His heart is secure. He will have no fear. The name of the Lord is a strong tower. The righteous run into it, and they are saved. How do we run into the name of the Lord?

How do we rest on him? It's by faith. We sang this verse last Sunday evening at the Lord's Supper. I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. Faith is that full persuasion that anything and everything I put into God's hands, it's in good hands.

He's got that. He's going to take care of it. Faith, this is Watson again, faith is a panacea, a remedy against all troubles. It is a godly man's anchor that he cast out into the sea of God's mercy and is kept from sinking in despair.

What can keep us from despair? Oh, we cast by faith our anchor into God's mercy. He's a merciful God, and I believe that, and that buoys up our little boats.

[15 : 31] And so we hold up this picture. We hold up this picture. This is a godly man. He's not a man without trouble. He's not a man without problems.

He's not a man without sin. He is a man of faith. He's a man who's embraced the gospel and is living on the gospel. He's a man who embraces every word that comes from the mouth of God.

It's a real, living, active, loving trust in God himself. And so do you want to be more godly?

Well, cling closer to Christ by faith. Believe more thoroughly the good news of who God is for you in Jesus Christ. Believe more thoroughly God's love and goodwill.

Believe more thoroughly that in all of God's dealings with you in providence, he's doing good. All of his words for you in the Bible are shot through, are coming to you, carried in the hands of God's goodness and love.

[16 : 40] That's what faith believes. Faith trusts God, the person. And so he relies on him.

He knows his heart. He believes he's good. So in God's commands, the godly man hears God's love and God's instruction and God's goodness.

Psalm 119 says, I trust in your commands. I trust in your commands. You tell me to do this and I believe that if I do it, it's for my good.

I believe these commands are the best way to live because I trust him. In God's promises, we hear by faith his plan for us. All of his promises are laying out what God has in providence he's going to do.

He's going to bring about. And by faith, I trust that. In Proverbs, we hear our father's practical love and wisdom for you. In the history, we see how our father acts.

[17 : 48] See what our father's father has done in the past, who he is for you and what he's like for you. There's no growing godliness without growing faith.

There's no growing godliness without growing faith. So the godly man's whole life, the principle of it, the driving power of it, the thing that gets it up off the ground and then carries it through every day is this trust in who God is.

And so you cannot think of the godly man without thinking of his God. You cannot understand the godly man without understanding who he thinks his God is and who God is for him.

So, godly man, he lives by faith. Now secondly, the godly man is a man of knowledge. He's a man of knowledge.

This faith is not uninged. It's not just a pie in the sky. It's not something that we just have.

[19 : 04] There's no connection to your mind. There's no connection to your thoughts. There's no connection to your understanding. Some people's faith is that. Some people think the craziest things.

And they think it for no good reason. But they believe it. I heard of this one lady who believes in Bigfoot.

Okay, a lot of people believe in Bigfoot. There's not a good reason for it, but okay. No offense if you're a Bigfoot believer, I guess. I don't know. Don't tell me. I don't want to know.

I don't want to have to deal with that. But she started believing that Bigfoot could heal you.

That's faith. Not faith with knowledge. The godly man is a man of knowledge.

[20 : 10] His brain, his understanding, his wisdom is stocked with knowledge. So the Apostle John in 1 John 2 says that the godly man is taught by God.

One of the promises of the new covenant is that they'll all know me. And you don't have to tell, you don't have to say to your brother, know God, because they'll all know me.

They'll all have this basic knowledge. God says, that's what I'm going to do. Proverbs 14, the prudent are crowned with knowledge. It's part of their glory.

It's part of their beauty. It's part of their majesty. The prudent are crowned with knowledge. Jesus calls the saints, those who are ready to meet him, he calls them wise virgins.

They're pure, they're virgins, and they're wise. They're wise. Or how about the Sermon on the Mount? It's a sermon about true godliness, isn't it?

[21 : 26] As opposed to artificial godliness or superficial godliness. It's about true godliness, heart godliness, life godliness, heart godliness, mouth godliness, towards God godliness, prayer, fasting, giving godliness.

And so, how does that, how does that sermon end? Jesus ends it with a parable. Do you remember the parable?

The parable of the wise man and the foolish man. The wise man and the foolish man. It's interesting, Jesus, I find this so fascinating.

Jesus doesn't end that sermon by saying the godly man and the ungodly man or the true believer and the untrue believer. He ends it by saying, now who's wise?

Who has knowledge and real meaningful knowledge and who's a fool? Well, the wise person builds his house on the rock.

[22 : 30] Wisdom and godliness go together. Foolishness and ungodliness go together. You want an interesting exercise. Read Proverbs chapter 10 and 11 because as that, that's the opening section where all those Proverbs, all the short little pithy statements start.

In Proverbs 10 and 11, I think it's 11 times Solomon says that wisdom and righteousness go together and foolishness and unrighteousness go together.

He's emphasizing it at that point that this wisdom is not somehow disconnected from ungodliness, unrighteousness or righteousness.

Wisdom is, righteousness is wise and wisdom does lead to righteousness. So godly men and women are taught by God.

Now, Watson is going to give us eight features of this knowledge and obviously we have about 17 minutes. That does not leave us a lot of time to cover all eight of them but I want to go over them and hopefully if you have time you can jot them down.

[23 : 45] We're going to cover them very quickly. One, what kind of knowledge is this? This godly man is taught by God. He's a man of wisdom, understanding.

what kind of knowledge is this? One, his or her knowledge is grounded. It's grounded.

It has its feet on the ground. It's solidly grounded. It's grounded in the word of God. It's grounded in knowing a person God.

It's grounded. The godly woman doesn't have her head in the clouds. She knows. She's certain.

She doesn't believe and think just because that's what everyone does.

She doesn't think and believe the church just because the church says so. She's not unthinking.

She's not disconnected from reality. She's not disconnected from God.

[24 : 51] She's not disconnected from the word. She's grounded in it. So saving knowledge is not like what James talks about the double-minded man unstable in all of his ways.

The double-minded man thinks one thing at one time another thing at another time. He's uncertain. He's unstable and he's not certain about what he believes. So remember John chapter 6 Jesus gave some really hard teaching.

That was the part in the gospel of John where he says you have to drink my blood and eat my flesh or you have no part in me. And everyone was like what?

What are you talking about? Hard stuff. And a lot of people left him then and there. And Jesus turns to his disciples and says are you going to leave me?

Are you going to leave me too? And they said we believe and we are sure that you are the Christ. Yeah it's hard.

[26 : 02] What you said is difficult. You talked about no man can come to me unless the Father draws him. That's humbling. But you're the Christ. it doesn't matter our evaluation of what you say what you say is sure and true and so yeah we believe it.

We just saw this a couple of weeks ago in our videos. Why were the apostles willing to die for the statement that Jesus has risen?

Why were they willing to die and be excommunicated from the synagogue? and it brought them nothing but trouble in the human realm in this world.

Why did they why were they willing to do it? Because they knew it was true. They knew it was true. Their faith was grounded.

Their knowledge was grounded. They saw him. They saw him. So they were grounded. Two the godly man's knowledge is appreciative.

[27 : 11] Appreciative. That means it appreciates what it has. I'm not talking about contentment. I'm saying it knows how to value the things that it knows.

Let me put it like this. A man who knew pearls a merchant of pearls so you have to know the buying and the selling rate and what things cost and what you can sell them for. So a merchant of pearls was looking for pearls and he found one and it was of incomparable worth and he goes and he sells everything he has in order to buy it.

He knew pearls so he knew the value of what he was dealing with. The godly man's knowledge is not merely academic.

It's not merely theoretical. The man of knowledge godly man's knowledge is someone who knows the true value of what he's dealing with. The true value of god.

Of the word of god. Of Jesus Christ. Of the gospel. He knows how to value god. And he and so he can say there's no one I want in heaven above or on earth below besides you.

[28 : 31] You're all I need if I have you I have everything. Now he knew the value he knows the value of the things that he's dealing with.

So if you know baseball cards and I told you I have a Honus Wagner card what do you say to me? Anyone? Does anyone know baseball cards?

And I say I have a Honus Wagner card. What do you say? Wow. You know what Stan?

It don't matter what condition it's in. If you don't even if you don't know Honus Wagner then you don't appreciate this illustration. If I told you I had it you'd say no way can I see it.

And again if you don't know baseball cards and you probably don't even know what I'm talking about you don't since you don't know baseball cards you don't know how to appreciate a Honus Wagner card but I would gladly sell everything I owned in order to have one.

[29 : 44] If you know something you know how to value it the godly man knows what God and His truth and the gospel is worth.

you can appreciate it. Third the godly man's knowledge enlivens him. It's an enlivening knowledge. Again faith was an enlivening it enlivens all graces.

Well true knowledge animates it makes us come alive. You have seen people who have crossed from death to life from separation from Jesus into Jesus Christ and it makes them come alive and so this isn't dead knowledge this is knowledge that makes you alive with hope and with joy it makes you come alive it makes you burn for him really knowing god lights you up you become the light of the world just by knowing Jesus Christ who is the light of the world so it's not dead knowledge it's living knowledge to know god is to love him to really know him is to live for him it's to come alive for him so that's three it's animating and an enlivening knowledge this is not knowledge that just has no purpose or practical working out in the Christian life for it's an appropriating knowledge appropriating these are big words they're just Watson's words you know what it means to appropriate something if I were to appropriate your car I would go and take your car and make it mine it's an appropriating I know that my redeemer lives Joe I know my redeemer lives he's not just the redeemer he's mine my redeemer Martin Luther said the Christian life is so much about personal pronouns personal pronouns again listen to Martin Luther read with great emphasis these words me for me and accustom yourself to accept and apply to yourself again that's appropriating accept and apply to yourself this me with certain faith the words are us for us ought to be written in golden letters the man who does not believe them is not a Christian to be a Christian is to be an appropriator of the truth you take it to yourself that's what Martin Luther is saying note especially the pronoun are and its significance you will readily grant that Christ gave himself for the sins of Peter and Paul and others who are worthy of that grace I hope he's talking tongue and cheek there but feeling low you find it hard to believe that Christ gave himself for your sins our feelings shy at a personal application of the pronoun are and we refuse to have anything to do with God until we have made ourselves worthy by good deeds that's what he says our problem is we're not appropriating what we know Watson says oh what joy when I'm drowning in debt that Jesus is my surety he's the one that says I'll pay the rent he's my advocate and he's never lost a case that he's pleaded so do you get my point godly man's knowledge is personal to him it's about the things that he knows are about his life the things that he knows he finds himself dealing with and working with in his life he knows how to use and apply it to himself

and he's doing it all of the time fifth it's transforming knowledge and we with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory are being transformed into likeness with ever increasing glory Romans chapter 12 verse 1 and 2 talks about in view of God's mercy don't be conformed to the world anymore but be transformed by the renewing of your mind but we know that when Christ appears we shall be like him for we shall see him as he is so we talked about this last week godliness is the beauty of the soul any beauty in another person in their spirit in their heart it's either common grace and God working some sort of godliness in them even if it's not a saving godliness and we know that that people even ungodly people can be patient and kind and that's a beauty but godliness is the beauty of the soul it's that jewel in the ring that we talked about last week then then knowing God is what transforms an ugly person into a beautiful person it's what transforms a common rock into a beautiful jewel now this is just what is so wonderful about who Jesus is and the power and the majesty and the glory of who he is and who God is that just knowing him transforms us knowing him and viewing him and living by faith face to face with him transforms us it's that's how powerfully beautiful he is an ugly person can look at a beautiful model all day and he can learn she can learn all about her but that won't make her pretty a wounded man can look and learn all about the doctor and not be healed but to know Christ is to grow in beauty and in health so is your knowledge transforming you is your knowledge transforming you this godly man he's not a perfect man but he's a being transformed man he's growing in beauty and godliness now he's going to be the last one to realize that he's going to be the last one to see that because here's number six this knowledge is self emptying it empties us of ourselves it humbles us so the more we know of God the less we think of ourselves Nebuchadnezzar had a great high view of himself and then God put him through something and on the other side he knew more about who God was and he was a humble man so the more we know of God the less we think of ourselves true knowledge brings a man out this is Watson's word true knowledge brings a man out of love with himself we're all born romantically in love with ourselves and bent in on ourselves and when we know God it bends us outward it empties us it makes us fall out of love with ourselves the more we know of God the more it empties us of ourselves the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding

the fear of the lord is the beginning of knowledge but fools despise wisdom and discipline fools are so full of themselves they don't see any need for anyone else to tell them anything they have no room for wisdom and when discipline comes their way they despise it they're so full of themselves they can't receive they can't receive any instruction but the fear of the lord this knowledge of him it empties us up of ourselves so that now there's room for wisdom to find its way into our hearts now there's room for discipline and correction and rebuke to come so that's number six it's self empty number seven it's a growing knowledge the way of the wise grows brighter and brighter knowledge of god is so sweet the more we drink of him the more we know of him the more we want him to know him is to have an ever increasing appetite for him are you thirsty!

[39 : 28] the the godly man is thirsty he hungers for righteousness he's thirsty to know God just think of the psalm that as the deer pants for the water so my soul longs for you Paul says calls it the riches of knowledge the richer a man is the richer he wants to be so what did Paul say Philippians whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ what is more I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of what knowing Christ Jesus my Lord a few verses later he just says I want to know

Christ he knew more of Jesus than all of us than any of us and yet he found in himself I want to know more and the greater the desire the greater the growth and knowledge so this knowledge is growing it doesn't stay the same it's a living thing it's a pushing in into God it's going ever forward further up further in C.S.

Lewis said eight and this is where we're going to end last it's a practical knowledge it's a practical knowledge the sheep follow him John 10 the sheep follow him because they know his voice they know his voice and that sets their little sheep feet walking they follow after him and so this knowledge is knowledge with obedience it's knowledge for obedience again back to that wise man who built his house upon the rock Jesus said who is that wise man he heard Jesus words and what did he do what did he do did the foolish person hear Jesus words the answer is yes the foolish man heard

Jesus words the wise man heard Jesus words the foolish man didn't put his words into practice the wise man heard Jesus words and put it into practice so Peter for this very reason make every effort again make every effort to add to your faith goodness and to goodness knowledge so think about how much pain people go to learn things think about how much debt they go into to go to college think about how much effort the doctor does to learn his skill and his trade and make every effort you have to count the cost if you're going to learn certain things and Peter is saying make every effort to add to your faith goodness and goodness is practical lived out love for people goodness and to goodness and knowledge so not just head knowledge but you know what what's not up here can't ever be down here if this is empty then this is going to be empty too you can't believe what you don't know and you can't trust a person you haven't learned about you can't trust a person you haven't studied and known and so

Peter's words brothers sisters make every effort to add to your faith grow your faith and don't just grow your faith grow your goodness and grow your knowledge that's what the godly man is always doing well our time is up we're dismissed