

PIETY

PURPOSE AND SITUATION OF THE ROLLO

PIETY holds an important place as the last rollo of the first day, and is the first rollo that gives a strong emphasis to personal witness. It brings the day to a resolution. It does this in two aspects:

- (1) Presents a true understanding of Piety
- (2) Demonstrates that true Piety can be lived daily.

Unless these two aspects are presented clearly and are understood, the whole Tres Dias experience will not be effective.

This talk looks back at all the previous talks of the day and is the culmination of those talks; it should bring the candidate to a personal encounter with Jesus Christ. Piety explains the first leg of the three-legged stool/tripod.

In this rollo, the rollista concentrates on the Christian's daily walk in the world with the Lord Jesus, giving examples from personal experience. Candidates should understand from this witness that a life in union with Christ is both possible and appealing. In fact, piety is a life of faith in Jesus Christ - empowered by the Holy Spirit. It is characterized by struggles, joys, failures, discoveries, seeing and not seeing, hearing and not hearing; all of which contribute to the Christian's growth in grace.

This rollo should set forth specific ways in which the rollista's life is centered in God's gracious work in Jesus Christ, and is being guided by the Holy Spirit toward Christian maturity.

Time objective: Should not exceed **40** minutes.

PIETY OUTLINE

- I. INTRODUCTION**
 - A. Piety as an experience of grace**
 - B. Piety as a process of growth**
 - C. False ideas of piety**

- II. WHAT PIETY IS**
 - A. Definition: The direction of one's whole life to God**
 - B. Pattern of the Christian life**

- III. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF PIETY**
 - A. Christ-likeness (Fruit of the Spirit)**
 - B. Gratitude**
 - C. Freedom**
 - D. Maturity**

- IV. HOW IS PIETY STRENGTHENED?**
 - **Through Bible study, prayer, worship, fellowship, and Communion**

- V. CONCLUSION**
 - A. Piety is an ideal**
 - B. Relate to earlier Rollos of Ideals, Grace, The Church, and the Holy Spirit**

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COMMENTARY ON THE OUTLINE

(This material is intended as a study aid for the Rollista. It is not intended to be the rollo.)

INSTRUCTIONS TO THE ROLLISTA: *Testimony used in this rollo should not be drawn out or force fit into the outline. Any testimony should fit naturally within the appropriate outline points and time objective.*

I. INTRODUCTION

The talk on piety stands at the conclusion of the first full day and brings the day to a resolution. The rollista should be aware that most candidates might have less than a positive reaction to the word, piety. Because of this lack of an understanding of the word, it is easy to miss (at least partially) the purpose of the talk.

The Rollista is asked to use this definition of Piety: The direction of one's whole life to God.

Piety explains the first step – making a dedication of all you are and have to God. But it is more than just the first step. It is the summary of everything else, “A Christian life, deeply felt, lived, and spread.”

Piety also does not just describe a state of being. Piety describes an attitude one must possess, the action necessary for growth, and the ideal of Christ-likeness that one hopes to achieve. None of this is possible without prayer.

A. Piety as an experience of grace. Piety is the living, recurring experience of the reality of grace in the relationship with God, with others, and with oneself. It is also the process of allowing the Holy Spirit to re-order one's life in relationship with Jesus Christ. Said another way, Piety is accepting and living the life of grace. This experience of grace and this process of growth are positive and transforming.

B. Piety as a process of growth. To Christianize the world and even to advance in our own spiritual life, we must focus our lives on three key growth areas – piety, study, and action.

C. False ideas of piety. There are basically three false perceptions of piety. To give better understanding these may be described as types of people. *(Please keep your explanations brief. If you choose to use names, be sure not to use names of candidates.)*

The person who is prideful and egotistical about their religion (“Holy Joe or Holy Hanna”) whose emphasis is on their participation in the externals of Christianity (the church building, devotions and rote prayers, traditions, etc.) rather than on a real dedication to God (Philippians 2:3-4.)

The person whose religion is routine or mechanical (“Mechanical Mike” or “Mechanical Millie”) follows the church crowd not Christ.

The person whose religion is a false front (Hypocritical Hal” or “Hypocritical Henrietta”), whose real concern is for personal acceptance or advancement.

(Since all Christians fall into the temptation of being falsely pious, it would be helpful for the rollista to give a brief personal example. Your example should fit naturally within the outline. The emphasis of this rollo should be about piety, not false piety.)

II. WHAT PIETY IS

A. Definition: The direction of one’s whole life to God. The call to be a Christian is a call to piety. The talk does not criticize doing “religious” things, but it states in a very strong way that being a Christian involves the directing of one’s whole life to God and making the life of grace our ideal.

B. Pattern of the Christian life. Piety is the pattern of Christian life: searching for God’s will, being open to God’s Spirit, allowing one’s life to be formed in the image of Christ, availing oneself of worship, Communion, Christian community, Bible study, prayer, and seeking the gifts of the Spirit for ministry and service.

(A personal testimony used here should include three elements and be less than ten minutes: 1. The spiritual condition the speaker was in before he or she began to direct his/her whole life to God. 2. How the change came, i.e., how he or she came to realize the value and necessity of directing his or her life to God, and 3. What a life in union with God means to the speaker now.)

III. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF PIETY

Some characteristics of piety are qualities, which are visible. A man or woman who is directing their whole life towards God will appear to the world in a natural, courageous and joyful way. *(Some characteristics can be illustrated by brief personal examples in the rollista’s life.)*

A. Christ-likeness (Fruit of the Spirit). This first characteristic involves following Jesus’ example and seeking to develop His character and conduct in our lives (2 Cor. 5:17; Rom. 12:12; 1 John 2-6.) Jesus was the perfect embodiment of the Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22). Christ likeness also involves allowing Jesus to produce the Fruit of the Spirit in us...love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Gal 5:22-23.)

B. Gratitude. The Christian life springs from our grateful response to what God is doing for us, in us, and through us in Jesus Christ (I Thes. 5:18). Christians are a people made and moved by gratitude. They are a people whose central act of worship is in thanksgiving. Their faith in Jesus Christ makes it possible for them to give thanks in every circumstance. Grateful Christians are giving and forgiving people.

- C. **Freedom.** One is set free to live a life of piety when Christ dwells in the heart by faith (John 8:31, 32, 36.) However, freedom is neither liberty to do just as one likes, nor is it an end of all restraints (1 Peter 2:16.) Persons who seek to be free from the will of God will inevitably become prisoners of their own will.
- D. **Maturity.** Christians mature in piety as they grow in their love for God, and His will. (Eph. 4:13-16.) The fruits of maturing can be seen in sensitivity to the needs of others and the courage to be known as a disciple of Christ.

IV. HOW IS PIETY STRENGTHENED?

- Piety is strengthened through Bible study, prayer, worship, fellowship, and Communion. Piety is more a process than a possession, more a pattern of Christian life than a list of Christian virtues. Because it is a process, it is never completed. The Christian, therefore, is someone on a journey of faith, a person who keeps on submitting heart, mind, and will to the shaping power of the gospel through the work of the Holy Spirit.

V. CONCLUSION

- A. **PIETY is an ideal** and should be related to the earlier rollos. The ideal is direct and straightforward – the only response adequate to God’s gift of grace is a complete giving of ourselves to Him.
- B. In summary, Piety relates to the previous talks of the day as follows:
 IDEALS: Piety is the lived ideal of a life in grace with Christ.
 GRACE: Piety is the daily response to God’s grace in our lives.
 THE CHURCH: Piety is strengthened by the believer’s participation in the Body of Christ.
 THE HOLY SPIRIT: Piety is formed and nurtured by the Holy Spirit, God present with us.

(During, or at the end of the Rollo, the concept of the three-legged stool {tripod} should be introduced.)

Note to the rollista: *There is far more subject matter in this “Commentary . . .” than is required to meet the time objective of the rollo. While it is necessary to speak very briefly on each item listed in the outline, be careful to select for expansion, only those items for which you have something significant to contribute - - usually through personal experience. Remember, the more important part of the Weekend will occur during table discussions than what participants will learn or remember from hearing the rollo. The rollo is meant more to spark ideas for the table discussions than it is meant to be instructive.*

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BIBLE REFERENCES

(These Bible references are included here to help the rollista understand some of the biblical background of the rollo. The list is neither complete nor is it intended to become part of the rollo. Read the references and listen for the Word of God.)

Exodus	3 – 4	Moses is called, God will overcome his limitations
1 Kings	19:1-8	Elijah is discouraged, he got his eyes off God & on self
Matthew	6:1-18	Beware of practicing false piety, develop inner piety
Mark	14:66-72	Peter denies Christ; pride & trust own strength will fail
Luke	18:9-14	A parable about true piety
John	8:31, 32, 36	The Word will set you free
Romans	6:1-6	Dying and rising with Christ; no longer slaves to sin
	8:1	No condemnation in Christ Jesus
	12:1-2	Be a living sacrifice, have a renewed mind
1 Cor	2:1-5	I was with you in weakness
2 Cor	5:17	Exchanged life; new creation in Christ
Galatians	2:20	Crucified with Christ; let Jesus live through you
	5:1	For freedom Christ has set us free
	5:22-23	Fruit of the Spirit
Ephesians	4:13-16	Don't be immature children – grow up in Christ
	5:1	Be imitators of God
Phi	2:3-4	True piety is humble, interested in others; pride destroys
I Thes.	5:18	In everything give thanks
1 Peter	2:16	We are free to live as God's servants
	5:5-6	Be humble; God opposes pride
1 John	2:6	Walk as Jesus walked