**Cleanliness is next to godliness**

The expression emphasises the importance of cleanliness-clean dress and clean habits. Cleanliness means the habit if keeping oneself physically and mentally clean. Godliness means being near to god by loving and obeying him. Cleanliness is very important for a good, healthy and moral life. A well-dressed person with clean habits impresses others. He may be in possession of a good character too. A person’s character can be assessed by his dress and manners. Cleanliness of body is also necessary for self-respect. But even more important than cleanliness of body is cleanliness of mind. Cleanliness of heart is the beginning of godliness. God is considered to be the most sacred and the purest being. A person who is pure and clean in body and mind is considered to be next to god. Men of good character stick to certain principles in life. They are pious and god-fearing. Their minds are free from hatred and jealousy. They do not keep any grudge against others in their hearts. Only a person who possesses a clean heart can become pious. Godliness is to be pious and religious. The character of a person is based on his external appearance, purity of thought, word and deed. A person who is outwardly clean and inwardly poisonous is very dangerous. Cleanliness gives us mental peace and happiness. Only clean-hearted persons can enjoy the bliss of god. Thus the proverb teaches us that cleanliness of body and mind is the way to reach god. If we are clean in mind and body, we are next to God.