

Desiring a Life Fully Pleasing to God

Colossians 1:9-10

All Stand and Read Scripture

Colossians 1:9-10 (NASB)

⁹ For this reason also, since the day we heard *of it*, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, ¹⁰ so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please *Him* in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

INTRODUCTION:

In the last month, I have been preaching from the book of Colossians. It is a book written by the Apostle Paul to the Colossians. In the epistle, Paul covers three basic themes.

1. The preeminence, absolute supremacy, and sole sufficiency of Christ. He teaches one of the most powerful passages attributing the divinity of Jesus Christ who is God in flesh as found anywhere in the Bible.
2. How to counter and respond to false teachings that they are facing based upon information that he has learned from Apaphras.
3. An encouragement to love and serve Christ with all of their heart, soul, mind, and strength.

In the first 8 verses, Paul reminded them of the gospel or the “good news” of Jesus Christ. The good news that Christ came to earth in human form, died on the cross for our sins, was buried, and rose again on the third day.

Through the writers of the scriptures, which were all inspired by God, we have been given God’s Word (the Bible). It is the infallible Word of God. It is our instruction manual on how to live for Christ. From the Bible we learn that we are sinners and have fallen away from God due to our sin, He has offered us an opportunity to be reconciled back to Him through His Son, Jesus Christ, and be made righteous. No matter how great your sin is, Christ’s sacrifice is more than sufficient.

The gospel message is not a message about what **you** can do to be saved or how you can **earn** salvation. The gift of salvation is given to us by God’s **grace**.

God’s grace is something we receive that we do not deserve. Grace is a free gift of unmerited or undeserved favor!

We are saved by God's grace when we:

1. Believe that Christ is the Son of God,
2. Realize that we are sinners and ask God to forgive us of our sins,
3. We are immersed in water by baptism for the remission of sins
4. We live a new life with Christ as our Lord.

This is the message of the Gospel. When we have accepted Christ as our Lord and Savior, we have the assured hope of eternal life with God in Heaven.

In our scripture verses 9-12 this morning, is recorded Paul's prayer for the Colossians that they might have a life fully pleasing to God.

ILLUSTRATION:

I would like for you to think back on your prayer life this last week. As you are thinking back, I want you to imagine that there was a transcript written of all of your prayers. Then imagine that the transcript is given to someone who does not know you. That person is asked to conclude what is the desire of your heart based upon your weekly prayers. What would that person conclude from that transcript?

- Would he see a soul that is not praying at all or someone who is in close communion with God?
- Would he see a soul that is asking give me, give me, give me or would he see someone who is praying for others.
- Would he see you asking for wisdom and understanding from reading His Word both for yourself and for others?
- Would he see you praying for the injured and sick?
- Would he see you praying for the brethren within Greenwood Christian Church?
- Would he see a concern for the lost?

I ask you this question, because this morning we get to see what the heart and prayer of Paul is for the Colossians. We get to see what he most longs to see in these believers that he cares for so much. It is not only for the Colossians that he cares for, it is for all believers, like you and me. I pray that we will use his prayer as an example of how we should live and how we should pray for others.

Prayer

As we consider Paul's prayer this morning, I would like for you to note 3 things that he asked God to provide for them through His grace. We will be covering the first today and the second and third provision will be covered later.

1. Have the Desire for a Life Fully Pleasing to God.
2. Seek the Source of a Life Fully Pleasing to God.
3. Exhibit the Evidence of a Life Fully Pleasing to God.

Have the Desire for a Life Fully Pleasing to God.

BODY:

This is the chief desire of Paul of Paul's heart when he prays for the Colossians. We read this in verse 10

Colossians 1:10a (NASB)

¹⁰ so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please *Him* in all respects,

This is the ultimate end that he longs for in these Colossian believers. Yes, he does begin in the second half of verse 9 by asking

Colossians 1:9b (NASB)

that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding

But that request is not the end of itself. He does not simply want them to have a lot of knowledge and wisdom. He wants them to have more than that, he wants them to be filled with His knowledge and spiritual wisdom for the ultimate purpose that they can walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to Him.

As we look at Paul's desire here, I want to note three things about it briefly. Observe that Paul is concerned about

- Their Life (**Walk**).
- Their lives are **worthy of the Lord**.
- Their lives are **fully pleasing to Him**.

I. Their Walk.

Paul wants the Colossians to walk worthy. "Walk" is a metaphor in the Bible for how we live life. It simply pictures our life as a journey. The choices, decisions, and the things we do day by day are symbolic of steps of that journey. As we go through life we are walking the journey of our life.

Walk is used in scripture many times. We can walk negatively and we can also walk in a righteous way.

Ephesians 2:1-2a (NASB)

² And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, ² in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world,

This scripture describes us as lost. We were walking in our sins according to the course of this world. We were living our lives based upon the knowledge and wisdom of men instead of God.

A positive manner of walk is in

Ephesians 5:1-2b (NASB)

⁵ Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; ² and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you

So when Paul is talking about walking worthy of the Lord, he is referring to the **choices, decisions, and the things we do day by day in our life**.

Those actions should be based upon spiritual knowledge and wisdom from the Word of God.

The second thing that I want you to observe is that Paul had a concern that they are walking worthy of Christ.

II. Their Lives are Worthy of the Lord.

The term “worthy” means “suitable” or “appropriate”.

We must be careful to not confuse worthiness with righteousness. We are given righteousness by the grace of God when we are forgiven of our sins. Unlike righteousness, worthiness is not something that is handed to us.

We have corrupted the beauty of God’s grace by adopting a definition of grace that means we don’t have to:

- press hard after Jesus,
- or walk in a worthy manner of His calling,
- or take up our cross and follow Him.

We go about our lives with a dull spirit, lukewarm about God’s Word, and we excuse ourselves by saying that we are under grace. Folks, this is not what the apostles taught the early church!

1 Thessalonians 2:11-12 (NASB)

¹¹ just as you know how we *were* exhorting and encouraging and imploring each one of you as a father *would* his own children, ¹² so that you would walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

According to Paul, the responsibility for being found worthy in God’s sight is on us and the daily decisions we make. The ultimate expression of this idea of worthiness is seen toward the end of the book of Revelation when John talks about the bride (or the final group of all Christians at Christ’s second coming).

Revelation 19:7 (NASB)

⁷ Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready.”

Note that the scripture does not say that God has made her ready; she made herself ready! This is synonymous with saying that the Bride began walking with God in a manner worthy of her calling. Can you imagine the folly of a bride who showed up at her wedding looking a mess, unprepared, and who claimed that as soon as the bridegroom appeared she would be transformed into a beautiful bride? Such a one would be well-advised to go back and GET READY! So it is with the Bride of Christ; those who are not making themselves ready but who expect to simply be changed when He appears are in for a surprise.

We will never be as worthy as the Lord Jesus because we are sinners and we fail often. It is important, though, that we strive for 100% obedience to the Lord as we endeavor to walk in a manner worthy of Him. But only Jesus is ultimately found worthy:

Revelation 5:3-5 (NASB)

³ And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the book or to look into it. ⁴ Then I *began* to weep greatly because no one was found worthy to open the book or to look into it; ⁵ and one of the elders *said* to me, “Stop weeping; behold, the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome so as to open the book and its seven seals.”

We must embrace both righteousness and worthiness with a right understanding. If we do not understand the free gift of righteousness, we will have a guilty spirit before the Father.. We will be robbed of the grace and understanding to pursue worthiness. And if we lack understanding about our responsibility to pursue a worthy walk, we will assume that everything is cool and that God understands. Jesus referred to such an attitude as being lukewarm and declared that it would make Him vomit.

Righteousness is free; worthiness is on us.

The third thing that I want you to observe is that Paul had a concern that their lives were fully pleasing to Him.

III. **Their Lives are Fully Pleasing to Him.**

Our chief desire as a Christian would be to please the Lord. It is something that we think about with every turn we make during the day. When we make decisions we should ask “which decision would most glorify the Lord?”

1 Corinthians 10:31 (NASB)

³¹ **Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.**

Paul says that even in the grey areas of our life where neither decision is wrong, we should ask which decision would most glorify the Lord

How different is this from what we generally ask? Does God forbid this? What can I get away with?

Paul says that is never the question. To always be walking with the Lord means that we ask “what would bring the most honor to the Lord?”

Rightly applied these questions would transform

- How we work.
- How we use our leisure time.
- How we talk to others.
- What responsibilities we take in our churches.

- What we read.
- What we watch on television.
- How we treat our neighbors.
- How we spend our time on the computers and cellphones.
- How we spend our money.

It would affect every one of those areas!

Paul summed it up in

Romans 12:1 (NASB)

12 Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, *which is your spiritual service of worship.*

Consider all that God has done for us and for the mercy He has shown to us. We have been found righteous, despite our sinfulness, because of Christ's death on the cross for our sins!

How can we NOT serve the Lord! Our life is no longer ours to do as we will; it has been bought with a price.

Every thought must be to honor Him! He is worthy of that!

CONCLUSION:

Matthew 16:24-27 (NASB)

24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. 25 For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. 26 For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? 27 For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and WILL THEN REPAY EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS.

Earlier we considered our weekly prayer life. God knows our every thought. We may be able to fool man, but God knows our heart. Is your faith still in earthly things, or are you seeking God's will in your life? The scriptures tell us not to store up for yourself treasures on earth where moth and rust can destroy and where thieves break through and steal, but store up for yourself treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy and thieves cannot break through and steal.

We can gain the whole world, but if we are not in Christ, we are dead in sin.

Most of us are over half way through our lives. We have already worked and earned a living and now we are tired. Our bodies do not function as they did when we were younger. Our minds are not quite as sharp. Health issues have come upon us and we are tired. We think how great it would be if we could just sit down and rest and be able to forget about our finances, pain, worries, and sorrow.

Do you know that a day like that is possible? Not only a day, but an infinite number of days that will make our life on earth seem like one breath of air. We were born into a world of sin. God sent His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross for our sins. He only asks that you believe in Him, repent of your sins, be immersed in the waters of baptism for the remission of your sin, and live a new life as we have talked about today. By His grace He will make you righteous and acceptable to God. He has promised an eternal life with Him in Heaven if we remain faithful.

God never promised that the faithful life would be easy. Our sinful nature tries to hide the glories of God and how wonderful His grace and mercy really is. Our time on earth seems very long, but those of us who are in our later years fully understand how short it really is.

Consider an **eternal** life in a perfect Heaven where there is no pain or sorrow or wages to earn. WOW! This is God's promise if we remain faithful to the end of our short life on earth. It is not enough to just go through the motions. Why waste your time going through the motions. God wants and knows our hearts. Turn your heart over to God today. He is worth every second of your time!

If you have not accepted Christ as your Lord and Savior, do it today.

If you have accepted Christ as your Lord and Savior and you are still living like the world and not living a life pleasing to God. I urge you to seek the will of God in your life and start submitting to His will in your life. You are either "**dead to sin**" or you are "**dead in sin**". There is no in between.

The Family of God

I'm so glad I'm a part of the family of God.

I've been washed in the fountain, cleansed by His blood!

Joint heirs with Jesus as we travel this sod,

For I'm part of the family, the family of God.