

# Colossians, A Study pt.8

Verses 1:10b–11

If you have your copy of God’s word, turn with me to Colossians 1. (We will read the entire chapter, but focus our attention on vv. 10–13. Read chapter)

As we will have walked through this section of the letter we have come to see that Paul reveals not only *that* he prayed for the saints since he heard of their faith, but he reveals *why* he is praying for them in this way.

Paul’s prayer is found in v. 9 (read), and the “why” (or reason) for the prayer is found in v. 10.

So, the prayer is that they may know the will of God and the reason for this prayer is so that they may do the will of God. (That’s what it means to “walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him...”)

What we said at this point was the fact God has clearly revealed what His will is and He is equally clear that we are called to know that will and do it!

We have also said, in other sermons, that God has granted to us everything necessary to fulfill His will and so bring glory to His name!

And since we all want to make it our aim to please Him, it is a blessing to us to *know* what is pleasing to Him.

And since we all want to make it our aim to please Him, we *better* pay close attention to what He has revealed.

Now, with this being the stated reason for Paul's prayer (that we will walk in a “manner worthy of the Lord”), he then lists other realities that correspond or are connected to the idea of “walking in a manner worthy of the Lord.”

To see this clearly, I want to look at all the verbs in this section and see how they relate to “walking in a manner worthy of the Lord.”

There are four main verbal phrases:

1. **Bearing** fruit...
2. **Increasing** in knowledge...
3. **Being** strengthened...
4. **Giving** thanks...

These four verbal phrases help us to make sense of what it means to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord.

So, let’s walk through this realities.

The first reality in walking in a manner worthy of the Lord and being fully pleasing in Him is to **bear fruit** in every good work.

Remember all this is connected to knowing the will of God!

So, in keeping with this Paul is telling us that he desires for these saints (and conversely this could be said about us) to abound in being fruitful and productive christians!

The christian life is (or at least) should be a very productive and fruitful life!

A fruitless christian is an oxymoron!

Christ has called us all to be abounding in fruit!

**The life of Christian is a fruit bearing, good work doing life!**

It is a life that proactively seeks to do good works that blesses our neighbor and brings glory to God!

The reason this is the case is twofold:

1. **Because we are simply seeking to imitate and follow the example of our Lord!**

Acts 10:38, “**He went about doing good** and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.”

Think about this text for a moment!

The life and ministry of Jesus was marked by the proliferation of good works!

Now, of course, we cannot reduce Jesus' ministry down to doing good works, but we DEFINITELY cannot ignore them!

And this is what we should expect from the Lord, who came to fulfill the law!

The second half of the law is summarized as loving our neighbor as ourselves!

And since Jesus fulfills this perfectly we should expect that His life was full of good works!

He sought to be a blessing and do things that were for the benefit and good of others!

Now, the text does not tell us specifically what these good works were, but it does tell us that He was active in the work of blessing others!

And our lives should be no different!

We should be marked as those who do good!

Our lives should be characterized as one that abounds in good works!

This is the first reason why we should be about doing good because our Lord was.

## **2. The Lord has saved us to do good works and bear much fruit.**

This is the whole point of being connected to the vine!

The whole point of being connected to the vine is so that we might bear much fruit.

This is what Jesus said repeatedly in John 15.

**John 15:1–2, 5, 8**

**15 “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. 2 Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit.**

**5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.**

**8 By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.**

We are in Christ for the purpose of bearing much fruit!

And since Paul wrote this phrase about bearing fruit in good works, lets connect it to what he said in Eph. 2:10

**Eph 2:10,**

**“10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”**

HEAR THIS:

YOU WERE SAVED TO BEAR FRUIT AND FOR GOOD WORKS!!

We make a big deal about our salvation being ordained before the foundation of the world, but have you considered that so were your good works?

Just as God prepared your salvation beforehand so too He did your good works!

You were saved to do good work!

It is an inescapable reality, you have good works that God has assigned for you to do (and that you will do!)

And I will be so bold as to say, that just as you could not miss the salvation that was prepared for you, neither can you miss the good works God has prepared for you!

I say this because I know the feeling of thinking I miss a work or something or that the works that God has for me have been forfeited somehow.

But according to the text, the Lord has prepared each work for us! So, by the grace of God let's walk in them!

Now, the question is what are those good works?

Here is a general rule, that you will have to apply wisdom and discernment to:  
**Wherever you see a need that you the capacity to fill by doing good, fill that need!**

(Now, remember, this is a general rule.)

I have biblical grounds for this general rule:

James 2:14,

**“14** What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? **15** If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, **16** and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and filled,” without giving them the things needed for the body, what good[b] is that? **17** So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.”

Contextually, James is talking about having a living faith that is demonstrated by its fruitful works.

And the example that he gives is one someone having a need that you can meet!

And meeting this need is seen as proof for having a living faith!

Now, if we believe in the sovereignty of God, then we must believe that there are needs that God brings to us to meet!

Far too often, we pray to God to meet the needs of others that He has called us to meet!

Yes, we ought always to pray, but coupled with that prayer should be our seeking to work for the good of others!

Again, use wisdom, but the general rule for doing good works is if there is a need of someone that God has brought to you, meet the need.

God has graced and gifted you with what is necessary to be a blessing to others!

And as you seek to prayerfully do this, you will be fully pleasing to the Lord and walking in a manner worthy of Him.

This is the first reality connected to walking in a manner worthy of the Lord: bearing fruit in every good work.

## **2. The second reality connected to walking in a manner worthy of the Lord is increasing in the knowledge of God (v. 10.)**

The increase of the knowledge of God comes as a direct result of seeking to live exclusively submitted to the word of God!

I chose this sentence purposefully.

The life that is exclusively submitted (by this, I mean there are no other acknowledged authorities to which you look) to the word of God will increase in the knowledge of God.

To say is another way and to put the cookies on the bottom shelf:

YOU WILL ONLY GROW IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD IF YOU SPEND TIME IN THE WORD OF GOD AND ALLOW THAT WORD TO HAVE ITS SANCTIFYING INFLUENCE ON YOU!

I know this is basic, but oh, how the basic things become the neglected things!

- There are no shortcuts!
- There are no substitutes!
- There is no second option!
- There is no one else who can do it for you!

YOU MUST SPEND TIME IN THE WORD OF GOD IF YOU ARE GOING TO INCREASE IN YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF GOD!

You know this, but do you live and act like it!

***You can say, “Amen” with your lips, but can you say, “Amen” with your life!***

Beloved, this is a reality that you can avoid without detriment to the health of your soul!

One thing that is assumed in the text is the fact that you actually can increase in the knowledge of God.

I mention this because a temptation is to think that this applies only to the immature or those who may be called, “babes in Christ.” However, this is not true!

This applies to the pastor just as much as it does to the kid who just became a christian!

In other words, there are ways in which we can increase our knowledge of God!

Because God is inexhaustible and incomprehensible, there will always be space to increase knowledge!

There is always room to increase in knowledge when the finite is trying to comprehend and understand the infinite!

This is the second way to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord is by increasing your knowledge of Him.

**3. The third way is by being strengthened by God for endurance and patience with joy.**

Notice first, that the strength we receive is divine.

We are strengthened “according to his glorious power.”

That is to say the strength that we receive comes from the God who has strength.

**Let me say it this way: God does not strengthen us with a borrowed strength!**

He strengthens us according to the strength that He possesses!

And notice the reason for this strength: it is for endurance and patience!

These two words have much in common.

Patience means to “remain under”

Endurance means to be “longsuffering”

The commonality of these words points to the fact that God provides His strength to us in order that we may not crumble beneath the weight of living in a sin curse world!

The reason we are able to maintain faith and are able to have our right minds in the midst of trials is that we are being strengthened by God to endure!



The reason we are able to grow in faith and not weaken in the midst of sorrow is because we are being strengthened by God to endure

The reason why we are able to maintain a resolve to look to the hills from which comes our help is because we are being strengthened by God to endure!

This strength is a strength that doesn't bend or break!

In this way, it is not surprising that you endure and persevere through trial!

You are being preserved by God!

The shock would be if we could sustain ourselves, which we know we can't! But the fact that we endure and so with joy is proof that God's power is greater than our circumstance!

And Paul, just like James, says that we can do this with joy!

And this joy is a gladness that is sourced in God that looks to him and not our situation for hope, peace, comfort and contentment!

This this is operative in your life:

1. Bearing fruit...
2. Increasing in the knowledge of God..
3. And being strengthened...

We will be walking in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to Him!

Let's Pray!