

**Message #4****Colossians 1:9-14**

Colossian heretics were offering a false system of doctrine to the Colossian church that was not based on truth. Paul was over 900 miles away and Epaphras, who was probably the pastor of the church, was with him. What could Paul do for this church? One thing he could do was to write it a letter which set forth the truth of God. The other thing he could do was pray.

**GROWING DEEP IN THE WORD AND WILL OF GOD INTO A LIFE THAT PLEASES GOD AND BEARS FRUIT IS DETERMINED BY ONE'S OWN FAITHFULNESS AND BY THE PRAYERS OF OTHERS WHO ARE FAITHFUL.**

We will never grow deep in the things of God until we are faithful and being transformed by the Word of God (Rom. 12:1-2). Growing deep is not a mystical experience achieved by some secret knowledge or information. Growing deep is achieved by clearly understanding the truth of God and by responding to that truth. When you combine this with faithful people praying, real fruitful and powerful growth will take place.

Paul was never content that people were saved. He was not happy with the fact that they were just escaping hell; he wanted them to grow deep in the knowledge and wisdom of God and he specifically prayed for that.

**SUBPOINT #1** – Why Paul was motivated to pray for the Colossians. **1:9a**

The words “for this reason” indicate that the reason Paul was moved to pray for the development of this church was because he had learned that they had so favorably responded to the truth of God and they understood it and were developing in their Christian life. Albert Barnes said: “We always feel stimulated and encouraged to pray for those who are doing well” (p. 106).

When Paul wrote to the Corinthians, he specifically said he did not teach them the meatier things of God because they were carnal and fleshly (I Cor. 3:1-2). However, when he prays for the Colossians, he is praying that they will grow deep because they had been devoted to truth and had developed in their faith, hope and love.

**SUBPOINT #2** – What Paul was specifically praying for the Colossians. **1:9b-d**

The contents of the prayer are introduced by the word “that.” There is one specific request that Paul continually made in behalf of the Colossians: “That they might be filled with knowledge.”

The word “knowledge” is one that implies that Paul is praying that God might fill them with knowledge-upon-knowledge. This is much more than a prayer for surface knowledge; this is prayer for deep and precise knowledge of the will, wishes and desires of God (G. Abbot-Smith, p. 204).

**Qualification #1** - Paul prays for full knowledge in all spiritual wisdom. **1:9c**

The word “wisdom” is a word that refers to intelligence and skill in both theological and practical matters (p. 412). Paul’s prayer is that the Colossians will come to such deep understanding of the things of God that in every situation of life they are able to sift through the truth of God and be able to know what to believe and do.

**Qualification #2** - Paul prays for full knowledge in all spiritual understanding. **1:9d**

The word “understanding” is one that refers to conscious understanding (*Ibid.*, p. 427). Paul is praying that the faith of these believers will be very conscious and very deep. This is not an emotional or irrational type of spirituality; it is a spirituality that is very conscious and very precious.

You will never gain “full knowledge” of the will of God in any other way other than an intense focus on the Word of God and a submission to it. That combination will take one deep and make one powerful.

**SUBPOINT #3** – What Paul was expecting as a result of praying for the Colossians. **1:10-14**

The words “so that” of **verse 10** introduce the results that Paul expected to occur in view of the fact that he was praying that they be filled with the knowledge of God.

The result of growing deep in the things of God is that we have a walk, a lifestyle that is worthy of our relationship with the Lord and a walk and lifestyle that pleases Him.

H.A. Ironside said: “We can only walk worthy of the Lord as we know His mind. The study of His Word and a godly walk should ever go together” (pp. 32-33).

Look carefully at what this passage is saying—we gain a walk that is worthy of our Lord and we develop a life that is pleasing to Him when He permits us to grow deep in His Word. People who are content with a surface level understanding of the Bible will never have a life worthy of the Lord and never have a life that pleases Him.

1) It is possible to have a daily lifestyle that is worthy of the Lord and pleasing to the Lord.

A worthy walk will be a walk of purity (Rom. 13:13), of contentedness (I Cor. 7:17), of faith (II Cor. 5:7), of godly works (Eph. 2:10), of humility (Eph. 4:1-3), of sanctification and separation (Eph. 4:17-32), of love (Eph. 5:2), of light (Eph. 5:8), of wisdom (Eph. 5:15) and of truth (3 John 3-4).

- 2) The key to a lifestyle that is worthy of the Lord and pleases Him is deep knowledge of the Word.

William Hendriksen said it well when he said: "...the more God's children know Him, the more they will also love Him; and the more they love Him, the more they will also wish to obey Him in thought, word and deed" (p. 57).

- 3) God is the only person who can permit us to grow deep in the knowledge of His Word and will.

Paul was praying that this might be permitted to happen by God. From a human perspective, the thing that makes this a possibility is a passion for the truth of God and a life responding to that truth.

**Participle #1** - A worthy walk is a fruit-bearing walk. **1:10b**

The present tense of the participle "bearing fruit" indicates that a worthy walk and a pleasing lifestyle is one that continually bears fruit. Bearing fruit is the result of a relationship with Jesus Christ and an intense focus on the Word of God, which is applying it to one's own life.

**Participle #2** - A worthy walk is an increased knowledge walk. **1:10c**

The present tense of the participle "increasing" indicates that a worthy walk that pleases God is one that continually grows deep in the knowledge of THE God. The word "knowledge" is one that refers to "knowledge-upon-knowledge." The more we are after a deep knowledge of the things of God, the more pleasing we are to God.

**Participle #3** - A worthy walk is a powerfully practical walk. **1:11**

It is possible to have God strengthen us with such power and might that we are a glorious reflection of the power of God. In the midst of doctrine that is heretical, in the midst of a world that is godless, it is possible to be strengthened to a level that is steadfast, patient and joyous. This type of character is a glorious demonstration of the power of God.

**Participle #4** - A worthy walk is a thankful walk. **1:12-14**

- 1) A worthy walk will continually thank God for His qualification. **1:12**

The word "qualify" means God has made us sufficient and competent to share in the eternal inheritance that will be given to all the children of God, or saints in light (G. Abbott-Smith, p. 215).

2) A worthy walk will continually thank God for His deliverance. **1:13a**

The aorist tense of the verb “delivered” indicates that at one moment of time God drew us and rescued us out of the satanic spiritual world of darkness (*Ibid.*, p. 398).

I draw attention to the preposition “from”; it means “out of” or completely removed. Once God saves a person, he/she is completely removed from the realm of satanic power. We are out of it forever. A life that pleases God is one that continually thanks God for this delivering reality.

3) A worthy walk will continually thank God for His transference. **1:13b**

The verb “transferred” is one used for the removal of large bodies of men, such as captured armies or lands. The word literally means to remove or change (G. Abbott-Smith, p. 282).

Notice the words “in whom” (v. 14)—deliverance, redemption and forgiveness of sins are only found in Jesus Christ!

Notice carefully there is no positional difference between redemption of sins and remission or forgiveness of sins—they are both found in Jesus Christ.

A worthy walk is one that will continually thank God for His delivering work in Jesus Christ.

People look for different things in a church and usually ask the wrong questions: Do you have youth? Do you have Awana? Do you have music? The question that should be asked is whether or not this church will take me deep into the Word of God! That is what produces a powerful life that is pleasing to God.