

A Practical Study of COLOSSIANS

How Christians Grow

“Christ is All and in All”

Key verse 3:11b —“*Christ is all and in all.*”

Study Number Two – The Will, Walk, and Work of Christ – Colossians 1:9-14

Father what a joy to have the privilege of studying Your Word. Thank You for the book of Colossians and the beauty of it. We pray that we'll be able to communicate the Christ that is so beautifully displayed and that You'll be glorified and honored and Your children will be edified and built up. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Study #2—The Will, the Walk and the Work of Christ.

The first two verses are going to be the KEY VERSES—verses 9 and 10.

Joe Keger wrote this piece of cowboy poetry called *Lookin' At Life*, “There Is a Place.”

(Lookin' at Live by Joe Kreger)

There Is a Place

There is a place I'm going.
Though, as yet, I don't know when.
But, I know it lies beyond the realm
of death and pain and sin.

Infirmity will have no dominion.
Eternal joy will abound.
Floods and drought and poverty
won't touch that Higher Ground.

We'll break free from the shackles
of bodies tired and worn.
Our voices will join in unending praise,
never more to mourn.

There will be no need for justice
in a place that's ruled by grace.
Doubt will pass from our memories
when we see the Savior's face.

Each day will be a reunion
with loved ones we long to see.
Saints of old will be our companions
when we sit at the Father's knee.

The veil that clouds our vision

will be forever gone.
We'll live in the Light, freed from night
in the Land of Eternal Dawn.

This promised destination
can't be reached by what we've done.
Our passage is bought and paid for
with the Blood shed by the Son.

Come and join me in the journey
to that far-off Promised Place.
Take Jesus as your Savior,
and receive His Gift of Grace.

pp. 135-36

John Ortberg has written a book called *When the Game Is Over* and what he had to say in his book about physical death is really good. He was talking about the fact that in his years of pastorate he had gathered together a list of regrets from deathbeds—people who were believers that were dying. Listen to these four things and maybe they will motivate.

(When the Game Is Over, It All Goes Back In The Box by John Ortberg)

- I would have loved more deeply.
- I would have laughed more often.
- I would have given more generously.
- I would have lived more boldly.

pp. 101-102

In other words, they would have used their time more wisely in a way that would be more fruitful.

Listen to what Erwin McManus has to say:

(The Barbarian Way: Soul Cravings by Erwin Raphael McManus)

I was surprised to learn that a group of buzzards waiting around together to feast on leftover carnage is called a committee. Just this one insight is worth the price of the whole book. This explains so much of what's going on in churches—a lot of committees waiting around to live off human carnage.

pp. 136-7

You might not agree with him but he sure is a stimulating writer and he comes from the trenches to help us understand that we can miss so much of what we should be doing.

That's the whole purpose of the book of Colossians. We're going to have to confront some things that will make you very uncomfortable.

We never really take time to evaluate the stages that we go through in our lives as Christians so we miss so much. This is partly from lack of instruction, partly from the fact that we haven't really put things in proper perspective.

Now remember Stage #1—Christ Has Changed My Life.

When you come to know Jesus Christ as Savior, you have:

a new capacity for LOVE,

PEACE,

FORGIVENESS,

RESTORATION OF RELATIONSHIPS a lot of time,

DESIRE FOR GOD'S WORD,

COMMUNION for PRAYER and THANKSGIVING,

HUNGER FOR FELLOWSHIP,

JOY and

STEADFASTNESS.

All these wonderful things we began to experience in Stage #1.

There were THREE KEY WORDS in Stage #1:

1. FAITH,

2. LOVE, and

3. HOPE.

Paul put it in that order rather than like we read in 1 Corinthians 13 because he's progressively going from the PAST to the PRESENT to the FUTURE in the three words.

That's what happens when you become a Christian.

First of all, you experience FAITH in the Lord Jesus Christ. You accept what He has provided in the gift of His Son, and He becomes your Savior.

In the PRESENT we know that we are believers because of the love we have for our brothers and sisters in Christ. We started to squirm along when he said "love for ALL the saints."

And then HOPE—the hope that we have of the place that is laid up for us, the inheritance that is ours because we are part of the divine family.

That brings us to Stage #2.

What are the things that ought to be top priority in our life the minute we come to know Christ as Savior?

The neatest thing about this study is we're going to see the apostle Paul pray for people that he's never met, but he's heard from the pastor that they love him in the Spirit.

So he breaks into prayer. All we're going to look at is his prayer for the saints in the Colossian church—verses 9-14.

What does he pray about? Is it alright to pray for our brothers and sisters in Christ?

JOB prayed for his friends,

MOSES prayed for Aaron,

SAMUEL prayed for Israel,

DAVID prayed for Israel, and

HEZEKIAH prayed for Judah.

We could go on and on.

Acts 4:31

And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together. They were all filled with the Spirit and they went out and preached the word of God with boldness.

So prayer was an integral part of the fellowship of the early church.

He's never met these people but he has a representative, Epaphras, who came to know Christ through his ministry and

probably was in the school of Tyrannus in Ephesus and prepared himself for leadership. He has a burden to go to the Lycus Valley.

In that Valley is Colosse, Hierapolis and Laodicea—these three cities. We're not sure how much ministry he had in the Valley but we do know that he had a very successful and meaningful ministry in Colosse.

That's where we're going to land. We're going to see a man who knows the Lord and then in these 6 verses he's going to pray.

When a person prays for a brand new believer, what should be the number one priority and concern? The will of God, the walk that you have—your conduct—and what am I supposed to do now that I've become a Christian?

The WILL, the WALK and the WORK is Stage #2.

We're asking the same question:

What do I do after I become a Christian? What is my number one priority?

Has anybody ever told you that your number one priority is to know the will of God for your life? You just thought that was for missionaries and people who were going to get serious about going into ministry didn't you?

God had a will and a purpose for you coming into the Kingdom. You are either in that will or you're out of it. It depends on how much time you spend with Him and the peace that you have in your heart.

When something starts to convict you, that's the Holy Spirit saying: "Hey, I better start being concerned about His will for my life because I don't want to waste time. I don't want to have regrets on my deathbed."

Every one of us has a responsibility to God the Father, because we're in relationship with God the Son, to know that we're in the will of God.

Being in the will of God doesn't mean that you are in full-time ministry. You can be in the will of God in your workplace, in your profession, in your career. But one thing for sure, you're in the will of God when you have that peace in your heart.

Now I know that seems a little bit disturbing and I want it to be because you need to give it some real thought.

Our two key verses are Colossians 1:9 and 10.

v. 9 Because of this, we also from the day we heard are not ceasing in your behalf praying and asking (petitions and definite requests), in order that you might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding,

“Because of this, we also from the day we heard are not ceasing in your behalf praying and asking (petitions and definite requests),”—purpose for my praying is—“in order that you might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding,”

Bottom line, the first thing we should teach and the first thing we should be concerned about is that each of us relate to the Father and to His Son and that He has a plan and purpose for our lives—the number of days we’re going to be here and what He wants to accomplish in our lives.

Do you understand why prayer is such a vital part of it?

Every morning you should wake up to yoke up. When you yoke up you’re just saying “Father, do You have some new assignments for me today that I didn’t have when I went to sleep last night? I want to be fruitful, available, at peace in the center of Your will.”

His first prayer for them is “that you might be filled with the knowledge of His will.” Then he uses the term “wisdom and spiritual understand.”

“Because of this”—that’s the way the verse starts.

“Because of the fact that Epaphras told me that you loved me in the Spirit. Because of that I started praying for you.”

First of all, the PETITIONS are in verses 9, 10 and 11. These

are petitions for the saints in Colosse.

Verses 12-14 are PRAISE for the work of the FATHER.

And verse 14 is PRAISE for the work of the SON.

Now you have an idea of where we're going and where this prayer is going to take place.

So first things first, after you experience your new birth you should be concerned and make serious consideration about what God's will is for your life. You need to do that on a daily basis in your prayer time. That's vital.

One of the greatest concerns that we face as Christians who are endeavoring in being rightly adjusted to the Spirit of God and moving toward a meaningful relationship with the Father is GOD'S WILL.

Aren't we so different though? When somebody becomes a Christian in the church what do we do? We baptize them, catechize them, sermonize them and do everything we can to get them involved in Bible studies and all these things.

But has anybody ever sat down with you as a believer and said "I want you to seriously consider why God is joyful about you being in His family and how you've been gifted to be in service—a servant for Him—and make that number one."

We do this to believers. We CAST them in all these different

ways. The Lord's just saying "Hey, when you get tired trying, just trust Me. I would like for you to do this."

Now how is this relevant to our message?

Isaiah 55:8, 9

"My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," saith the Lord. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts."

Over and over again the Scripture gives us WARNING that we can try to make a fair show in the flesh but it will not measure up at all to the blessing that will be ours when we check-in with the Lord on new assignments on a daily basis.

In this first part there's actually FIVE THINGS he's going to say but we're going to be mainly concerned with THREE THINGS:

1. God's WILL,
2. our WALK, and
3. our WORK.

Listen to what Samuel Rutherford says:

(The Loveliness Of Christ: Extracts from the Letters of Samuel Rutherford selected by Ellen S. Lister)

The great Master Gardener in his wonderful providence has planted me in this part of his vineyard by grace, and here I grow and abide till the great Master of the vineyard thinks it fit to transplant me. Give him leave to take his own way of dispensations with you. His people must be content with what he carves out for them. Christ and His followers suffered before they reached the top of the mountain, but our soft nature desires heaven with ease. All who have gone before who have found sharp storms that took the hide off of their faces, and many enemies in the way. His ways are far above me, with windings we cannot see.

(source unknown)

At the end of it he says:

...duties are ours, events are the Lord's.

(source unknown)

When you put those together, we are to show up for the work but the events of that day are known only to Him. We're limiting ourself to my own resources and we're on our own if we fail to check in with Him regularly. This is a message that you have to communicate to people who get serious about the Lord Jesus and that they recognize there's just no alternative.

Petition #1:

“in order that you might be filled with the knowledge of His will” and with “all wisdom and spiritual understanding.”

It would be best for us to stop for just a second and meditate on two verses that are very familiar:

Romans 12:1

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present yourselves as a living sacrifice, wholly acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

That's the least you can do for what He's done.

Romans 12:2

Be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you can prove and practice that the will of God is perfect.

In other words, right at the critical time in the book of Romans, after he gives all of those theological discourses and then the future of Israel, BAM!—he starts the practical session with Romans 12:1 and 2.

When it says “in all wisdom and spiritual understanding” a young believer is going to have a hard time knowing that. So what are you going to give him?

James 1:5

If you lack wisdom, just ask of God and He'll make it clear to you.

He'll let you know what makes Him happy. He will let you know what He would like for you to do when you are listening and when you're sensitive and not trying to think that you can do it on your own.

“filled with the knowledge of His will”

Would you be honest enough to say that just maybe you might be guilty of being filled with the knowledge of YOUR will?

We have to all claim if we're not spending time with Him daily to check in to find out what it is. Many of you have raised kids and you know that the hardest thing you have is their will and you have to deal with that.

They'll do lots of great things for you but they don't do what they say. That's the way we are with the Lord sometimes. We think this might please Him and this might score us some points and so we do it and we haven't consulted Him so it fails. It doesn't go well.

“in all wisdom” then takes us back to James 1:5.

Henry Drummond once said the greatest instrument is finding God's will—and then he ends with this:

(The Ideal Life: 15 - How to Know the Will of God by Henry Drummond)

The name of the instrument is Obedience.
(source unknown)

It's the obedient heart. We want to do YOUR will.

Are you sensitive daily to the expression of His will? Do you ask about it?

Ruth Paxson's book *Life on the Highest Plane* is a treasure. She was part of the China Inland Mission. She said this:

(Life on the Highest Plane: A Study of the Spiritual Nature and Needs of Man by Ruth Paxson)

To master my will He had to melt my heart.
(source unknown)

There it is. To master my will because I was so bent on doing things my way. To master my will He had to melt my heart. He had to help me really be sold out on Him knowing best.

Now what other verse are you going to put there?

Proverbs 3:5, 6

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will

make your paths straight.

That's what we want.

In *The Little Red Book* by Mark DeMoss we read:

(The Little Red Book of Wisdom by Mark DeMoss)

“The art of being wise,” wrote [the] philosopher William James, “is the art of knowing what to overlook.”

p. 54 (paraphrase)

We just overlook everything that comes from the flesh. We overlook those things which we know are not of the Lord.

Chuck Swindoll said:

(Embraced by the Spirit: The Untold Blessings of Intimacy with God by Charles R. Swindoll)

- *As a child of God, you have God Himself living inside you.* St. Augustine, who found himself yielding to sin on one occasion, turned and ran. Finally, all alone, he stopped and put his head in his hands and said, “Oh, soul, dost thou not know that thou art carrying God around with thee?”

p. 21

That's the kind of commitment that's needed.

Now you've made the commitment. You want to do the will of God and God says "No, that's not what I want you to do because you still have a thought about what you want."

Joni Eareckson Tada in one of her books waxes so eloquent on this point. Realize that when you open up to the will of God you're going to get some no's because you've been so used to just anticipating and going ahead and doing some really neat stuff. It seems like we're being blessed.

She spent years in a wheelchair as a quadriplegic.

(A Place of Healing: Wrestling with the Mysteries of Suffering, Pain, and God's Sovereignty by Joni Eareckson Tada)

A no answer has purged sin from my life, strengthened my commitment to Him, forced me to depend on grace, bound me with other believers, produced discernment, fostered sensitivity, disciplined my mind, taught me to spend my time wisely . . . and widened my world beyond what I would have ever dreamed had I never had that accident in 1967.

My affliction has stretched my hope, made me know Christ better, helped me long for truth, led me to repentance of sin, goaded me to give thanks in times of sorrow, increased my faith, and strengthened my character. Being in this wheelchair has meant knowing *Him* better, feeling His pleasure every day. [There is the KEY THOUGHT.]

If that doesn't qualify as a miracle in your book, then—may I say it in all kindness?—I prefer my book to yours.

pp. 55-56

She's just telling us that even in the midst of difficult circumstances, we can be in the will of God and rejoice knowing that God has some greater plan.

And that comes from Paul doesn't it? Three times he said "Deliver me from this thorn in my flesh." And the Lord said No, No, No! "But My grace is sufficient for you." (ref. 2 Corinthians 12:9)

In verse 9 we find the PURPOSE IN PRAYING:

"in order that you might be filled with the knowledge of His will."

You say how am I "filled with the knowledge of His will"?

What happens when you become a believer? You're filled with the Teacher—the Holy Spirit Himself. He is the One who is free when we have given up on our will and we want His, and we wake up. Then the Holy Spirit comes along and uses the Word of God to guide us and direct our steps. And we're aware of that as we go through the day.

John 14:26

But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He is going to teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.

And then:

John 16:13

But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak of His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak...

That's the key—sensitivity to the Holy Spirit.

You haven't seen anything tough until you get Oswald Chambers with *My Utmost for His Highest*. Listen to this—Jesus' primary consideration.

This is the guy, the rich young ruler, who had done everything but he wouldn't deal with his finances. It was first in his heart.

(My Utmost For His Highest by Oswald Chambers)

Jesus' primary consideration is my absolutely annihilation of my right to myself and my identification with Him, which means having a relationship with Him in which there are no other relationships....

“Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him...” (Mark 10:21). This look of Jesus will require breaking your heart away forever from allegiance to any other person or thing. Has Jesus ever looked in this way at you? This look of Jesus transforms, penetrates, and captivates. Where you are soft and pliable with God is where the Lord has looked at you. If

you are hard and vindictive, insistent on having your own way, and always certain that the other person is more likely to be in the wrong than you are, then there are whole areas of your nature that have never been transformed by His gaze.

“One thing you lack. . . .” From Jesus Christ’s perspective oneness with Him, with nothing between, is the only good thing.

(September 28)

Remember, it’s the WILL, the WALK and the WORK.

In verse 9 it’s the WILL.

Now we’re going to move on to the second part to the WORTHY WALK. It’s going to be in verse 10. The WORK is going to be in verse 10. The next two are there.

v. 10 to live (walk) worthy of the Lord, to please Him in everything, in every good work, bearing fruit and increasing in the knowledge of God;

“to live (walk) worthy of the Lord, to please Him in everything,”

That goes with the first one. The worthy walk is to please Him in every way.

And the third one is:

“in every good work, bearing fruit and increasing in the

knowledge of God;”

You say, “Wow! That’s a big assignment to walk worthy of the Lord.”

If you want to do a little study, just take your concordance out and trace down the many times that Paul—to the Philippians, the Thessalonians, and to the Colossians—challenges them to “walk worthy of the Lord.”

In other words, walk in such a way that people see Christ in you.

Zephaniah 3:17

The Lord your God is with you, he is mighty to save. He will take great delight in you, he will quiet you with his love,...

It has to do with not being sinless. It has to do with manifesting the fruit of the Spirit—Galatians chapter 5.

That’s the work that goes on within us that causes people to wonder why we’re so joyful, why our heart is filled with love, why we have learned these things. Because we want to “walk worthy” of Him.

You might have heard this statement: “Remember whose you are and who you represent.”

That’s all the “worthy walk” means.

Remember WHOSE YOU ARE—you belong to Him—and remember WHO YOU REPRESENT.

You are representing a holy God. You're representing what the Lord Jesus Christ can do in life.

Do you see the second part of that? It's in that phrase "to please Him in everything." That's our goal—to want Him to be happy, to be fulfilled, to be proud and satisfied.

Ephesians 5:10

trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.

We learn His WILL and His WORD and we learn the WALK of the believer—or our conduct—by spending time with Him.

What is it that pleases Him in the worthy walk?

The only way that this can be fulfilled is by doing His perfect will. When that's being done, watch out. It's going to happen.

Charles Wesley has written a lot of great hymns. This one is called "O Come and Dwell in Me":

I want the witness, Lord,
that all I do is right,
according to thy mind and word,
well-pleasing in thy sight.

I ask no higher state;
indulge me but in this,
and soon or later then translate
to thine eternal bliss.

(source unknown)

That's to "walk worthy."

Galatians 5:17

walk by means of the Spirit and you will not fulfil the desires
of the flesh.

It's to be so sensitive to the Spirit's voice and realize that.
That as you are, you're walking in a manner worthy.

To know Him is to love Him. The more you know Him, the
more you're going to love Him. And the more you love Him,
what else is going to happen?

You're going to want to please Him!

You know Him—that's why Paul said "that I might know Him
and the power of His resurrection, the fellowship of His
sufferings." (ref. Philippians 3:10)

That's primary! The more we get to know Him there's things
that change. We're not trying to perform. We're not trying to
be something we're not. We're knowing Him. And to know

Him is to love Him. And to love Him is to please Him.

When you love someone you want to make them happy don't you?

If you have a spouse, the more you love him/her, what? The more you want to please them. That's why you have date night. That's why we communicate, we talk, we have fun together.

When you know somebody and you get to know them more you love them. When you love them you want to please them. And when you please them, then you want to work, you want to serve, you want to do for them.

That's where we come to number 3:

“in every good work, bearing fruit and increasing in the knowledge of God;”

Back in verse 6 of our last study we read that the gospel is “bearing fruit and increasing in all the world.”

That phrase is talking about what the Gospel was designed to do. And here it is, the same two words, but now it's personal. It's to us!

Our work is to be “bearing fruit and increasing in the knowledge of God.”

You say, “Well I want to bear fruit. How do I do that?”

Fruit is borne IN us and then THROUGH us. Fruit is not borne BY us. We’re frustrating the whole plan of God when we try to bear fruit in the flesh. It is a work of the Spirit.

As He works in us and through us:

“You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go and bear much fruit.” (John 15:16)

“for without me you can do nothing.” (John 15:8)

But that other one was John 15:16.

These are the wonderful truths about how God is at work in our lives bearing fruit.

And you can put Galatians 5:22 and 23 there.

If we make our number one priority to know His will and to “walk worthy” of Him, then when we serve Him out of love He’s going to bless it because it’s the Holy Spirit bearing His fruit in and through our life.

Notice the word “increasing.”

In our last study we said that salvation is not a terminal experience.

The word is “increasing.” We grow more and more like Christ. This is the normal design. As newborn babies we “desire the sincere milk of the Word that I may grow.” (ref. 1 Peter 2:2)

Then I grow in grace and the knowledge of Him. So if you want to write underneath the word “increasing,” **CONSTANT GROWTH.**

*I'm pressing on the upward way,
New heights I'm gaining every day;
Still praying as I onward bound,
“Lord, plant my feet on higher ground.”*
(source unknown)

The *Daily Bread* for May 21, 2011 was called “Fresh Fruit.” This is the way it read:

I love the old photographs that are often printed on the obituary page of our local newspaper. A grinning young man in a military uniform and words such as: *92 years old, fought for his country in WWII.* Or the young woman with sparkling eyes: *89 years young, grew up on a farm in Kansas during the Depression.* The unspoken message is: “I wasn’t *always* old, you know.”

I recently saw a T-shirt on a beautiful white-haired woman that said: “I’m not 80. I’m 18 with 62 years experience.” No matter how old we get, we can still be young at heart...

(From *Our Daily Bread*, Saturday, May 21, 2011)

Psalm 92:12-14

The righteous will flourish like a palm tree,
they will grow like a cedar of Lebanon;
planted in the house of the Lord,
they will flourish in the courts of our God.
They will still bear fruit in old age,
they will stay fresh and green.

John MacArthur wrote a book called *Found: God's Will*. This is what he says about the will of God:

(Found: God's Will: Find the Direction and Purpose God Wants for Your Life by John MacArthur)

You say you do not know what God's will is, but I'll tell you what it is. First, that you know Christ and then that your neighbors hear about Christ. That is His will. So often we sit around twiddling our thumbs, dreaming about God's will in some far distant future when we are not even willing to stand up on our own two feet, walk down the street, and do God's will right now.

God so desired that men be saved that He gave the One whom He loved most, His Son, and sent Him to die on a cross. That is the measure of His love, and that indicates how much He wills that men be saved!

p. 15

In the book by Curtis Tucker, *Majestic Destiny*, speaking

about kingdom living we read:

(Majestic Destiny: Kingdom Hope is Rising by Curtis H. Tucker)

In the words of Vince Lombardi, “Success demands singleness of purpose.” Our purpose is to glorify God, whose glory will be displayed to the greatest degree in the coming kingdom of Messiah.

p. 40

Our first obligation, according to John MacArthur, is to know God’s will. But in the process we ought to be on assignment, bearing fruit by ministering to those who are our neighbors. The Spirit of God will do that.

When we get to verse 11, a lot of people think that they can’t do the will of God because they don’t have the strength or the power.

v. 11 equipped with all power, according to His glorious strength, unto every kind of patience and steadfastness with joy,

“equipped with all power, according to His glorious strength, unto every kind of patience and steadfastness with joy,”

What he’s saying is here, in the plan of God, in His purpose for you to walk worthy and in His pleasure—or the product of your work—there’s going to be power to accomplish it.

There is never a power shortage with the Lord.

The task ahead is never greater than the power behind.

2 Samuel 22:33

It is God who arms me with strength and makes my way perfect.

Philippians 4:13

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

Isaiah 40:31

They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary...

You have adequate strength in the Spirit of God to fully accomplish what He has for you in life.

At this point this beautiful hymn is appropriate:

He Giveth More Grace
Annie J. Flint

When we have exhausted our store of endurance,
When our strength has failed ere the day is half done,

When we reach the end of our hoarded resources Our
Father's full giving is only begun.

His love has no limits, His grace has no measure,
His power no boundary known unto men;
For out of His infinite riches in Jesus
He giveth, and giveth, and giveth again.

(source unknown)

That's where the power comes.

We have tried in our own flesh to have victory. And we've
received great comfort from Romans 7:15 because that's
exactly what Paul says:

Romans 7:15

For that which I am doing, I don't understand; for I am not
practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very
thing that I hate.

The key to the whole thing is to elevate the Spirit's ministry in
your life on a daily basis—this is the principle. Say NO to the
flesh in the power of the Spirit.

There is the assurance. It's so simple!

When the flesh raises its ugly head and there is anger or
temptation or there's something else that comes in that you
know is not from the Lord, you say no to the flesh in the power

of the Spirit. Then you are walking worthy of the Lord. You're doing what the Spirit of God is designed to do to provide the victory.

NO to the flesh—say YES to the Spirit of God.

NO to the flesh—the power of the Spirit.

Now you notice the words that come out of it:

“patience,”

“steadfastness” and

“joy.”

You'll know it when you're in His will and you're having the victory.

Now the word “patience.”

“Patience” is totally passionate. You can say “I'm having the patience of Job” and not do anything.

This word is not the word for “patience.” This word is *Hupomonē*. There are 49 occurrences of *hupomonō* or *hupomonē*. It can be translated PERSEVERANCE.

That word points to the STRUGGLE.

Patience is PASSIVE—“they that wait upon the Lord...”.

And “wait I say on the Lord. Be of good courage and He shall strengthen thine heart.” Patience, patience, patience.

If you’re going to gain the victory, if you’re going to learn to walk in His will and to walk worthy of Him and do the work that God has provided through the power of the Spirit, you are going to have a struggle.

There are going to be times when you don’t want to. Like the guy whose mother woke him up and said “Time to go to church!” And he said “I’m not going.” She said “You’ve got to go!” He said “Give me one reason.” She said, “You’re the pastor!”

Those are the feelings that you have that you rise above the flesh and you persevere. You stay by the stuff.

That word by the way comes from a lot of these early church writers. They say that victory in the Christian life is perseverance.

It’s not some kind of celestial experience that you have that puts it all on the platter before you. You’ve got to wake up to yoke up. You’ve got to get in the Word and then you’ve got to stay steadfast in that. There’s going to be great joy in it.

Psalm 16:11 would be a great verse here:

Psalm 16:11

You have made known to me the path of life;
you will fill me with joy in your presence,
with eternal pleasures at your right hand.

It's God wonderfully, graciously providing it.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon said:

(Lectures to My Students by C. H. Spurgeon)

Our one aim is to save sinners, and this we are not to talk about, but to do in the power of [the Lord].

p. 261

1 Corinthians 15:58

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as you know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

This crystalizes everything that's said.

C. H. Spurgeon's love for children was incredible. He said:

(Exploring the Mind & Heart of the Prince of Preachers: Five-thousand illustrations under one-thousand topical headings from the works of C. H. Spurgeon by C. H. Spurgeon)

Young people, you must pray, for your passions are strong, and your wisdom is little. 1656.251
p. 95

Gary Thomas wrote:

(Thirsting for God: Spiritual Refreshment for the Sacred Journey by Gary L. Thomas)

We need difficulty because without it we become proud, self-centered, and uncaring monsters who are full of ourselves.
p. 207

That's why we need suffering. That's why we need perseverance. That's why we need the challenge.

Back to MacArthur on the will of God:

(Found: God's Will: Find the Direction and Purpose God Wants for Your Life by John MacArthur)

When will Christians realize that they have everything? Peter wrote, "According as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness" (2 Peter 1:3). You do not lack anything! But so many emaciated Christians go around and say, "Well, I just don't have the power to do this or that."
p. 19

He always cuts to the chase.

Listen to Tim Hansel:

(Between a Rock and a Grace Place: Divine Surprises in the Tight Spots of Life by Carol Kent)

I've survived because I've discovered a new and different kind of joy that I never knew existed—a joy that can coexist with uncertainty and doubt, pain, confusion, and ambiguity.

Tim Hansel

p. 129

Now listen to the Father praise—in verses 12 and 13—and listen to the Son:

v. 12 Giving thanks to the Father who qualified you for the share of the inheritance of the saints in the light.

“Giving thanks to the Father”—KEY WORD—“who qualified”

There's going to be 3 words here.

The Father “qualified [me] for the share of the inheritance of the saints in the light.”

We can't qualify ourselves. The stopwatch had already stopped. The 18 holes have been played in 18 strokes. You couldn't do it! But the Father moves in and what a wonderful thing He has done for us.

In the work of the Father He has first of all:

“qualified” us to be His sons and to look forward to an “inheritance” which is ours in Jesus Christ.

We’ve been “qualified” for this wonderful “inheritance” that we talked about in the last study.

Then we are “saints in the light.” We’re no longer in the kingdom of darkness.

With brokenness and surrender and humility we’ve come to the Savior. On bended knee we have received Him—the Father’s gift for our eternal salvation.

Joni Eareckson Tada tells the story of Steve. She said:

(A Lifetime of Wisdom: Embracing the Way God Heals You by Joni Eareckson Tada)

Shortly before he died, Steve wanted to record some of his thoughts in verse. [He said:]

*I went to Him on bended knees
Begging Him, “Oh Tentmaker please?
Restore this tent I thought would last,
This canvas house that went so fast.”*

He looked at me through loving eyes

*And merely pointed to the skies.
“Please don’t grieve over some old tent,
Old canvas walls that have been spent
For this mansion that’s been built by Me
Will last you [throughout] eternity.”*

p. 157 (paraphrased)

You know PERSPECTIVE is so beautiful.

I’m a Child of the King
Hattie E. Buell

My Father is rich in houses and lands,
He holdeth the wealth of the world in His hand!
Of rubies and diamonds, of silver and gold,
His coffers are full, He has riches untold.

(source unknown)

It’s going to be wonderful when we get there.

**v. 13 Who rescued us out of the domain of the darkness,
and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son of
His love,**

“Who rescued us out of the domain of the darkness, and
transferred us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,”

What’s the next word?

”rescued”

“Qualified”—“rescued us out of the domain of darkness.”

2 Samuel 22:17-18

“He reached down from on high and took hold of me; he drew me out of the deep waters. He rescued me from my powerful enemy, from my foes, who were too strong for me.

He was the senior lifesaver. He jumped into the sea of sin and
He rescued us.

Let's sing “Love Lifted Me!”:

*I was sinking deep in sin, far from the peaceful shore,
Very deeply stained within, sinking to rise no more,
But the Master of the sea, heard my despairing cry,
From the waters lifted me, now safe am I.*

(source unknown)

He rescued us! And what does He do?

“transferred,”

“qualified,”

“rescued,” and now

“transferred” us.

WHERE?

“into the kingdom of the Son of His love,”

He transferred us by taking our sin and giving us His righteousness! Which is perfect!

*Dressed in His righteousness alone,
Faultless to stand before His throne.*
(source unknown)

And then when you get to verse 14, the best is saved till last. There's your Lord Jesus.

v. 14 in whom we are having our redemption, the forgiveness of our sins.

“in whom”—that's Jesus—“we are having”—WHAT?

1. “our redemption,”—that's the sacrificial Lamb paying the price, blood sacrifice, for our salvation.

And with it:

2. “the forgiveness of our sins.”

Isaiah 1:18

“Come now, let us reason together,” ... “Though your sins be

as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

Fifteen lessons that come out of this.

LESSON #1: The will, walk, and work of Christ will become the dominant concern in stage #2 of our spiritual development.

LESSON #2: Praying for new believers should encompass these three things: the will, the walk, and the work of this new Christian.

LESSON #3: Paul is praying for five things for these believers in Colosse. He is praying about God's plan, God's purpose, God's pleasure, God's product, and God's power.

LESSON #4: How much better we can cooperate with God when we understanding His way of doing things.

LESSON #5: It is vital to be filled with the knowledge of His will because our thoughts are not His thoughts and our ways are not His ways.

LESSON #6: To live or to walk worthy of the Lord, it is going to be necessary for us to be daily in His Word where we will find the definition of the worthy walk.

LESSON #7: The more we know Him the more we will love Him. The more we love Him the more we will want to please

Him.

LESSON #8: We are making progress towards spiritual maturity when in every good work we are bearing fruit and increasing in the knowledge of God.

LESSON #9: Are we making the mistake of trying to work FOR Him when He wants to work IN us?

LESSON #10: As a believer we are equipped with all power according to His glorious strength for the purpose of perseverance and steadfastness with joy.

LESSON #11: Paul is giving thanks to the Father for the fact that He qualified us for the share of the inheritance of the saints in the light. We certainly could not qualify ourselves.

LESSON #12: He not only qualified us, but He also rescued us out of the domain of darkness and then He transferred us into the kingdom of the Son of His love.

LESSON #13: Because he qualified, rescued and transferred us, we are now in the position of having redemption and also the forgiveness of sins.

LESSON #14: The only way the Father could qualify us, rescue us, and transfer us is by the death of His own Son.

LESSON #15: Salvation is all God's doing.

In one of our books *Drawing Closer, Growing Stronger*, we shared this story:

(Drawing Closer, Growing Stronger by Donald E. Anderson)

Scott and Janina Walker are hosts for one of my home Bible studies. I was touched one evening as Scott shared his testimony: “At age thirty-eight my life was out of control. I was drinking heavily. My marriage and my employment were in jeopardy. Midlife transition was rapidly becoming midlife crisis. I never studied God’s Word and seldom prayed. When I did pray, it was mostly the 911 type. I had abdicated my role as the spiritual leader of my family.

“I knew the Lord had been knocking on my heart’s door for many years, but I stubbornly refused to respond. Instead, I attended church, occasionally dropped money in the offering plate, contributed to worthy community causes, and patted myself on the back for being a better husband and father than most other guys I knew.

“Outwardly, I was cruising along thinking I was a pretty neat guy because of my achievements. My athletic abilities had paid for my undergraduate and graduate education, and my business skills had landed some great employment opportunities. My wife, son, and daughter were in good health. Any onlooker would think I had it made.

“But inwardly my life had jumped the tracks. My marriage relationship with Janina was deteriorating. Soon I became restless and discontented with my job. Pride and selfishness were pushing me to the breaking point.

“Then six years ago, in my hour of deepest need, another

Copyright © 2022 by Bible Teaching Resources by Don Anderson Ministries. The author's teacher notes incorporate quoted, paraphrased and summarized material from a variety of sources, all of which have been appropriately credited to the best of our ability. Quotations particularly reside within the realm of fair use. It is the nature of teacher notes to contain references that may prove difficult to accurately attribute. Any use of material without proper citation is unintentional. Teacher notes have been compiled by Ronnie Marquinn.

couple invited Janina and me to attend Don Anderson's Bible study in a nearby home. Janina had already sensed a spiritual void in her life and she really wanted to go. After she kept prodding me, I finally but reluctantly said, "Well, I'll go with you just once."

"At first I thought, *Why should I go to a Bible study? I haven't done anything bad—like murder, rape, or robbery. I'm a good guy.* Although I agreed to attend just to placate my wife, little did I know that God was planning a divine appointment with me.

"That night the Lord began showing me I was living in spiritual darkness. Again, I felt Him knocking at my heart's door. Right then with some fear and trepidation, I opened it. Through God's Word I began to see myself as a sinner in need of a Savior. What a difference Jesus Christ began to make in my life! By God's grace I am a new creation.

"My personal encounter with Christ has revolutionized my home and my work. All the energy I once expended in resisting Him is now focused on pursuing Him and His will by the reading of His Word."

Scott's story reminds me of David's words, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise" (Psalm 51:17 NIV).

p. 183

The funeral for Scott Walker was an incredible. He touched hundreds and hundreds of lives. There must have been over a thousand people packed in that church. And the funeral was almost two hours long as people were telling how God had impacted their lives by the witness of Scott Walker.

That's what God wants to do with each of us if we'll just be sensitive to His will, if we are walking worthy of Him, and He will indeed give us plenty of work to do.

Father, Your Word makes it clear that Jesus was so devastated by the great harvest and the laborers were so few. Forgive us for not checking in for new assignments. Forgive us for not being concerned about a worthy walk that would bring pleasure and honor to You. And forgive us for not being at work, busily engaged in that which would cause others to come to know Christ. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

A Practical Study of EPHESIANS

HEAVEN'S PLAN for Life on Earth

“What It’s Like Living According to God’s Plan”

Key verse 3:11b — *“Christ is all and in all.”*

STUDY NUMBER TWO – THE WILL, WALK, AND WORK OF CHRIST – COLOSSIANS 1:9-14

KEY VERSES 1:9, 10

v. 9 Because of this, we also from the day we heard are not ceasing in your behalf praying and asking (petitions and definite requests), in order that you might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding,

v. 10 to live (walk) worthy of the Lord, to please Him in everything, in every good work, bearing fruit and increasing in the knowledge of God;

v. 11 equipped with all power, according to His glorious strength, unto every kind of patience and steadfastness with joy,

v. 12 Giving thanks to the Father who qualified you for the share of the inheritance of the saints in the light.

v. 13 Who rescued us out of the domain of the darkness, and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,

v. 14 in whom we are having our redemption, the forgiveness of our sins.

NOTES

QUESTIONS:

1. Read Colossians 1:9-14 and in your own words pull out the main thought of this passage.

2. After hearing about the changed lives in Colosse, what is the apostle's immediate response?

3. What does it mean to be “filled with the knowledge of His will?”

4. How would you characterize a worthy walk with the Lord, pleasing Him in everything?

5. How is the work of a Christian described in verse 10?

6. Why does the apostle pray for power in verse 11?

7. For what is the apostle giving thanks in verses 12 & 13?

8. What does the word “redemption” mean in verse 14?

9. What verse in the study has meant the most to you?

10. What lesson have you learned from this study?

LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: The will, walk, and work of Christ will become the dominant concern in stage #2 of our spiritual development.

LESSON #2: Praying for new believers should encompass these three things: the will, the walk, and the work of this new Christian.

LESSON #3: Paul is praying for five things for these believers in Colosse. He is praying about God's plan, God's purpose, God's pleasure, God's product, and God's power.

LESSON #4: How much better we can cooperate with God when we understanding His way of doing things.

LESSON #5: It is vital to be filled with the knowledge of His will because our thoughts are not His thoughts and our ways are not His ways.

LESSON #6: To live or to walk worthy of the Lord, it is going to be necessary for us to be daily in His Word where we will find the definition of the worthy walk.

LESSON #7: The more we know Him the more we will love Him. The more we love Him the more we will want to please Him.

LESSON #8: We are making progress towards spiritual maturity when in every good work we are bearing fruit and increasing in the knowledge of God.

LESSON #9: Are we making the mistake of trying to work FOR Him when He wants to work IN us?

LESSON #10: As a believer we are equipped with all power according to His glorious strength for the purpose of perseverance and steadfastness with joy.

LESSON #11: Paul is giving thanks to the Father for the fact that He qualified us for the share of the inheritance of the saints in the light. We certainly could not qualify ourselves.

LESSON #12: He not only qualified us, but He also rescued us out of the domain of darkness and then He transferred us into the kingdom of the Son of His love.

LESSON #13: Because he qualified, rescued and transferred us, we are now in the position of having redemption and also the forgiveness of sins.

LESSON #14: The only way the Father could qualify us, rescue us, and transfer us is by the death of His own Son.

LESSON #15: Salvation is all God's doing.

Copyright © 2022 by Bible Teaching Resources by Don Anderson Ministries. The author's teacher notes incorporate quoted, paraphrased and summarized material from a variety of sources, all of which have been appropriately credited to the best of our ability. Quotations particularly reside within the realm of fair use. It is the nature of teacher notes to contain references that may prove difficult to accurately attribute. Any use of material without proper citation is unintentional. Teacher notes have been compiled by Ronnie Marroquin.