

Walking Worthy

God bless you in the name of Jesus Christ our lord. Recently, I had the privilege of sharing God's Word with the Pan American Fellowship that meets monthly on zoom. At that time, we read the opening verses of the book of Colossians. I would like to do that with you today and because we have a bit more time than was available with the Pan American group, there are some points that I would like to expand on.

I would never put myself or any of us into the position of the great Apostle Paul or any of the believers of the first century. But, it can be encouraging, constructive and an overall blessing to read in God's Word of similarities between their situation and ours today. I would like to read one such passage with you tonight.

Colossians 1:1,2

Of all the locations initially addressed in the Church epistles, only Colosse is not directly mentioned in the Book of Acts. All of the others (Rome, Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, Philippi and Thessalonica) are. That is not to say that Paul had never been there, just that it is not mentioned at all. And while he is writing to the "saints and faithful brethren" in Colosse, other verses in the epistle make it clear that there were at least some that he had never seen and that had never seen him.

Colossians 2:1

Even though Paul did not know some of the saints personally, we will see that they still had a great mutual love.

Colossians 1: 3 – 5

What a tremendous declaration in these verses. And remember that at least some of the people who would receive this epistle had never seen

Paul nor he them. He was thankful to God for them. The believing faith in Christ that they had; the love that they had for all the saints; and the reality of the hope that was laid up for them – Paul was thankful for it all. And I can tell you that these verses express how we think of each other.

Colossians 1:6

The word “which” refers to the “word of truth of the gospel” which they had heard. It had come to them as it had to all the world, and it had brought forth fruit. God’s Word will always bring forth fruit, it will always deliver. It doesn’t matter if you are in the United States or South America or anywhere in the world – even in Rockford, IL. The Word of God is not bound; it is quick and powerful (Hebrews 4:12).

Colossians 1: 7, 8

Colossians 4: 12, 13

Epaphras was one of them, but at the time of the writing, he was with Paul. But even when he was with Paul, he still had the great love and concern for the Colossian believers and others.

Colossians 4: 7 – 9

Incidentally, Epaphras was not the only one to go back and forth from Colosse to be with Paul. And they were limited at the time by not having the technology of today. They could not do a monthly zoom call or reach each other by phone. But there were those who did go back and forth and they would communicate what was happening at each end.

With the Pan American fellowship, I think of similar occurrences. Recently, it was Mike and Sheila Lorence going to El Salvador. While there, I am confident that they shared what is happening here. I know

that upon their return, we all got to hear about their visit and things that are happening there. Charlie and others have done the same type of thing previously. Charlie keeps us informed about what is going on with all of you. Just because they did not have the technology that we have today doesn't mean that they had no idea what was going on and how people were doing.

Colossians 1:9

This was Paul's (and God's) prayer and desire for them. It is really God's prayer and desire for all believers everywhere.

Colossians 1:10 – 12

The prayer is not just that they would be filled with knowledge, but that it would be manifested in their lives: that they would walk worthy.

Following this exhortation to walk worthy, there are four phrases that are introduced by participles that show or describe more fully what it is to walk worthy. You will remember that a participle is a verb form that is used as an adjective. They will usually end in "ing" in English. This is what I would like to expand upon from the previous sharing about these verses; each of these is an important facet of the life of a mature believer. It is what Paul (and God) desired for them. It is what we pray and desire for each other. The four participles that start each of these constructions are:

- *Being fruitful* in every good work. According to John 15:8, God is glorified when our lives are fruitful.

John 15:8, 5, 16

Psalm 1:1 – 3

Jeremiah 17:7 – 9

- Growing (increasing) in the knowledge of God. This is the next aspect of what it is to walk worthy. We are growing in our knowledge of God. And the only way you can really know God is to know His Word. And this does not just mean “head knowledge”. The Bullinger Lexicon and Concordance points out that this is knowledge that has a profound influence on the one who knows. And make no mistake, this is God’s Will. It is the same word that is used in I Timothy 2:4

I Timothy 2:4

We know and understand more of God’s Word today than we did 10 years ago for instance. Our appreciation of His Word has increased and this “growing” is an important aspect of walking worthy. That knowledge of God is evident in our day-to-day living.

- Being empowered with all might according to his glorious power. When we receive the new birth spirit, we are endued with power from on high.

Luke 24:49

Acts 1:8

II Corinthians 3:5,6

We are able because He has enabled us via the new birth spirit. And when we walk in the spirit, using those spiritual abilities, we begin bringing the fruit of the spirit into evidence in our lives.

- Giving thanks unto the Father who has made us all that we are. That is the fourth aspect of walking worthy – thankfulness. God has so blessed our lives. As our lives are fruitful, as we grow in our understanding and application of God’s Word, as we see the power of God in our lives – how can we be anything but thankful?

Colossians 3:15, 17

Colossians 2:6,7

So there we have four aspects of what it means to walk worthy. Obviously, there is a lot more that can be explored in this section, let alone with all of Colossians. But that is where we will end for now. We see the tremendous affection and admiration that believers can have one for another, even if they have never met. Additionally, we see the great vision that the Father has for His children.