

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

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SPEAKER

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For This Reason I Pray

PART

2

TITLE

That We Would Know God's Will

SCRIPTURE

Colossians 1:9-14



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Providence family, it's good to see you this morning. If you are guests with us, we're thrilled that you are here as well. And if you're in the room or at home, we're glad that you've joined us. Wherever you're at, even if you're at home, I would love for you, if you have in your hand a Bible, if you want to turn with me to the book of Colossians and we're going to be in chapter one. If you don't have a Bible and you're in the room, we encourage you to grab one, they you should be in the seat right in front of you there. And if you don't have one at home, take that home as a gift. We'd love for you to have that. If you're brand new to this and to even the Bible, it's a big book and there's a lot of pages in that, so you're like, "Where are you going to be?"

I'm going to be on page 924, okay? In the Bible that is in those chairs, but it is really good to see you. I want to pray for us as we get started. Father in heaven, we bow before you our maker, and we know that as our maker, that you feel for us and with us. We are made in your image. And so when we see things that aren't right and we feel a certain way, we know that you don't look upon the things and you're not ambivalent of what's happening in the world. That we know that your word tells us that when we sin against one another, that although we do sin against one another, ultimately, we're sin against you, that you are the one who is ultimately sinned against in every way.

And we look in the world and we do see brokenness. We see such brokenness, even in our own city. We pray for the Carnettes family and for the Conner family and for the Marshall family. We pray for the Thompson family and the Torrez family. Lord, as they experienced such a special, unusual, terrible grief, not only this morning, but this week, and we ask God that you would do just as you did with Mary and Martha, and that is that you would come to each one of those individuals and that you would tailor your care for where you find them. We asked Father that you would be gracious to them, sympathetic with them. We asked that you would draw people who know you close to them, that they would be a tangible expression of your love and grace and comfort to them.

We are grieved. God, we're also sorry, because maybe in a way that's, it's not similar, but it's still the same, we've all contributed to the brokenness that we see in the world. And we know that you feel a certain way about that brokenness. And so would you be gracious to us? And even this morning, as we consider these things and we consider living in a world where the very bedrock of culture and family has been so broken apart, that it's hard to imagine a better day to come. We ask that you would help us to do just what this passage tells us to do, and what's possible.

And that is that we would be able to live in such a way by the power of your spirit, because of the love of Jesus Christ and His sacrifice, that our very life would become like salt and light in a hurting and broken world. And so we asked that you would help, that you would speak through weakness, and that you would incline our heart this morning to become people to pray. And we pray all of this in Christ's name. Amen.

I wonder what it felt like to watch Jesus pray. If you think about the accounts that we have, we have various accounts within the four gospels that actually tell us of his disciples experience and what they felt, a measure

of excitement, when they looked and they saw Jesus seeing people and showing compassion to people and healing people, and even teaching people. And they remark about the level of enthusiasm and excitement within their own heart. That would be something to see. There's no doubt about it.

But what's really compelling to me is the prayer must have been absolutely extraordinary. And I say that because of all the things that his own 12 disciples observed in him, by which they then came back to him and said, "Would you teach us how to do that?" The only one was prayer. There's something about the observable prayer life of Jesus that was completely unlike their own. How familiar Jesus was with that moment. How much pleasure He seemed to find in that moment. How powerful that encounter with His Father became and the rest of the course of His day.

It had to be a pretty remarkable thing to watch Jesus pray for them to say, "Would you teach us how to do that?" You see, most of us, if you've spent any time in the Bible, you're run across different places where the benefits of prayer are exposed. One of the benefits is that God's pleased with it. He says that He takes pleasure in those who hope in His steadfast love, who look to Him in prayer.

We also read of a benefit that it's effectual. That the prayer of a righteous person that avail with much or it's powerful and effective in the work that it does. We even look at Proverbs chapter three, and there we find something that's pretty remarkable and that is that it's healthy for us to pray. He says, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Lean on your own understanding, in all your ways acknowledge Him and He will make your path straight." And then he goes in another verse and he says, "And this will be healing to your bones."

There's something that happens that when your soul gets healthy, your body gets animated. Your bones strengthen. You develop strategies of righteousness. It creates courage and fortitude and love and mercy and patience. It's healing to our bones. And, yet, in spite of all the benefits that we see in the scriptures about prayer, I have never met a single Christian in my entire life who found it perpetually easy.

We struggle with our flesh that resists prayer. We struggle with our focus. This morning, I knew what I was going to talk about today. I get in the truck driving here to church. I start, "Father hallowed would be your name." "18 innings, they played 18 innings last night." I'm like, "Wait, wait, wait. Hold on, hold on, back up, back up. Let's see... Your kingdom come." "18 innings." How in the world could I be so distracted? You may have felt something like that from time to time in your own prayer life., When you're talking to the Lord, you're having a conversation with a creator of the universe and suddenly you're talking and thinking about something completely different.

God wants to help. He gave us the Bible to show what to pray, how to pray, how not to pray. He gave us His Spirit to incline, our hearts to pray. And he even recorded within the scripture prayers that were inspired by the Holy Spirit that people like the Apostle Paul pray. That's what we're doing this month, is just simply looking at four different prayers that Paul began. Most of them began with the words, "For this reason I pray."

And this morning what we want to look at is the reason that he prayed in this chapter. He prayed that we would know God's will.

So as I've said the last few weeks, if you happen to be here and you're like, "Is this the week I finally get a booklet?" I want to encourage you not only to study with us these prayers, but I want to encourage you to pick up one of these booklets. They're in the back. They are now in the back. I'm thankful to say there's one for you. We happen to be on day seven, but we're praying 21 days in a row through these very prayers for ourself and then expanding out to our family, church family, our city, our nation, people who are far from the Lord. And I would encourage you to participate in praying for some of the best things.

And so chapter one, verse nine, Paul says, "And so from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will and all spiritual wisdom and understanding so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; and being strengthened with all power according to His glorious might for all endurance and patience with joy; giving thanks to the Father who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins."

Now, last week I mentioned something and it's really important that you hear it again. And that is that Paul is in prison and he is going through difficulty personally. He knows that, but he doesn't talk about it. He also knows that the people who are first reading what we just read, his intended recipients, they are going through difficulty. They have an unjust emperor who hates them. They have tax structures and wages that are unjust and unfair. They're dealing with poverty. They're dealing with sickness. They're dealing with a lot of things.

And I just have to assume at some point in time, Paul prayed for his own circumstances, "God, I would love to be out of prison." And I have to believe that he prayed for their poverty and for their sickness and for their oppression, wherever they're at. And yet when he took the time to write them and when he took the time to write what he prayed for them, he never once talks about his difficult circumstances or theirs. Instead, what he does is he goes for the heart. He says, "Let me tell you the best thing that I could pray for you. Oh, if you didn't have this, but you had a better wage, you would still be at a loss. But if you had this, even without a better wage, you're still way ahead."

And so this prayer is interesting, and I talked about this last time, Paul, he loves to stack words. He loves to stack all kinds of superlatives upon sentence, upon sentence or upon, it's one sentence and it just keeps going. And so what I want to do with his prayers is what I did last week. And that is I simply want to show you three ingredients to this prayer. Three things that we can be, not only praying for ourself and for others, but ultimately, as we think about how do we learn how to pray in a way where we're praying over what's best is that these things would filter and they would be seen within our prayers.

Where you're going to see is one thing that he prays for, one motivation, and one source of power. So the first thing is the appeal. He appeals to know God's will. This is the one big thing. If you boil this whole prayer down, it's we are praying that you be filled with the knowledge of His will. That is what he is praying about. But before we can really understand and appreciate that, I need to back up just a little bit in time and help you understand how we got there.

See, just years before he wrote this letter, there's a map that I want to show you that has all these places. It's sort of a crude map, but all the places that I'm going to reference are on this map, so we went with it, okay. So Paul is in Ephesus. This is years before this. And he gets there and he's preaching the gospel. He's telling people that, "Jesus Christ died for their sin and rose from the dead. And if they trust in him that they'll be forgiven and given eternal life."

And one of the people who heard this gospel about Jesus Christ in Ephesus, his name was Epaphras. And Epaphras, he goes, "This is amazing news. I believe it." He trusts Christ. And then he's so overwhelmed with what Christ has done in his life. He says, "I have to get to my hometown in order to share this good news with other people." And so he goes to his hometown, Colossae. This is the letter Colossians. It's written to the people from this city. He gets there, he preaches the gospel there, and many people believe. A little church is formed and it begins to grow, and they're doing really well. And over a period of time, he's their leader, they're growing.

And then over a period of time, Paul is imprisoned for his faith. He's relentless in sharing the gospel. It becomes illegal to him. And he continues to do it because he has to do it because it's too good of news to keep quiet. And he is put in prison, we believe, in Rome. All the way up here. That's a long way, isn't it?

And yet, in that time, Epaphras became so concerned and the reason they became so concerned was because the church became infiltrated with an understanding from its own people that says, "We believe in Jesus, but we have all of these neighbors who were literally migrating to Colossae and the Roman Empire," because the road structure within the city was so amazing. Economic opportunity was so amazing. They had all these people filtering in and they had different beliefs and different religions and different philosophies of life, and all of those, they promised something about the goodness of man, of what would happen to man if we adopted this philosophy.

And so he became so concerned that the church was being, not just infiltrated, but the church was beginning to say, "Man, how can we sync up some of like the gospel? Jesus is our man, He's our savior. And yet some of these other things, they really look good. And we would be seen as a little bit more inclusive within our culture if we adopted some of these as well." He becomes so concerned over the worldliness within the church that he actually goes all the way to Rome to consult Paul. Paul, who's in prison, he goes, "All right, I hear you. Let me write a letter." And he writes Colossians.

And what it says, if you notice, when we start in verse nine, he says, “From the day that we heard, we’ve not ceased to pray for you.” And so we have to ask the question, what did he hear? Because it was on a particular day he heard something that began his prayers for them. Well, verse four tells us what he heard. He says, “This is what I hear from you.” He says, “We have heard of your faith in Jesus Christ and of the love that you have for all the saints.”

Now, we actually looked at something identical in the Ephesians one last week, where he says, “You know it’s amazing. He’s come to me and he says, ‘Their faith in Jesus Christ is so real that has absolutely captured their heart. And not only has it captured their heart, but it is activated, it has animated their heart to love people. And not just any people, but all the saints.’” Saints, as we looked at last week, aren’t super Christians. They’re normal Christians who trust in a super savior. When we put our faith in Jesus Christ, He takes our sin, He gives us His righteousness. God looks at us, rap to the righteousness of Christ, and he says, “You’re a saint. I’m going to call you what I see.”

But notice he says, “All the saints.” You see within the church, within his kingdom, God’s people all called saints, there’s a lot of different kinds of people, that before Christ are separated into different camps on the basis of economics, on the basis of ethnicity, maybe of skin color, where they went to school, how old they are, how young they are. And he says, “Your faith in Jesus Christ is so real that it’s actually caused you to become loving to all of the groups. All of the peoples, young ones and old ones and dark ones and light ones, doesn’t matter, all of them.” And we should ask this question, has our faith in Jesus Christ moved us to the place that we love all the different kinds of people who trust Christ?

He says, “This is what I’ve heard. But now let me tell you what I’m praying for you. I am praying, asking that you be filled. You may be filled with the knowledge of His will.” And we should spend a little bit of time with this word filled. Filled literally means to be completely engulfed, to be completely engulfed. In the physical realm, let’s just say that there’s a cup. It has no milk in it. Suddenly we pour milk into the cup or into the glass. Now what’s happening when we do so? Not only is the milk capturing and taking all of the space within the cup, there’s nothing that can be hidden. There’s no crevice down here. There’s pocket down here. It takes all of it, but not only does it do that, but it eliminate everything that was once in that cup, in this case, if it was empty, it’s just air.

And so we can imagine that when we pour milk into a cup, you’re like, “Okay, I get it. It fills it up. It completely engulfs. It takes all the space and removes everything that was previously there beforehand.” Now, what does that mean for the heart though? Now, what’s interesting is the heart is very similar. In John chapter 16, Jesus says, “I’m going away. You can’t go with me.” And their heart, it says, became filled with sorrow. It took all the space. Jesus was right in front of them. They could touch the son of God. “Hey, I just touched the son of God.” And yet all they could do in that moment was be overwhelmed with sorrow. It took all the space.

In Luke chapter five, there’s a man who’s brought to Jesus by his friends. He’s healed, and it says, and all the

people were filled with awe. They still had bills. They still had sicknesses. They still had to go make dinner. They still had to go to work. Those things were still there. Yet, in that moment it absorbed all of their heart, all of their capacity to think. It took over every portion of their heart. In Luke chapter six, it says that Jesus did a miracle on the Sabbath day. And it says that the hearts of the Pharisees were filled with fury. Nevermind, there was a man right in front who just got healed. The only thing they had, they were filled with fury.

Now, if you can grasp all of that, then you can also grasp this. That in each one of those cases, people were under the control of whatever was filling them. And so what Paul is praying and what we can pray for ourself is that the gaps, the pockets in our understanding of God's will be increasingly engulfed and eliminated, and that we would then be controlled, governed by the knowledge of the will that fills us.

So the question is how? Well, obviously I would encourage you to pray, "God, would you fill me? Would you fill my wife, my husband, my friends, my children, my grandchildren, with a knowledge of your will?" We should be praying that, but we should do something else. And it's this, let me encourage us to position ourselves where God and his will are revealed. It's disingenuous to pray on Sunday, "Fill me with your will," and then go for the rest of the week and not have another thought about God. To not to put ourself where the knowledge of his will is literally falling. To stand outside of the bank of where that knowledge is falling and to say, "God, how come I don't know your will? You're so unjust. You're so unfair. All I wanted to..."

No, stand underneath it as well. So let's talk about how do we do that? How do we pray for it and then position ourself so that the knowledge of his will can fill our heart? Well, in Luke chapter 14, there's this remarkable, parable, and it says that Jesus says, "All right, there's a king and the king has a banquet. And he invites people to it. Great big feast. People say, 'Yes, the RSVP, Hey, I'm going to be there.' And then all of a sudden he cooks it all or somebody cooks it all, and it's already. The king says, 'All right, it's time.' Send the servants out to the home, say, 'Hey, by the way, the food's ready. We're ready for you to come.' And one by one, they start making excuses of why they can't come.

So the servants go back to the king and they're like, 'Look, I know you have everything ready, but they don't want to come now. They have other things that are on their mind.' And he says to them something remarkable, which is really a picture of the beauty of the kingdom. And he says, "Then go to the people who are on the streets, the people who marginalized, the people who are sick, the people who are hungry and tired, invite all those people." You're like, "That's amazing," and that is amazing, but that's not the point that I want to talk about.

The point I want to talk about is this. Do you know what those same servants said to the king once he said, "Go and invite the people on the streets to fill the places that were once for VIP guests." Do you know what they said? "We have already done that." Now some of you're like, "Why is that so important to him right now?" This is why. Listen. Think about how presumptuous it would be if they didn't know the heart of the king for servants to say, "You know what? Your guest didn't want to come eat with you. So we just invited

some other people.”

Think if that happen in London, “Oh, we just invited some more people. They’re coming over. Open the doors.” No, but instead there’s a commendation. And why is that? It’s not presumptuous. Once they know what he’s like. Once they know him well enough to know his ways and to know his will, and they’re like, “We knew you were going to send this back out, so we could anticipate your will, because we know your ways, because we know your heart.”

Hosea 6:3 you know what he says? He says, “Let us know; let us press on to know the Lord.” And then he says something that’s just stunning. “His going out is as sure as the dawn...” You know what that means? When you study the scriptures and you see how God acted, how He responded to his situation. And you’re looking at it like, that’s interesting, He’s going to respond like that the next time, as sure as the dawn. He immutable. He doesn’t change. You know something about God. You put it into the category bank of your heart to say, “This is who he is.”

And what this means is that more we know God and the more we know His word, the more we will know and be able to anticipate His ways, that’s what He does, and His will, what He’s going to ask us to do. So how do we position ourself after we have prayed for the knowledge of His will? How do we do it? A few things. First, desire to know. We have to desire to know. Jesus says, “If anyone’s will is to do God’s will, he will know whether the teaching is from God.” So let me say it this way. Those who don’t care about God’s will, will not be filled with a knowledge of His will. Those who only want God to confirm their will, will not be filled with the knowledge of His will. Let me take it a step further. Those who don’t have their yes on the table, while they are looking for His will, whose will is, it doesn’t say, “His will is to know God’s will.” He says, “His will is to do his will.”

What that means is if you come to God’s will and you say, “God, I want you to know my yes is on the table. This is the situation. Whatever it is that you would say, I want to know,” you can be filled with a knowledge of His will. But if you come to that moment and you say, “I want to know what it is and I’m going to evaluate if I want to do it,” that person will not be filled with the knowledge of His will.

They’ll still be living in confusion. And so we can come to the Lord and say, “God, I want to know your will and I’m ready to do it, whatever it is.” And then we move a step further. How do we position ourself? Not only do we desire to know, we walk by the Spirit. You notice in verse nine, he says that, “You may be filled with the knowledge of his will and all spiritual wisdom and understanding.”

This is really important because the Bible describes two different kinds of wisdom, a wisdom from God, he calls it spiritual wisdom that can only come from the Holy Spirit imparting it to us. And an earthly wisdom, it’s sometimes called the wisdom of this age. Where Romans 1 says, “Man, claiming to become wise, they become a foolish.” There is a wisdom in this age that you look at it, and if you know God’s will, you’re like,

“That is just absolute crazy. It is folly what is going on in the world.” And, yet, if you don’t know God, have rejected his plan, and the bedrock of culture, you look at things that the world is calling wise and you think, “This is the way to go. We’re wise for adopting these things.”

And the Bible tells us in James chapter four that the fruit of the wisdom that is earthly is four things. He says, “It leads to jealousy. It leads selfish ambition. It leads to social chaos. And it leads to relational evil.” On the other hand, when we’re walking with the Holy Spirit, and we talked about this for over a month, to walk with the Holy Spirit, what does it mean? It means that we acknowledge He’s in our heart. We’re saying, “I want to be responsive to your promptings. If I get off step, convict me of the wrong way. When I’m on on point, when I’m on step, confirm your pleasure in my heart. I want to be responsive to your promptings. I want to listen to you. I know you’re in me.” The Bible says that the Holy Spirit gives us a different wisdom than the wisdom of the world.

In 1 Corinthians chapter two, he says, “We impart wisdom.” This is Paul saying, “We have wisdom to give, although it is not the wisdom of this age,” it’s the different one. Where do they get it? God has revealed it through the Holy Spirit. And so we have to walk with the Spirit.

The third thing is we have to study the Bible. So to place ourself where his wisdom can be known. We desire to know, we walk where the spirit, we study the Bible. “All scripture is breathed out by God and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.” Every good work means that there’s not a single circumstance or situation that you can go through where the Bible does not give you at least some instruction on how to respond or to behave. A knowledge of His will always will correspond with a knowledge of His word, which is why on five different occasions, Jesus corrected the Pharisees with the words, “Have you never read the Bible?”

Have you ever read it? You begin reading the Bible. And what you’re going to find is there’s two different kinds of decisions we make. There’s what I would call moral decisions, or I would call those right or wrong. “God is it sin or righteousness that I do this?” And in those cases, in every one of those cases, there is direct instruction. He says, “Don’t do this,” or, “This is a sin,” or, “Do this.” There is, it’s clarity. He doesn’t want us guessing what he considers right and wrong.

When it comes to the second kind, which is directional. Directional is not right and wrong. It’s do I go right or left? Is it this job or this job? Do I marry this person or not? Where you’re never going to find a verse that says, “Thou shalt, marry John.” We’re like, “Well, there it is.” So if you’re dating John and you look at it and you go, “Well, there’s no verse. Where do I find wisdom?”

Some of us were like, You know what? Whether it’s circumstance, some of us, it’s more mystical. It’s like, “Man, I was driving down the road all of a sudden there was this song, and someone was singing to John, and so I just know for certain it was his will for me. I’m supposed to marry John.” Well, is there something more

substantial for us? And the answer is yes.

When it comes to this one example, let me just give you a few, well, the Bible tells us not to be unequally yoked. So you can ask the question, Is John a believer? If not, it's not God's will that you marry John, at least now. The Bible says it is His will that we be sanctified, that we become more like Christ. So when you're hanging out with John, are you more or less inclined, motivated to look to Jesus, to become like Jesus? The Bible says that it's His will that we be filled the Holy Spirit, and in being filled, we would bear the fruit of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. So when you're with John, are those fruits more evident or less evident in your interaction with each other?

The Bible says, Submit to one another. It's his will that we would submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. So if you're dating someone named John, do you respect their relationship enough with the Lord that you'd be willing to follow what they really believe is God's will for your family? And if the answer is no, don't marry John. Some of you're like, "Who's John?" I don't know, there's no category for that. It's just a name. Okay? It's just a name.

He wants us to know, so we study His Bible. And the last thing is this, we seek godly counsel. How do we position ourselves? We seek godly counsel. Christ saved us and put us in a community to help one another grow to know his will. You remember Ahab? If you've ever read the Old Testament, there's a really, really evil wicked king named Ahab. And all he ever wanted to do was sin. And he would go to a prophet and he'd say, "Hey, what do you think about this? I'd love to rob a bank. Is that God's will?" He's like, "No, you can't rob a bank." That really didn't happen.

And he got to the place to where he didn't want to talk to him anymore, because every time he said, "This is my plan," it was a plan for evil. And the prophet said, "No, that's not God's will." So there's a day that he and another king, they want to make an alliance, they want to do some stuff. And so the other king says, "Is there a prophet in town that we can talk to? We can consult to see if this is God's will?" And what does he say? He says, "There's still one man. His name is Micaiah, who can ask the Lord. But I hate him, because he never prophesies anything good for me."

Some of us, it's really interesting, when we know what we want to do isn't necessarily a good thing, and we know that we have people in our life that we respect enough that they're going to hold us accountable to say, "You shouldn't do that." Instead of not doing it, we simply sever that relationship for a time.

It's so destructive. If you don't want your godly friends to speak into the gut decision, you're making the wrong one. And so we come to the Lord and we say, "Okay, God, this is what I think is your will, but who can I go talk to?" You find one or two people that you can go talk to that you respect their relationship with the Lord and say, "Okay, this is my situation. This is what I think. Do you know anything about the Bible, anything about God that would inform the situation that would clarify or confirm or correct the decision

that I think I need to make?” So this is his appeal.

I want you to know God’s will. And the second is the motivation behind the appeal. And it’s a desire to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord. Anytime scandal takes place in the world, it’s exposed. We end up crying with our lips, “That’s unworthy.” That judge or that principal or that pastor or that leader or that coach, whoever it was, and when we say unworthy, what we’re saying is that the nobility of the position that they held should have motivated them to not live unworthily of it.

That said, do you see the motive in Paul’s prayer? He says, “I am praying and asking that you be filled with the knowledge of His will.” And then he says, “So as” or so that, this is why I want you to be filled with the knowledge of his will. It’s not that you would simply be smarter as a sinner, it’s that we would “walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, and be fully pleasing to him.” Worthy of, that phrase, to walk in a manner worthy of, worthy of means, another translation is equal weight to.

And so if you think about a scale that has the two sides, what he’s saying is this, “I am praying that as representatives of Christ, that God would fill you with the knowledge of will, so that your walk or way of life would weigh as heavily in people’s hearts as Christ’s good name.” In other words, if you just put over here, Christ’s grace and forgiveness, it’s that heavy. But Christ is in heaven and a lot of people, they don’t see Him, and can’t see Him physically, but they see His representatives. So what he’s saying is that he wants us to live in a way that’s worthy of Him.

So what would that mean? It mean that we would be forgiving in the situations, and we would know His will to forgive, to live as equal weight, to be worthy of. What does that look like? We don’t have to guess, because he tells us in four different ways. All of these ways, I’ve mentioned this many times before. It’s a participle. A participle ends with an I-N-G, and they’re simply ways that we’re supposed to do the verb. So the verb is walk. This is what he wants, “I want you to walk.”

Now, how do we know if we are walking and what would we do in order to walk? He gives four things and they all end with an I-N-G. First, bearing. We would be bearing fruit in every good work, which doesn’t mean that we’re supposed to do every work. It means we’re supposed to find the work that God has for us that is noble and we are to bear fruit in that work. Some of us, we have a noble occupation as a carpenter. And if that’s your op occupation, then the bearing fruit would not only be the outcome of your product, it would be the manner in which you do it. Meaning, we would want to be kind to people. We would want to be honest people. But not only would that be the manner in which we would treat the people, we would also build really good cabinets, because Jesus built really good cabinets. Bearing fruit.

The second participle is in increasing in the knowledge of God. God’s will is that we would know Him, because to know Him, if when we know Him, we know what He loves. And when you know what He loves, you

know what He wants. To know God and know His will, they're two sides of the same coin. So we would be increasing the knowledge of God.

Third, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy. That's a lot of words, but this is what he says, "You know when you're being strengthened with His strength, with His might, when you finish a hard job and you treat people with patience while you do it."

You've all noticed that when you're impatient with people, you're operating in weakness. So am I. And it's what he says is, "I want you to stand where God's strength, because when God's strength comes over you, you know what you do. You don't quit hard things, and you treat people with patience, because it takes a long time to grow." And the last one he says is giving thanks, as one of the most accurate gauges indicating the health of the engine or the health of the heart. God wills that we be thankful.

So let me ask you this morning to consider his worth, and then examine your lives. And let me just ask you a few questions, and just think about your own life. In the course of the last week, Have you positioned yourself in a place? Have you pursued doing good work? Did you do good work this week? Honest work? Excuse me. Did you learn something new about the Lord or fortify something that you already knew about the Lord by spending time with the word?

Did you receive strength from the Lord in such a way that it led you to have internal fortitude to finish a hard task, or you're still on pace to finish it or to be patient with people? And do the people who live near you, would they be absolutely convinced that this person that I live near is very thankful for the gifts and blessings that people give to that person? And the last thing I want you to see and hear is how is this all possible? And that is adoration of Christ who made us saints.

Here at the very end, after he is saying, "This is what I'm praying for, and this is why." He says, "This is who makes it possible." He says, "Giving thanks to the Father, who's qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light." This light, this inheritance of heaven, instead of the darkness, none of us qualified for, and yet Jesus qualified us to be able to receive it.

How did he do it? Verse 14, He tells us four things that He did. He said, "He first saved us from a domain of darkness. He took us out of sin. He took us out of that bondage, and he second, is He transferred us to His kingdom. When we put our faith in trust in Him." And he did that, how did he do that? He redeemed us. He paid the price for our sin. And when we put our faith and trust in him, he forgives us of our sin. This is how it is possible.

You see Jesus Christ according to what He has done in our life, then becomes the point of life. And of course, the Bible affirms this repeatedly in Romans 11 he says, "For from him and through him, and to Him are all things." You know what that means? All things would include you, of course, and me. What that means is that

He is our origin. He's our creator. And we are going to be going to him. He's the final judge. This is our destiny. And not only is He origin and our ultimate destiny, but He's purpose. He's the one that makes it possible for us to live according to the will that we learn.

Life only makes sense when you're connected to the point of life. And so my question is, have you put your faith and trust in Christ? Have you come to the place where you recognize, I am a sinner and I cannot pay off my sin? But I see that Jesus came to die for my sin and I believe in him, and I confess him as Lord. If that's the case for you, stop listening to me and just start talking to him. Say, "Christ, God, I believe. I believe."

But for those of us who have, let me give one last application and then we're going to sing a song together. Let me encourage you to bow your hearts to Christ every morning. Now, this is really important. This is so important. He has prayed, if you're following along, he said, "I want you to know his will so that you can live in a manner worthy." And then he says, "And the only way this is possible is because of Jesus Christ and His power." And yet you and I wake up every day of our life and it's like there's a throne upon the heart of our own life, and every day we wake up and we take over that throne.

We think about ourself, we start making decisions quickly. The only way I've ever experienced the power of Christ ruling over one day is if I reestablished him as king in that morning. Where you wake up and you say, "Christ, here's the throne. I give it to you. I need you to take it." You see, every single morning, my inclination is to take the throne. And until, in that course of the day, I give it back to him and ask him to rule. I tend to set a top it.

So let me encourage you, at the beginning of a day, by the way, if you don't do it at the beginning of day, don't wait until the next beginning of day. Just do it at lunch, right? Do it at dinner. Where you pray and you say, "Christ, the only hope that I have is that you are literally ruling from the place of authority in my own life. And so I yield to you as Savior and Lord of my own life and of my day." This is not to say that you're being born again or being saved again. It's simply saying, "Christ, I need you to come. You're already in my heart and I yield to you."

So let me pray for us. Father in heaven, we bow before you. We thank you that you love us. Thank you that you've made all of this possible. Jesus, thank you for coming. Thank you for delivering us. Thank you for transferring us. Thank you for redeeming us, and for forgiving us. There is no way that this is possible without you. And yet we see that if we were filled with the knowledge of your will and it consumed us and took over our life, that we would indeed live worthy and walk in a manner worthy of Christ. And we know that that would make a big difference in our own life, our family, our home, our relationships, and our culture. And so we look to you. We need your help. We bow before you in praise. We pray all of this in Christ's name. Amen.



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