

Intro: Years ago I discovered what I call the “back way” to Florida! Instead of 50 Beltway 95 Started driving 301: It was the previous road on East Coast BEFORE 95...Lined Motels/Small towns All a little faded because when 95 was built traffic moved away, less business, former glory gone

That is the story of Colossae. At one time it was thriving, large, prosperous, Roman Trade route moved By the time Paul writes his letter to them, everything has changed. Smallest most insignificant to get letter We aren't even sure when the church was begun...who originally shared the gospel (Epaphras?)

But, in a very “God” way of working (1<sup>st</sup> shall be last and the last shall be first)

- Colossae, the LEAST important city to receive a NT letter
- Gets the MOST important message of all!

Theme: *The absolute supremacy and sole sufficiency of Jesus Christ*

- Shares with us the FULLNESS of who Jesus IS! 1:15-18; 2:9
- And the SUFFICIENCY of what He has done for us! 1:21-22; 2:20

Now, Based on WHO He is...and What He had DONE for us:

Paul's Message: LIVE WORTHY

Walk Worthy: Lit = *to conduct yourself in an appropriate way considering Who He is, What Has done!*

Illus: Friend of mine used to tell his children when they were leaving the house: Remember who you are That is what Paul is saying to the Colossian Church: Remember WHO...and WHOSE...you are!

LIVE LIKE YOU ARE A FOLLOWER OF THE SON OF GOD, GAVE HIMSELF FOR YOU!

So, how do you do that? Paul talks about 5 specific actions that we should pursue

1. Hopeful: VS 3-6 Lit = *A confident assurance, expectation and anticipation regarding the future!*

Applic: (Our world NEEDS us right now!) As those who KNOW Him, Received Him: Faith not Fear Listen to me: The rest of the world might be frightened, fearful, afraid...but we KNOW end of story! Path to get there might be difficult: But we know what is waiting for us: Stored up, Packed away And because we have our eyes not on what is seen...but on what is unseen...we have hope!

- Psalm 46:1-11  
~We SEE what is! All around us...We aren't blind to it...be we are not overcome by it!  
~We SEE BEYOND what is! To what God is going to make it!

Applic: Because we KNOW Him...not the Problem...but the Problem Solver...we are Hopeful!

2. Fruitful: VS 6-10 Lit = *to bring forth fruit, or to be fruitful, to have a positive outcome*

Here in this first couple paragraphs of his letter to the Colossian church he talks about fruit couple ways

- Fruit FROM You Vs 6 Growing: New followers of Jesus
- Fruit IN You: Vs 6 Heard and understood grace: New Life in you
- Fruit THROUGH You Vs 10 Bearing fruit in every good work! Impact

Paul is challenging the Colossian church, listen: The WORTHY LIFE IS PRACTICAL LIFE!

It changes HOW you live...it makes a difference in the every day

Ask Yourself:

Am I producing the spiritual fruit of others coming to Jesus?

Others coming to Him?

Am I personally being changed by His work in me

Am I being changed?

Am I practicing the Jesus life?

Am I a practical or intellectual disciple?

3. Growing: Vs 10 Lit = *to increase; to enlarge; to grow and become more*

You become more fruitful and you become more hopeful, you becomes stronger and thankful..

By INCREASING in your knowledge of WHO He is...and WHAT He has done for you!

Illus: Old bumper sticker “Be patient with me, God isn't finished with me yet!” More Know, More Grow

Here is a very important key. When Paul says in vs 10, Growing in the knowledge of God, he means not just growing in intellectual information ABOUT God. He is assuming that the end result of knowledge is change in life!

The word for knowledge here isn't just content and information, but understanding and implementation. To know Jesus, as the FULLNESS of God in human flesh, is to GRASP and UNDERSTAND His Will! We know what He wants...and we DO what He wants. THAT is living a worthy life!

Illus: Lightfoot: Great Greek scholar:                    "*The end of all knowledge is conduct!*"

#### **4. Strong:** Vs 11: Being Strengthened: Lit = *to be enabled with HIS power...Him energizing ME!*

Just like we talked about last week...it is impossible to live a disciples life in our own strength.

We need God to pour His strength and power out into our life.

Now, you can tell when you have His power at work in your life by looking at two things.

- Endurance: *Cheerful constancy; Patiently continuing; Keep on Keeping on!*  
Remain under the pressure; to bear up under the load without collapsing or quitting
- Patience: *Long endurance, to hold on for the long haul without retaliating*  
*To hold on and keep going forward, against strong headwind...Not Stop*

Listen to walk worthy is to be like Jesus in this regard! Heb 12:2-3

*"Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart."*

Applic: Right now our world NEEDS the Church of Jesus Christ to be strong...to endure with patience and longsuffering this awful situation...and to be people of Hopful, Fruitful, Strong, Thankful

#### **5. Thankful:** Vs 12-14 Lit = *to be grateful and/or to express gratitude (to God)*

That is the final mark of a worthy life. We are to live a life of gratitude to God for His grace

- *He Qualified us to be in His kingdom*
- *He Rescued us from darkness*
- *He Redeemed us (bought us back from slavery to sin)*
- *Forgave our sins!*

When you look at that list... Your heart should overflow with thankfulness!

Paul is telling us, "Don't be like an ungrateful child, never is appreciative of others goodness in your life" A life worthy of the God we know, revealed to us in Jesus...and the God done all those things:  
THANKFUL!

**CONCL:** So, as we close this morning...let me ask you...How are you doing? Are you living worthy?

Hopeful: See beyond the circumstances of today?

Fruitful: Look at your life, can you see God working in you, through you, producing spiritual fruit

Growing: Is your spiritual life vibrant, moving forward,...or have you hit pause...

Strong: Holding up under pressure...regardless of how long it takes...Fix your eyes on things above

Thankful: Have you paused today to say thank you to God...or are you all about "Gimme"!

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Paul's Message: **LIVE WORTHY**

Walk Worthy: Lit = *to conduct yourself in an appropriate way considering Who He is, What Has done!*

Challenge: Pick ONE! This week focus on that one...memorize verse, create strategies

Hopeful: Eye has not seen ear has not heard, man not imagined

Fruitful: Are their places where I see God changing me...others thru me

Thankful: Every day this week...I'm going to practice thankfulness