

That ye might worthy of the Lord

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 01 January 2000

Preacher: Rev A.B.Ferguson

[0 : 00] You turn with me now to that passage that we read together. You'll find in Colossians chapter 1, and we can draw our thoughts to chapter 1 and verse 10.

That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God, strengthened with all might according to his glorious power.

That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing. Now, Paul having to write to the church in Colossae, found that he had to bring before them the superiority of Christ.

And this meant that when he was highlighting the superiority of Christ, he had in mind those who were placing or putting in question that superiority, that uniqueness of Christ and his relationship to his people as their God and Redeemer.

And because of that, Paul was made aware that there were those who were placing questions over Christ and his finished work.

[1 : 42] And obviously, there were those who were prepared to speculate as to the necessity of that mystical part of life.

There were those who were prepared to go into the supernatural, but they weren't to see that as being exclusively the domain of our Lord Jesus Christ.

They seemed to believe that there was a place for other spiritual beings, and in particular that of angels.

That they had an important part within the spiritual upbuilding of the believer. Paul had to deal with that as he had to deal with the speculators of philosophy.

Where in the regions it could spill over into the thought concept of man's superiority in his own mind. That he was an individual distinct among individuals.

[2 : 53] There were those who were the intellectual capable and those who were not. And so that division was coming in, making an elitist movement among the people.

Paul had to deal with that problem too. And a problem that has not gone away from the church in any degree. And a third matter.

And that was the problem of the ritualistic attitude of people. Where they still felt that ritualism had its place in the order of spiritual life.

Or in the aspect of the faith of the people of God. Paul had to place this also in a category of reprimand.

Giving the church to recognize that the full sufficiency of Christ really meant that.

[3 : 58] You are complete in him. And it is for that reason that he had to not only bring this to the notice of the church.

But he wanted to do it for a specific reason and purpose. And that was that the church would be built up. And that building up of the church would of necessity place upon the believers.

That recognition of the power of the Lord Jesus Christ. Not only to be the source of their information. But the power that was needed to direct their lives.

And it is for that reason that Paul brings us to the words that we have in the text here this morning. The reason is that you might walk worthy of the Lord.

Now obviously when Paul is making that demand of the believers that they would walk worthily of the Lord. They had to first obviously bring to their own minds what that meant.

[5 : 13] And to walk worthily of the Lord meant that they had to know the Lord. And of course dealing with the Lord he was the Lord Christ.

He was their Savior Redeemer. He was the one that Paul could speak of in whom we have the knowledge or the excellency of the knowledge of God's glory.

Here was the Lord that directed them to the knowledge of God. And so for them to walk worthily of the Lord. As Paul would have us believe to walk worthily of the Lord.

They had to have that knowledge of God. And that knowledge of God must surely include God's nature and perfection.

Surely we cannot but recognize the necessity to remind ourselves of the greatness of our God.

[6 : 14] What God is. Our God is a spirit. He's unchangeable. He's possessed of every perfection. Self-existent in himself. Underived. He is the eternal God without beginning. He is the infinite God without limits.

The all-seen God. The omniscient. The supreme over all God. We have to be reminded of this. These are not just concepts for our intellectual stimulation.

They are concepts to build us up in an encouragement of the greatness and the uniqueness of our God. And of course.

In his relationship to his people. We are reminded also of his moral character. He is a holy God. He is without spot.

[7 : 16] He is a just God. He is a good God. God. And in his dealings toward us. He is a merciful God.

Yes, he is a gracious God. God. Surely we cannot omit a compassionate God. These are concepts for you and for me to consider.

That we might rejoice in the knowledge that this great unchanging Jehovah. That he toward us. He is a merciful God.

That he is a gracious God. That he is a compassionate God. Toward his people. And secondly. A knowledge of God. Must also include.

His works. His works. Yes, we can go to his works of creation. His works of providence. His governing and controlling the world.

[8 : 18] Surely at a time like this. We have to remind ourselves. That he is a governing and controlling God. In this world.

That in our fears. That in our anxieties. That in the problems and the magnitude of the problems of the world. That we are still to be reminded of this.

That our God is governing. And that he is controlling. This world. And yet too.

Within the uniqueness of. This world. That is set forth. Uniquely. The plan of God. And the purpose of God. And surely that is his redemption.

The redemption of which we can. Compositely put it. And its. Accomplishment. And its application. To us.

[9 : 17] In our need. And so that sense. We. Recognize the particular work. Of God's redemption.

That it is a work. In which Paul could say. Jesus Christ. We have redemption. That purchasing.

That buying out of. That drawing us from. And in these graphic ways. He tells us. From darkness to light.

From the power of Satan. To God. Setting clearly for us. That redemption. And surely we cannot.

But look upon. And just mention. That there was. Of necessity. The need. Of the sacrifice.

[10 : 15] Of Christ. His atonement. We say. The death. The suitableness. The perfection. And the acceptableness.

Of that sacrifice. By God. And towards God. In its nature. In its perfection. It must be set forth. These are concepts.

In which. You and I. Must. Recognize. We must understand. We must seek. To understand. Before we can ever.

Come to consider. What our life is. Let alone. What our life is. In walking with God. What relationship. It has with God.

And if we do that. It must bring us. To consider. The will of God. The will of God. And that sense.

[11 : 13] In which we. Have a knowledge. Of the will of God. And that is what. Paul's whole. Design. And desire was. In ministering.

To the people here. As you have learned. And so it is the sense. That you might walk. In this knowledge. The knowledge.

Of God's. Electing us. Out of his good pleasure. Electing some. To life eternal. And so.

In that electing love. Delivering them. As Paul had said. Out of. Darkness to light. Or if we have it. Summarizing.

The. Shorter catechism. Out of the estate. Of sin. And misery. Bringing.

[12 : 08] Out of that estate. Into. An estate of. Salvation. By. A redeemer. Jesus Christ.

Christ. And so this. Revelation of God. Is declared. In the old. And in the new testament. And surely. With this knowledge. Of God.

And his will. It must also include. That knowledge. Coming back. Of God's mercy. Of God's.

Mercy. Towards us. In the new birth. In the being born. From above. In the work of. Regeneration.

If we want. In that. Justifying. Position. That he. Brings. To his people. In the adoption. Of them.

[13 : 02] Into his family. And of. The building up. Of that people. Into. A unique body. Of which. Christ.

Is the head. The church. And so. God's. Reconciling love. Must be understood. It must be understood.

In the terms. In which. You and I. Will. Begin. To consider. Our lives. And so. It is that question. In which you and I. Have to consider.

In the way. In which you and I. Are walking. The knowledge. Of God. Surely. In his mercy. In his pardoning.

Mercy. Is essential. Without these. There can be no. Spiritual values. And if you've got no. Spiritual value. You will have no.

- [13 : 57] Spiritual growth. This growth. Surely. Then. Can only come about. In the knowledge. Of God.
- That we might. Grow in grace. And in that knowledge. And so. Paul states. Regarding that. How do we come.
- To have that knowledge. Paul and his. Demand. For the believer. Speaks to the church. In Philippi. And he gives. And he sets forth.
- The standard. Let this mind. Be in you. Which was also. In Christ Jesus. Jesus. Who being in the form of God. Thought it not robbery.
- To be equal with God. But made himself. Of no reputation. And took upon himself. The form of a servant. Of course.
- [14 : 52] As Paul would say. To the church. Let the word of Christ. Dwell in you. Richly. In all wisdom. Teaching. And admonishing.
- One another. Psalms. Hymns. And spiritual songs. Teaching. And admonishing. One another. There is that. Sense in which.
- The believers. Are responsible. One to another. But their ultimate. Responsibility. Is in the pleasing. Not of one another. But of the pleasing. Of him. The walking.
- Worthily of him. That must. Be always the standard. Not to please. Each other. But walking. Worthily of the Lord.
- And there should be that. Evidence. Following. That we are walking. In the divine will. Must be seen in all points.
- [15 : 45] Of our lives. Not just. In the selected parts. Isn't it so easy for us. To say that we are. Walking.
- Worthily of the Lord. In the avenues. In the parts of life. That. Are so easy for us to do. And of course we were. Touching on these points.
- Throughout. The weekend already. What is our duty. What is. Our. The command. What is our responsibility. ability. What is our ability. Well surely.
- In any other sphere. Or whatever sphere. That the Lord has placed you. Or placed me in. Is that we walk. Worthily. Of the Lord. And that must be.
- Surely. Having. Christ. As our example. Letting this mind. Be in us. Letting everything. Be subjected.
- [16 : 44] To the will. And the purpose. Of God. Friend. That will not be. One in which you and I. Will so readily. Agree to. And become subservient to.
- Until you and I. Grow. In the knowledge of God. That knowledge. That teaches us. That he is.
- Not only our great God. But he's our great God. Redeemer. He is our savior. He is our sanctifier. And it is in that sense.
- That you and I must walk. Worthily. Of the Lord. Now there is obviously. A sense in which. We think of. Walking worthily. And it may become. Our problem.
- Our fear. Because. We're looking at our hearts. And we're seeing that. Within our hearts. There seems to be no. Worthiness of the Lord.
- [17 : 43] There seems to be no. Worthily. Desire. For walking with the Lord. But isn't that. The very concept. Of scripture. For you and for me.
- God's word. For me. God's word. To his people. Oh I will take away. The stony heart. And I will give you. A heart of flesh.

And this heart of flesh. Will be a heart. That will know me. That's the difference. A heart that will know God. And in that knowledge.

Recognize. Our unworthiness. Our sinfulness. Our corruption. Yes. Agreeing wholeheartedly.

With the word of God. That the heart is deceitful. That it is desperately wicked. Oh some people rebel today. When you tell them.

[18 : 40] Do you know what your heart is like? It is wicked. It is desperately wicked. And they rebel against that. But does the believer.

Rebel. Do you as a believer rebel. When you are told. That your heart. Is deceitful. That it is desperately wicked.

Dead. I happen to be preaching. On one. Not so long ago. On the life of. Jacob. Speaking of his character.

Giving him the terms. Of supplanter. Or deceiver. Or twister. Whichever way you want. To describe him. And seeking to. Set out the sovereignty. Of God.

And the. Molding. Or if you like. The sanctifying. Of his life. And when I came out. The visitor said to me. Ah. But I still think. Jacob was a twister.

[19 : 40] He missed the point. Of course he was a twister. Of course he was a deceiver. But isn't that the heart of man?

What was uniquely so. That he was a twister. That he was a twister. That he was in the hand of God? That he was being molded by God? That he was being fashioned by God?

And that. Is the distinction. The man was obviously forgetting. Of the picture that I portray to you.

Of my life. And of which you portray to me. Of your life. Is not the same picture that God sees.

Of your life and my life. Aren't we twisters? Aren't we deceivers? And yet.

[20 : 40] There is the characteristic of the believer. That has learned. That that is so. And that his desire has become. With David.

Search me. And try me. And see if there is any wicked way in me. And lead me in the way of life everlasting.

In the way of God's life. In the way of God's control. In the way of God's building. That's the difference. The believer.

Is made aware. Of what he is. And it is a sense of that. Oh how we thank John. That he recorded.

These words of encouragement. For you and for me. When we are made aware. And it becomes sore. For you and for me.

[21 : 37] To learn. What our hearts are really like. And we cry. Before a holy God. That our hearts should be sore. And we wonder.

At our relationship. Indeed we wonder. At the love of God. Toward us. And John so wonderfully. Comforts us. If we confess.

Our sins. He is faithful. And he is just. To forgive us. Our sins. And to wash us.

From all uncleanness. Oh aren't we reminded. Of the greatness. Of our God. In his attitude toward us.

In his mercy. In his compassion. Oh in order for us. To understand that. We have been following.

[22 : 37] Through the theme. Of Gethsemane. And Calvary. Doesn't it. Highlight it. Doesn't it. Make the picture. Stand out.

Doesn't it. Give to it. That uniqueness. That brightness. That only Christ. And his finished work. Could give. That we are complete.

In him. That it is in him. That we have redemption. We never. Could have earned it.

Of ourselves. He destroyed. Sin. And so the church. Can speak of him. Walking worthily. Yes.

In the name. That they plead. Of the Lord Jesus Christ. He bore. Our sins. In his own body.

[23 : 36] To the tree. Reminding us. Of the uniqueness. Of his relationship. To his people. In his own body.

Demonstrating. What he could say. That he has compassion. That he has care. That he has love. That he has understanding. Of our needs.

And that he himself. Is tempted. In all points. In all points. Like as we are. Yet uniquely. He was without sin.

Oh. How we go to him. Worthily. Know the worthiness. Is never seen. To be. In and of ourselves. Are flowing.

From ourselves. But flowing. From Christ. Flowing. From Christ. And to that extent.

[24 : 35] The believers. Are walking. Worthily. Of the Lord. And to all. Pleasing. And surely. That demands. Not just. Where we can find it. Place of honor.

Place of distinction. Place of prominence. Place. Within the church. And within society. But in all. Pleasing.

In good report. And in bad report. It is all very well. For us to be honoring. And to be. Walking worthily. When things are going well. When there is no test.

And when there is no trial. When there are no conflicts. But when you and I. Are given to recognize. That the church. Is a warfaring body.

That Paul chooses. To describe it as such. That we learn. To walk. In all pleasing.

[25 : 34] And what is more. Pleasing. To our Lord. In that we put on. The whole armor. That he has provided. For us. That we don't shun it.

That we don't underestimate it. But that we recognize. Its significance. And its uniqueness. And its completeness. Ah. That we would grasp that.

That we would have that armor on. That we would. Thank our God and Savior. For the uniqueness of this armor. For the sufficiency of this armor.

And for the knowledge. That we would have. Of our great need. To be fully equipped with it. Oh.

That this would be our desire. And our longing. So that your life. And my life. Not just when we're together like this. It's a lovely experience.

[26 : 30] We enjoy the fellowship. And sadly. When time comes to go. We're almost reluctant. We want to stay. We want to tarry. We want to linger on the way here.

Because it's good. We understand Peter's request. Let us just stop off here Lord. Let us build our house here. This is the best place. But you see.

In order that the Lord proves. The uniqueness. Of his sufficiency. And his grace. And the completeness of his armor. And his provision for you and for me.

He says go out. That is the mandate. Go out. But you and I. We must go out.

In the knowledge. And obedience unto him. And so. Showing forth. Whose we are. Whom we serve. If you're in this school.

[27 : 26] Yes. Fifth. Sixth former. But you're a fifth. Sixth former. Who is a believer. Who loves the Lord. And who shows your love. And who shows that your discipline is in the Lord.

And in this letter that Paul uses to the church. He expresses that in many ways. But in these last chapters. He expresses uniquely. The family relationship.

The industrial relationship. So that there is a sense in which. This. This. Interaction between each other. Not just when you and I are in a. Can I say it.

A holy huddle. But when you and I are in the places. Where God has placed us. That we are believers. Oh yes. They will recognize that.

Our faults. And our failings. But they will also recognize. That we are a disciplined people. That we are a people that can say.

[28 : 23] I am wrong. That we are a people that can say. I am sorry. Any fool can make many boasts. It takes a strong person.

To say I am wrong. It takes a very strong person to say. Will you forgive me. I did wrong. To take that position.

Deems that you have got a quality. That is not characteristic of the world. But you want the believer. To have it uniquely so.

It is having the mind. That what in all things. We are pleasing to our God. That becomes. Our burning seal.

Yes. And when we say that. Your heart and my heart. Begins to faint. Because we know our weaknesses. We are given to our weaknesses. But surely. Then. In order for us to know our weaknesses.

[29 : 26] We are given to know the grace. That is sufficient for us. My grace. Is sufficient for you. And isn't that what.

Paul would want the church to learn. Going on into all pleasing. And being fruitful. In every. Good work. There are many ways.

In which. Your life. And my life. Can be fruitful. And again. It's not to term it in. Fruitfulness. In the way. In which the world. Will say. He's an excellent preacher.

He's got the gifts. We like him. But this man. Is not much of a preacher. He hasn't got much to say. Or this person. If he's a shopkeeper.

Very slow. Cumbersome about the things that he does. A teacher. Not the best teacher. Whatever sphere you're in. People are ready to point the finger at you.

[30 : 25] And say you're not the best. But for you. And for me. It is to be fruitful. And the way in which. That is judged. It's not in what the world judges.

It is. It's in what our relationship is to God. Isn't that bringing us back. To the very principle. I will take away the stony heart. I will give you a heart of flesh.

To know me. And it is in that sense. That the believer comes. Because there is where God is ultimately dealing. With the man.

Or the woman. Remember. When they were choosing a king of Israel. After Saul. Samuel would choose.

From the outward side. God reminded him. Man. That's where he makes his judgments. That's where he holds his assessments.

[31 : 22] Samuel. But Samuel. When I judge. I go to the very heart. I go to the very center of activity. I go to the very.

Point of life. I go to the heart. God looks at the heart. Friend. Whatever you and I want to show. And what might seem to be fruit bearing.

As Christians. Remind ourselves. Yes. Yes. Jacob. To many people. He was a twister. But in the heart.

He was a man. Being molded by God. And on the other way. Conversely. In the life of Judas Iscariot. He seemed to be a man.

Eminently. Suited to be with the Lord. Willing to take on the duty of. Treasurer. He held that office. One that could be. Complimented.

[32 : 19] In his concern. Master. Let us. Make sure that we don't. Use. The resources. And frivolous things. Let us be compassionate.

That was a deceitfulness. He was a twister. He was ready to be praised Lord. He had no love. For Jesus. Our friend.

That's where God is looking. And to have that all fruitfulness. Jesus tells us. I am the vine. Ye are the branches. And without me. You can do nothing. Do you believe that?

It's all very well for me to say it. It's another thing for me. To put that practically. Into my life's experience. Day by day.

[33 : 25] Hour by hour. Yes Lord. Without thee. Not only.

Can I do nothing. I am nothing. All fruitfulness. Lord. Friends.

Just. Just briefly. And. Coming to this point. Increasing. In the knowledge of God. The more you and I then.

Recognize. What a demand it is. For us to be fruit bearing. We realize. The more that we have the need.

To have this knowledge of God. The more that we see the need of our knowledge of God. The more we see the need. Of our Redeemer.

[34 : 21] And oh how we thank him. For that knowledge. That instruction. That Christ. Has given to us. He has given to us.

That wonderful blessing. The outpouring of which was. As a consequence. Of his finished work. His Holy Spirit.

His Holy Spirit. And surely. He is our instructor. And his instructions. Are very explicit. He will convict.

Send. Righteousness. Judgment to come. That is true. But in his relationship. To his people.

He is the comforter. All the uniqueness. The greatness. The sufficiency. The fullness of that title. He is the comforter.

[35 : 23] Who will lead. And who will guide us. Into all truth. Why don't you see.

The uniqueness of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Don't we see. The uniqueness. And the greatness. And sufficiency. And satisfaction.

Of his sacrifice. The Lamb of God. And don't we see. The blessing. Given to the church.

And so that should. In a sense. Be for you. And for me. What is our desire. Out of all that knowledge. Of the knowledge. Of Christ. Of the desire.

For walking. In an order to please him. And in our walking. That our lives. Would be fully appreciative. Of him. And glorifying to him.

[36 : 24] Surely. It must be. That you and I. Are striving. Towards this. The knowledge. Of God. The knowledge.

Increasing. In the knowledge. Of God. And we increase. In that knowledge. As we increase. In our dependence.

And waiting upon him. And so Paul. Could say. I know. Whom I have believed. And because of my relationship. With him.

Because of my dependence. Upon him. Because of my knowledge. Of his faithfulness. I'm able to say. I'm persuaded. Indeed. Out of his experience.

He was able to say that. Out of the. Faithfulness. Of his God. He could declare it. He's able to keep. What I have committed. To him. And just.

[37 : 20] Just touch on these two points. At the. On the other verse. When you and I feel. How can I possibly go on. It's in this way. Strengthened.

With all might. According. To his glorious power. Strengthened. With the power. Of Jesus. Power. And so.

He could say. To the church. That's the way. I want you to go out. Confidently. Into the world. Go out. Not in your own strength.

But go out. With the good news. Live the good news. And speak of it. When you desire.

And seek. And long. For a power. To be with you. All power. Is given. Unto me. In heaven. And on earth.

[38 : 19] Paul. Elaborated. On that. In the words. That we have. All powers. Principalities. And powers. They are all. Under his authority.

What a glorious. Encouragement. When you are reminded. And I'm reminded. Of the duty. Of the task. That he is setting.

Before you. And before me. When he gives. The duty. He also gives. The promise. Of the power. To go with it. And so then.

It's important. To identify. Your relationship. With him. Do you know him. As your Lord.

And Savior. Do you know him. As your God. And Redeemer. Do you know him. As the friend. That will never leave you.

[39 : 15] Nor forsake you. Do you know him. As the one. That declares. The uniqueness. Of the security. Of his people. They shall never perish.

And neither shall. Any man. Pluck them. Out of my hand. Do you know that friend. Well if you can say that.

You can have the encouragement. With David. Yea. Though I walk. Through the valley. Of the shadow of death. I will fear. No. Evil. Why.

Was it because. He had learned much. Yes. But what he had learned. Most of all. Was that his Lord. Himself. Would be with him.

Friend. That's the question I leave. Are you walking. With Jesus. For two. Can't walk together. Unless they be agreed.

[40 : 21] Are you agreeing. With Jesus. If you are. You are. Recognizing. What he says. Of himself. That he came.

Not to call the righteous. But sinners. To repentance. And also. I am the light. Of the world. He. That followeth me.

Shall not. Walk in darkness. Let us pray. O Lord. Our God.

We need thee. And yet. When we are confronted. And made aware. Yet again. Of our weakness. And our helplessness. O Lord.

Our God. We thank thee. For our Lord. And Savior. Jesus Christ. O that we would see. And know. And experience. More fully.

[41 : 18] The love. The beauty. And the fellowship. Of him. Who loved his people. And gave himself for them. Lord Jesus.

That we may know thee. As the friend. That will never leave us. Nor forsake us. And all for thy glory's sake. Amen.