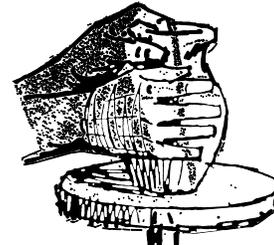


His Workmanship at Westside

*“For we are His
workmanship, created in
Christ Jesus for good works.”
—Ephesians 2:10*



Isaiah 64:8

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A Prayer from Prison, Part 2: Pleasing God *by W. Edward Bedore and David B. Curtis*

Last week we looked at Paul's prayer in Colossians 1:9-14. Ever since Paul had first heard of the Colossians' faith in Jesus and their love for other believers, he had been praying regularly for them. His prayer is an expression of God's desire for the entire body of Christ and is an example for our prayers. Paul mentioned two major and specific requests on behalf of believers. First, He asked God that they would ***“be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding,”*** v. 9. This can only be accomplished through godly wisdom and enlightenment by the Holy Spirit. Wisdom from God is only found in Jesus Christ, 1 Cor 1:26-31. Only by the Holy Spirit—His revelation of God by His inspired message—is spiritual enlightenment possible, 1 Cor 2:6-16. Second, Paul asked God for ***“a walk worthy of the Lord,”*** v. 10. This means a life that bears fruit unto the Lord through our labors (good works) done in faith. The knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding enables us to walk worthy of the Lord

so we can please Him in every situation of life and bear fruit for Him.

Conduct from a Christian who is first filled with the knowledge of God's will is more like to please God fully!

In the last half of Col 1:10-12, Paul described five directions a worthy walk will take. All five participles bring specific attention to what it means to walk worthy of the Lord and describe the pattern of life for a Christian:

1. ***Pleasing*** the Lord fully (in all respects),
2. ***Being fruitful*** in every good work,
3. ***Increasing*** in (or by) the knowledge of God,
4. ***Being strengthened*** with all might, and
5. ***Giving thanks*** to the Father.

I. PLEASING GOD FULLY. *Pleasing* is the Greek noun *areskeia*, which is found only here in the New Testament. But it comes from the verb *aresko* which Paul uses fourteen times in his writings. An important point to note about this word is that *aresko* describes an attitude that is the driving force behind one's actions. The Bible does not use this word in the sense of a cringing attitude. *Pleasing* implies anticipation to meet the desires of God, willing to do

anything to please Him—willingness to do what the Lord pleases, desire to fulfill what is eternally due to God.

How strong is our desire to please God? What are we willing to sacrifice, what pain are we willing to endure so we may live in a way that is pleasing to God? The Lord Jesus Christ lived his whole life with the aim of pleasing God: *“for I always do those things that please Him,”* Jn 8:29. That is an incredible statement. Can we say that? Can we say, “I mostly do those things that please Him”? How about, “I sometimes do those things that please Him”? Or is it, “I seldom do those things that please Him”? Just as Jesus always did what pleased His Father, so the Father was pleased with Him: Mt 3:17 (Mk 1:11; Lk 3:22); Mt 12:18; 17:5; Col 1:19; 2 Pet 1:17; Mal 3:1. As Christians, we are called to imitate Christ, we are called to live our lives to please God. Is pleasing God important to us? This is a legitimate question, because Paul said pleasing God was his aim: *“Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him,”* 2 Cor 5:9. And Paul admon-
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"...May you be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; may you walk worthy of the Lord, pleasing Him fully, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; being strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; giving thanks to the Father Who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light." —Colossians 1:9-12 (good to memorize)

ished other believers to please God by their conduct: *"Finally then, brethren, we urge and exhort in the Lord Jesus that you should abound more and more, just as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God,"* 1 Thes 4:1. How do we live? We are to live in such a way to please God by all that we do. Sometimes people feel that they're not doing what God wants them to do with their lives. Sometimes people do weird things because they think they're doing what God wants them to do. But we don't have to guess. The Bible makes it clear what it is that pleases God. Pleasing God is not something that can be done once and for all and gotten out of the way on a Friday evening so we can go and do as we please on Saturday morning, like mowing the lawn or going to a birthday party. Pleasing God is a way of life. What a blessing to know that we can please God!

A. Faith pleases God. Let's look at a some specific things that the Bible says are pleasing to God. What would you say is the number one thing that we can do to please God? The Scriptures make it very clear that faith pleases God, Heb 10:3, 11:6. There is no way we can live a life that is pleasing to God without trusting Him. God wants us to trust Him. Without faith, it is impossible to please God. Thousands of believers have trusted Christ for their salvation, but are not living in faith; they do not trust God in each and every area of their lives. We should be people who live by faith. Are we trusting God each day for each situation? Do we really

trust Him? When we are hurting, and our life seems to be coming apart, do we trust God? When we fail to trust God, we doubt His sovereignty and question His goodness. God views our distrust as seriously as He views our disobedience. When the children of Israel were hungry, which was a trial, they spoke against God, Ps 78:19-21. Why was God so angry with them? *"Because they did not believe in God, and did not trust in His salvation,"* Ps 78:22. In order to trust God, we must always view our adverse circumstances through the eyes of faith. Faith pleases God.

B. Obedience pleases God. The Bible tells us that God takes pleasure in our obedience: *"Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord,"* Col 3:20. Believer, do you understand this? Obedience pleases God, and disobedience displeases Him, 1 Cor 10:5; 1 Jn 3:21-22.; cf. Pr 11:1, 20; 12:22; Is 66:4; Jer 9:24. The only way to know obedience and disobedience is to spend time in the Word of God. What do you suppose would be the greatest act of disobedience? It would be breaking the greatest command, would it not? *'Jesus said to him, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself,"* " ' Mt 22:37-39. Loving God and loving others are acts of obedience that please God. But we will not know how to love others if we don't spend time in God's Word.

Obedience is not partial obedience

or ritual obedience. King Saul claimed he had obeyed God, but God was displeased, 1 Sam 15:13-23: *"Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, As in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams,"* v. 22; cf. Is 1:11; 56:4-7; Hos 9:4; Mlc 6:7-8. Hear and obey. Disobedience displeases God, 1 Cor 10:5-14.

C. Prayer pleases God: *"The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, but the prayer of the upright is His delight,"* Pr 15:8. Please hear this, believer—God delights in our prayers. God delights in meeting our needs. It pleases Him to bless us, Num 24:1; 1 Sam 12:22; 2 Sam 7:29 (2 Chr 17:27); 1 Kg 3:10. Prayer is His delight, because prayer shows the reaches of our poverty and the riches of His grace. Prayer is the wonderful transaction where the wealth of God's glory is magnified and the wants of our soul are satisfied. Therefore, God delights in the prayers of the upright. Two corollaries to God's delight in blessing us are 1) **He delights in salvation**, and 2) **He is pleased when we share His blessing of salvation**. Paul wrote that he sought to please God by preaching the gospel, Gal 1:6-10, 15-16. *"For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.,"* 1 Cor 1:21. It pleased God for Jesus to die for us to bring about salvation, Is 53:10. Thus, He wants us to be fruitful in His word, Is 55:10-

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Psalm 133:1



Fill your can-teen in 2013

“May you be filled with all the fullness of God.”

—Ephesians 3:19

Pleasing God, from 2

11, and to share (have fellowship) in preaching the gospel by supporting gospel preachers, Phil 4:18; 1:5. Are my prayers pleasing to God?

D. A meek and contrite spirit pleases God. “The LORD takes pleasure in those who fear Him, in those who hope in His mercy,” Ps 147:10-11. God dwells with (is near to) those who have a poor, humble, and contrite spirit, those who fear Him and tremble at His word, Is 57:15; 66:2; Ps 34:18. There is “joy in heaven over one sinner who repents,” Lk 15:7, 10. After we have repented, confessed with a meek and contrite spirit, God enables us to share His mercy, see Ps 51, esp. vs. 12-13, 16-19. Then our praise pleases Him, Ps 69:30-34, Job 33:26-28; Heb 13:15-16

Paul wrote that we are to be “Fully pleasing Him.” *Full* has the idea of “in all respects” and points to all the spheres of one’s life—spiritual, mental, emotional—and all the various areas of one’s activities—family, church, work, recreation, entertainment, hobbies, government—wherever life may take us. Our tendency is to compartmentalize our behavior so that we let God take charge of some areas, but try to keep Him out of others. This thinking displeases the Lord and fails to honor Him as God. Pleasing the Lord stands opposed to the

worldly mindset that primarily seeks to please ourselves or that seeks to please others but for the wrong reasons, Rm 8:8. Paul’s threefold use of *aresko* describes what is involved in a life that seeks to please the Lord: “We then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, leading to edification. For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, ‘The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me,’ “ Rm 15:1ff

Christians are warned against pleasing themselves at the expense of brothers in Christ—each must please his brother, but always with a view to his brother’s good, specifically, his spiritual edification. The model for this is the Lord Jesus Who, refusing to please Himself, pursued the Father’s plan regardless of what it cost.

Look back over the past week. Was my life fully pleasing to the Lord, i.e., in all respects? How are we enabled to walk in a manner worthy to please Him in all respects? By being “filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding.” God’s truth becomes so much a part of me that pleasing Him is increasingly in my mind and actions. It becomes spiritually natural.

Job concerns Andrew Tope, Linda Szymanski, Lorenzo Gonzalez, and Frank Savarese are seeking jobs.

Traveling Mina Gonzalez is in Utah for music training.

Expecting Amy Vander Kooi—Aug **Rejoice and weep, Romans 12:15** Alysha Elliott, daughter of Gina Elliott (Mina’s neighbors), put on Christ in baptism Monday. Alysha moved Wed to IL, but write c/o Gina, 12532 E. 31st Ave, Aurora 80011

Gary Boyd—grieving death of friend; pray for Robert’s widow **Sandy Soderlund**

Discipleship Here At Home

PRAY FOR healing, protection, help, and comfort here and away

Judy Sartin—fall with bruising
Caleb Howell—tonsillectomy recovery
Margie Szymanski, Dale’s mother—low oxygen levels creating serious condition
Mark Campbell—in hospital at Glenwood Springs, to move to rehab this week; impaired cognition from seizures
Ruth Hice, Pat Campbell’s mother—invasive colon cancer; receiving blood at hospital; pray for her and her family; **Larry** and **Brandon Thompson** will travel to AR Wed, to return with **Pat** Mon, 7/29.

Frances Selvidge, Jonathan Hadders’s grandmother—moved to rehab center in Colorado Springs last week

CHRONIC CONDITIONS

Logan Corray; Rocco Sangellino Jr; Addison Tope; Pat Wilkes—asthma
Pearl Chapman—leg pains; pancreatitis
Nell Free—pacemaker, heart; back pain
Autumn Hadders—epilepsy
Kirk Johnson—worsening MS; needs help around his house
Menards—aging; **Lloyd**, diabetes;
Virginia, worsening rapid macular degeneration; high BP
Lynda Szymanski—COPD, lung

Directory updates: The Huelsman family will be part of this local work: Huelsman, Tim*, Lis*, Tyler, Hannah, Danielle, 32372 Lodgepole Dr Evergreen 80439 h-303-993-5924 Tim-719-213-3539 Lis-719-237-2716

lishuelsman@gmail.com
Brennan Blicharski and Gregg Geis were recently baptized into Christ. Here is their contact information: Brennan Blicharski, 3668 S. Laredo St Aurora 80013 520-808-9846 **Brennan.Blicharski@cummings.com**
Gregg Geis, 4228 Wyandot St Denver 80211 303-902-9997 **greggwgeis@gmail.com**



*Fighting
the
Current*

Exposing current thoughts & trends

Threat to Religious Freedom in Military by Tony Perkins

How far is the military willing to go to silence men and women of faith?

According to Air National Guardsman Layne Wilson, they'd rather deny his sick wife medical care than tolerate his opinion on same-sex marriage. Wilson's superiors not only rescinded his six-year contract with the Guard for his opinion on marriage, but broke off the health coverage that his wife, who is suffering from stage four breast cancer, depended on. As part of his punishment for voicing his beliefs, Layne's superiors said the only way his family could regain their health benefits was by agreeing to a one-year extension instead of the six-year contract they had already signed. Essentially, the military was telling Layne that it was prepared to risk his wife's life on the altar of political correctness.

"That's so illegal," said Layne's attorney, John Wells. "You can't take an executed contract [and change terms]. The oath was administered. Everybody had signed on it. You can't take it and just tear it up. And that's exactly what they did. [The Guard]'s earlier actions in pulling the six-year contract led to a break in service and a loss of benefits... Canceling the medical benefits for a sick cancer victim to coerce an underling to sign an illegal contract constitutes cruelty and maltreatment under the Code of Military Justice. This is unconscionable..."

The 27-year veteran spoke up in defense of *the law*. In a letter to West Point, Layne objected to a lesbian wedding held in the cadet chapel, which, at the time, was in direct defiance of the Defense of Marriage Act. "You are hereby reprimanded," Lt. Col. Kevin Tobias informed Wilson. "As a noncommissioned officer, you are expected to maintain a standard of professional and personal behavior that is above reproach. You have failed!" The officer who actually failed was the one who allowed the ceremony in the first place. While Wilson's objections might have rankled the Guard, the fact is that the military was using Don't Ask, Don't Tell (which had nothing to do with marriage) to force him out of the service. In the meantime, the National Guard may have had second thoughts about its heartless treatment of Mrs. Wilson. When Layne threatened to sue, the branch agreed to reinstate his original six-year enlistment contract, complete with health insurance. It's now up to Congress to protect families like the Wilsons. Passing Rep. John Fleming's (R-LA) military conscience amendment will allow our brave military to be free to speak about their faith without fear of punishment. Go to [http://www.frc.org/clear present danger](http://www.frc.org/clear_present_danger) to read about others who've been harassed for their faith.

Westside church of Christ

meets at
13789 W. 8th Avenue
Golden, Colorado 80401
(303) 972-0087

Pastors

Larry Campbell (303) 462-4987
DeWayne Howell (303) 973-7283

Preacher

Jim Reingrover (303) 973-5102

Like us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/pages/Westside-Church-of-Christ/276475819148309

Assembly Schedule

Sunday

Bible classes	9:00 am
Morning assembly	10:00 am
Afternoon assembly	1:30 pm

Wednesday

Bible classes	7:30 pm
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This morning: "How to Live Godly in a Godless World," Jim Reingrover

This afternoon:

Paul's Prison Epistles Series

"Colossians 2," Jeff Wilkes

Our mid-year income and expenditures vs budget report is available online in the "Financial Information" file under "Member Files" in the Member's Section of our website. Account balances are included. The entire 2013 annual budget is also available in the same file.