

# THE LIFE THAT PLEASES GOD

## (COLOSSIANS 1:9-14)

### INTRODUCTION:

1. What does it mean to live a life that pleases God?

## THIS MORNING, FROM (COLOSSIANS 1:9-14), WE WILL EXAMINE THREE CHARACTERISTICS OF A LIFE PLEASING TO THE LORD.

### I. FIRST, THE LIFE THAT PLEASES GOD IS THE ONE THAT BEARS FRUIT.

1. The idea of "bearing fruit" is not that foreign to us.
2. If we purchased a fruit tree, planted it, and took care of it we would expect to be getting fruit from that tree in a matter of years.
3. If after many years the tree was not yielding fruit, we would feel that the tree was defective or really not a fruit tree at all.
4. We might return to the Nursery where we purchased the tree and complain.
5. The tree did not live up to the advertising.



Jesus says the same is true of people who profess faith. He says, "Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit" (Matt. 7:15-17).

6. How can we tell if someone is professing to be a believer, but isn't a believer?
7. We can tell by watching their lives.
8. If there is not a change in their living then we can conclude there is no change in their soul.
9. Our heart and our lives go together - they are not separate.
  
10. Now it is important that we remember that fruitfulness takes time.
11. You don't get any good fruit the first year you plant a fruit tree.
12. It takes time for the tree to mature.
13. The same is true for followers of Christ.
14. The change might not be immediately discernable.
15. However, over time we should be seeing a difference in the way people live.
  
16. Listen to these words of Paul to the Galatians.
17. In this passage Paul contrasts the life of the sinful nature (the life that doesn't please God) and the "fruit (or life) of the Spirit."
18. Listen to the New Living Translation,



"When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, your lives will produce these evil results: sexual immorality, impure thoughts, eagerness for lustful pleasure, idolatry, participation in demonic activities, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, divisions, the feeling that everyone is wrong except those in your own little group, envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other kinds of sin. Let me tell you again, as I have before, that anyone living that sort of life will not inherit the Kingdom of God. But when the Holy Spirit controls our lives, he will produce this kind of fruit in us: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Here there is no conflict with the law" (Galatians 5:16-26).

The person who is living to please God will begin to see a change in their values and we will see a change in their behavior.

- a. Those living together outside of marriage will get married.

- b. Those cheating others will begin dealing honestly.
  - c. Those who have been abusive in their speech will move toward kindness.
  - d. Those who were known for using others will begin serving others.
  - e. Those who relished tearing down others in their whispering will now seek to build them up.
  - f. Those who had hoarded their resources will begin investing their resources in the work of the Lord.
19. If we want to please God, then we must bear fruit.

## **II. SECOND, THE LIFE THAT PLEASES GOD IS ONE THAT YEARNS TO KNOW GOD BETTER.**

- 1. The life that pleases God is the one that "keeps on growing in knowledge."
- 2. It is continually seeking to know God better.
- 3. But in order to understand the force of what is being said here let me state two negatives.
  - a. First, growing in the knowledge of God is not the same as seeking to learn how to get more from God.
  - b. Many of us are only concerned with how we can tap into God's resources.
  - c. We want to know how to get God to answer our prayers.
  - d. We want to know how to get God to meet our needs and banish our problems.

- (1) If your children came to you only when they wanted something, would you feel that they loved you?
- (2) If your children spent their life studying how they could get you to give them what they wanted would you feel loved?
- (3) Of course not.
- (4) You would feel used.
- (5) When our concern in seeking to know God better is to be able to "experience more of His blessing," we are not loving God . . .we are using Him.

- a. Second, growing in the knowledge of God is not the same as growing in knowledge about God.
- b. We can spend all our time mastering information about God and not have a relationship with God.
- c. There is always a danger of substituting facts for a relationship.
- d. The life that pleases God is the one that yearns to know more about God so that they can know God better.
- e. I think this kind of person, reads the Bible not primarily for factual information but to discern the heart of God.
- f. They look for direction not merely information.

4. Their prayer is not totally consumed with requests.

5. They take time to work on their relationship with God.

6. They are eager to learn of God.

7. They want to read or to be taught anything that might help them know God better.

8. They are like a boyfriend or girlfriend who enjoys looking at family pictures and hearing stories of the past.

9. They want to learn anything they can that will help them know the one they love better.

10. They are careful to make sure they are seeking truth and not just seeking ammunition to defend their own perceptions of God.

11. We have to remind ourself that we are to read the Bible not for primarily to defend our theological convictions . . .

12. But we are to read the Bible because we want to know God better!
13. If we want to please God, then we are to grow in our knowledge of Him and develop a relationship with Him.

### **III. THIRD, THE LIFE THAT PLEASES GOD IS THE LIFE LIVED GRATEFULLY.**

1. Have you ever noticed how much we complain?
  - a. We complain about the weather (when we should be grateful to be alive).
  - b. We complain about our income (or our taxes which take away our income) when we should be grateful that we have an income.
  - c. We complain about the government (though we should be grateful we don't live in anarchy).
  - d. We complain about how our food is cooked (or how long the waitress takes) when we should be grateful we have food.
  - e. We complain about other Christians (they aren't as spiritual as we! We're the only ones doing it right) When we should be thanking God that all members do not have the same function.
  - f. We complain about traffic when we should be glad we can travel with such ease.
  - g. We complain about crowds in the store (when we should be glad we are able to shop).

2. You get the idea.
3. We thank God for what He's given while at the same time feeling He should have given more.
4. We seem to think that if God really loved us we would have: less problems, more money, more stuff, more influence, less illness, more good times, less difficult times.
5. But we tell God we're grateful.
6. If you were God, would you believe us?
  
7. Gratitude begins when we realize we do not deserve the inheritance that has been reserved for us.
8. We should spend every waking moment being grateful that God by His Spirit has pulled us from the jaws of Hell.
9. The Lord has taken our dead end life and set it on the course for eternity.
10. We must think often of where we would be if He had not drawn us to Him.
  
11. An attitude of gratitude grows as we learn to open our eyes to the blessings we take for granted.
12. When was the last time you thanked God for the breath you were able to take, or the blue sky, or the song of a robin?
13. When did you last thank Him for the Bible, for fellow believers, for the songs that lifts your soul?
14. When did you last thank Him for a warm home and conveniences we enjoy.
15. When did you last thank Him for your family?
16. When did you last thank Him for the trials that give us perspective?
17. We need to be grateful for the blessings that we take for granted.
  
18. We also grow in our gratefulness as we see how wonderful our Savior is.
19. We have so little idea of His greatness.
20. As we study His words, His actions, and as we become more attuned to His character, we will naturally grow in our gratitude that we are united with one who is so magnificent.

## **CONCLUSION:**

### **1. The life that pleases God...**

**a. Bears Fruit.**

**b. Grows in knowledge of God.**

**c. Lives gratefully.**

### **2. Please remember this:**

**a. Paul is pointing to the goal.**

**b. This is what we are working toward, not where we should already be.**

**3. If your life has not been very pleasing to God, then come forward this morning, and rededicate your life.**

**4. God is not concerned with where you have been, but with where you are going.**

**5. You can start today, living a life that will please the Lord.**

**6. If you are subject to His call, please come now as we stand and sing.**