

Redemptive Key #2

“Walking Worthy of the Lord, Fully Pleasing Him”

In this four-part study, we are looking into four Redemptive Keys given to us in Paul’s prayer in Colossians, Chapter One. This is the second of four parts.

Colossians 1:9

“For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;”

Colossians 1:10a

“that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him;”

Paul wrote to the Colossian Church that he continued to pray they would *“walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him.”* The term “walk,” used so often in New Testament epistles, is synonymous with the idea of our navigating daily life. To be more specific, the Bible uses the term, “walk” to speak exclusively of the Christian life. It’s to be lived in the awareness of God, knowing He desires to share our life’s experiences. For Christ followers, It’s a journey that becomes *“worthy of the Lord”* when it’s taken in submission to the leading of the Holy Spirit. Walking *“worthy of the Lord”* is our second redemptive key, well worth using to discover the truths of our position in Christ.

For Paul, a *“walk worthy of the Lord”* was more than an idea or a prayer wish. It was a driving force and set of guidelines for life. It was a badge of Paul’s bondservice to Christ. He saw a “worthy walk” as a measuring rod of life. It was a set of biblical principles and guidelines to be applied to all believers, so they could experience God’s presence, purpose, blessings, and of course,

His approval. For many Christians today, such a walk has become optional. Everyone has free will. However, to have a successful life in Christ, as the Bible defines it, requires a worthy walk that's anything but optional. It's to stay on that narrow path our salvation invites us to walk. Walking it in a worthy manner pleases God and brings light to our life, illuminating our way. It's the adherence to what Psalm 119:105 calls, "*a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.*" Without this enlightened understanding, an unworthy walk will result and danger is just the next darkened step away.

Let's look at the original biblical meaning of this expression, "*walk worthy.*" The Greek word for "*walk*" is "*peripatesai.*"¹ In Paul's time and place, this Greek word carried a Hebraic meaning of "conduct, lived in an ethical sense."² In Colossians 1:10, "*peripatesai*" is modified by the Greek word "*axios.*"³ Its original meaning, simply stated is, "in a worthy manner." These words combined may be accurately paraphrased in English to say:

Live an ethically correct and God-pleasing life in a manner worthy of the blessing you have received by being welcomed into Christ's kingdom.

The God's Word Translation (GWT) gives us a revealing representation of this idea that living an ethically correct and God-pleasing life will result in good things.

Colossians 1:10a (GWT)

"We ask this so that you will live the kind of lives that prove you belong to the Lord. Then you will want to please him in every way as you grow in producing every kind of good work by this knowledge about God."

¹ Strong's number G4043.

² Definition derived from Strong's Concordance and paraphrased.

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The believers in the Colossian Church were facing great temptations because of the horrific lifestyle of the culture in the city of Colossae. They used to accept this unrestrained way of living as the norm, but since coming to Christ, they had changed radically. Add to this culturally offensive behavior the apostasies that were trying to permeate the church; and, it's apparent why Paul emphasized the need to *"walk worthy of the Lord,"* or to *"live the kind of lives that prove you belong to the Lord."* Ungodly cultural pressures permeating the Gentile world drove Paul to also exhort other churches to a worthy *"walk."* Here are two examples.

Ephesians 4:1-3

"I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, {2} with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, {3} endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

1 Thessalonians 2:11-12

"as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father does his own children, {12} that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory."

Fully Pleasing the Lord

Colossians 1:10a

*"that you may walk worthy of the Lord,
fully pleasing Him;"*

It's always been God's desire that the way you live would give undeniable evidence that you belong to Him. Nothing could please Him more, because this is in the Father's heart and it's the fulfillment of His Son's propitiating sacrifice. When you came to the Lord, it was by His grace through the gift of the faith He

supplied to you. However, grace can never be an excuse for neglecting the responsibilities salvation brings.

Ephesians 2:8-9

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, {9} not of works, lest anyone should boast. {10} For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”

James, Chapter 2 gives us the scriptural case that fully pleasing God requires faith, along with a lifestyle of works to demonstrate it. At first glance, Ephesians 2:8-9 seems to conflict with this, until you understand that grace is a gift *FROM* God, but, in a very real sense, your works are a gift *TO* God.

- Your efforts to do what’s pleasing to the Lord are your gift of appreciation for what He’s done. He’s delivered you from darkness into the light of eternal salvation. Having this appreciation should be the driving force that motivates your desire to share the testimony of his gift *FROM* Him.
- As you can see, there’s really no conflict between grace and works. God intends them to be complimentary. As James wrote, your faith requires an active, deliberate lifestyle that displays your willingness to do the good things God desires. Thus, a “*walk... fully pleasing Him*” gives evidence of your new birth and commitment to Christ. It’s all about how you live.

James 2:18-20

“But someone will say, “You have faith, and I have works.” Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. {19} You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe- and tremble! {20} But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?”

“A New Kind of Life”

As you have previously seen, the New Testament provides us with many statements concerning our walk with the Lord. Here are three more statements supporting this “*new kind of life*” we can add to the ones previously unpacked in this chapter.

- In Romans 8:11, Paul wrote, “*But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.*”

Walking with the Spirit of God requires two things. First, you must recognize that He’s indwelling you. Second, having recognized His presence, you must yield to His leading.

- 2 Corinthians 5:7 (GWT) says, “*Indeed, our lives are guided by faith, not by sight.*”

If your walk with God is to be pleasing to Him, it requires faith. The Bible is clear: “Without faith, it’s impossible to please Him” (Hebrews 11:6).

- 2 Corinthians 10:4 clearly states, “*though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh.*” In Verse 5, Paul affirmed how vital submission to God, the Holy Spirit, is to this faith-filled battle. Paul wrote, “*For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds.*” Then, in Verse 6, Paul instructed the Corinthians to take action, by “*casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.*”

These Scriptures form a comprehensive look into a worthy walk that pleases God. Here’s their message. First, recognize the Holy Spirit indwells you. Then, yield to His leading as an act of your faith. Finally, surrender to the Holy Spirit’s presence and

guidance. This will require you to *“bring... every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.”* Doing so will please God.

In Galatians 5:16, Paul admonished the Galatian church, saying, *“walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.”* Three verses later, Paul put forth a list of seventeen *“lusts”* or *“works of the flesh”* (Verses 19-21). Paul finished this list with the words, *“and the like,”* indicating this was a limited listing that could have displayed countless more sins. It’s like a bottomless pit!

As you read the list of *“works of the flesh”*, below, it will be evident they’re still practiced today. In Verses 22-24, Paul followed this list of sins with a short list of the *“fruit of the Spirit.”* This second, contrasting list describes critical elements of *“a walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him.”* It should be insightful that Paul’s first list is twice as long as his second.

<p><i>“Works of the Flesh”</i> <i>Galatians 5:19-21</i></p>	<p><i>“Fruit of the Spirit”</i> <i>Galatians 5:22-23</i></p>
<p><i>“adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like”</i></p>	<p><i>“love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control”</i></p>

What Are We To Do? Answer: Displacement!

God calls Christians to a life of holiness, with each of us having a divinely ordained, specific purpose. Some answer this call. Others do not. Paul’s message throughout his epistles is to do our best to keep *“the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”*⁴ He said the way for this to happen is to allow God’s grace to flow through the gifts God has assigned each of us.

⁴ Ephesians 4:3.

Paul's appeals for unity and peace involved a simple principle... that pleasing God requires something new within us to displace something old. Displacement is a principle discovered by the Greek mathematician and inventor, Archimedes about twenty-three hundred years ago. It may be stated this way.

"A ship that is launched sinks into the ocean until the weight of the water it displaces is just equal to its own weight." In other words, one thing displaces the effect of the other equally.

We can apply this principle to our new life in Christ, in which we displace (exchange) the carnal behaviors of our old life prior to Christ, with new spiritually led ones. This is the idea behind Paul's words, when he wrote, "*put off the old man*" and "*put on the new man.*" (For us this means replacing our "*old*" pre-salvation behaviors with God-pleasing "*new*" ones, as the Holy Spirit leads us.) Below, are two powerfully edifying sets of biblical instructions from Paul's epistles that leave no doubt about how we live are to live "*this new kind of life.*"

Ephesians 4:22-24

"that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, {23} and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, {24} and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness."

Colossians 3:8-10, 12-15

"But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. {9} Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, {10} and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him... {12} Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness,

humility, meekness, longsuffering; {13} bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. {14} But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. {15} And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.”

My Amplified Paraphrase of these Scriptures

Stop wearing those rags from the past that Paul listed as “works of the flesh.” Take a serious look at Paul’s list of these rags (carnal behaviors) in Galatians 5:19-21. Then, just get rid of them! Refuse to wear them any longer. Now, displace them with “the fruit of the Spirit.” You’ll be clothed in shining robes of righteousness. Believe me, it will feel really good and you won’t miss those rags for a minute. God has elected you to a place of favor that invites you to righteous living. This is a great honor and privilege. It cannot be explained because it’s pure grace! Just accept it with thanksgiving and live it to its maximum.

Romans 8:14

“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons [and daughters] of God.”