

---

# The Christian in the Kingdom

## Colossians 1:9-23

*Russ Kennedy*

**Introduction** What do you know about kings and kingdoms, you who grow up in democracies? What do we know about kingdom and the church? What has the gospel got to do with the kingdom of God? What do we care, really? We just want to get through the day without some major problem – and some without some big sin.

Let's get a running start at our text this morning.

<sup>3</sup> We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, <sup>4</sup> since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, <sup>5</sup> because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel, <sup>6</sup> which has come to you, as indeed in the whole world it is bearing fruit and growing—as it also does among you, since the day you heard it and understood the grace of God in truth, <sup>7</sup> just as you learned it from Epaphras our beloved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf <sup>8</sup> and has made known to us your love in the Spirit.

In Paul's joy over their conversion, he highlights three essential marks of a Christian (v.3-8). Here is his beloved trilogy of faith, love and hope.

- Faith in Christ – belief and trust in who Jesus is and what He has done
- Love for the saints – sacrificial heart giving of ourselves to others
- Heavenly hope – future expectation shaping present confidence

All arising from hearing the gospel, the word of truth. Not self-manufactured, but Spirit generated through the hearing and heeding of the Word, the truth of the gospel.

Do these mark you? Can those who know you best and love you most say they know for certain of your faith in Christ, your love for Christians and your hope in heaven? Hit the pause button: hope in heaven? What is that? Faith, sure. Love, yes. Hope in heaven? How can something be a mark of a genuine Christian if we don't know what it is? Notice, that faith and love are actually because of the hope laid up (set aside, held or reserved for, you know, “on call ticket, prepaid but waiting at the door”) in heaven for you.

So hope is a present sense of assurance and quietness because of a expectation in what you are absolutely sure will happen or will receive. There it is: genuine Christians are so quietly confident and expecting that what God promised He will do that they believe in Christ and love His people.

From this then Paul moves to an opening petition which will shape the whole book. And from it, we will see how Christians are in the kingdom and what that means for living.

**God's Aim for Us****(v.9-10)**

God's aim for us is expressed in the prayer by Paul. As those who are new in the Kingdom, this is what is foremost in Paul's concern for them.

<sup>9</sup> And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, <sup>10</sup> so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.

**To Know His Will Wisely****(v.9)**

Our minds will be filled with God's will as revealed in His Word

**What the King's Will is**

What is meant by knowing God's will?

God's will here is not the inside circle of some target, the needle in a haystack, the "what you have peace about." God's will is not hidden, slipped behind His back, under a rock somewhere for you to try to find out exactly what you are to do.

I had a college roommate who was so on one extreme of the search for God's will in each and every detail of life that he became immobilized by it. He refused to get up from bed and get dressed because he wasn't sure it was God's time and he didn't know what God wanted him to wear.

As a Junior Higher, I saw in my dad the discouraging, disheartening affect of a wrong view of "being in God's perfect will". When he had the opportunity to return to Africa to fulfill his "calling" and was prevented from doing so, he lived the rest of his days believing he was out of God's perfect will.

God's will is found in His Word. We can only know for certain what God has willed by looking at prophecy or history. But we do not function based on God's decrees, on what He has determined to do. God has revealed His will for our life in His Word.

So we value filling our minds with God's Word so that we know His principles and precepts inside and out.

**How the King's Will is Lived**

God's will is truly known in spiritual wisdom and understanding. So we cannot merely know what it is but we must see how God's will is to be worked out in your own life. Wisdom is first connecting what we know to Christ and then to your living as pleasing to Him.

This is at the heart of Biblical counseling. It is pleasing God in our lives by spiritual wisdom and understanding of His will that works itself out into everyday life. So, we ought to dress modestly and appropriately, but whether or not and what tie you wear is immaterial. Where you live is a minor decision compared to how you will serve where you live.

Even God's will, the clear precepts and principles of His Word, has to be implemented in life through the means of Christ and His wisdom. We are to obey God wisely. Now not that wisdom allows us to disobey God!

So, God says that we are not lust after others. What is the primary means of that for men? Eyes. Women? Ears and touch. So, should men go around with blinders over their eyes and women with cotton in their ears? Is this a wise implementation of obedience? Has it even gotten the point of “obeying from the heart?”

This is what Paul is asking for – that God would do this in these new believers. Does this mean that they just lay back in their easy chairs and one day they will wake up, fully knowing God’s will in wisdom and understanding? No. The Bible makes it clear that this is an active pursuit by God’s provision. This is an important idea. The rest of the book will be filled with practical commands which should be obeyed. But if God is not pleased to grant this wise and understanding knowledge, then we will become big-headed and ivory towered.

## **To Live Worthy of the Lord (v.10)**

In three short phrases, Paul summarizes what it means to live as a Christian in the Kingdom. We live a lifestyle that is:

### **Worthy of the Lord**

So we say things like this from the Bible – but what does it mean to live worthy of God? It simply means to “measure up.” Now we don’t mean, “to measure up so as to gain favor, access or approval.” No, we mean, simply measure up to whose you are. And it is in reference to, “the Lord”. Measure up to your Lord and King. If you are going to march under the banner of Christian, then make God proud.

Worthy of the Lord is expressed in two “ing” verbs.

### **Pleasing to God**

Worthy of the Lord living is that which is pleasing to God. It is what He approves, yes, but more than that. It is living in which He delights.

Think about eating at the Longhorn restaurant because the people who invited you love that place. The food is good. You enjoy the company. But when you ask them out, you are going to go Carvers. Sure you are pleased with Longhorn’s food – but Carver’s?

It is one thing having to tell, then remind and then check to see if they cleaned their room. They did a good job and you are happy with that. But wow, to walk into their room it is cleaned and you didn’t have to say a word?

When you want to please someone you look at what they like, what they want, what they enjoy, what they prefer or expect and you do it. You can please someone who is giving you orders by simply obeying them as quickly as possible with a willing spirit and happy heart. So, do you live so as to be pleasing to the Lord? Do you seek to know what He desires and enjoys and requires? Do you then seek to please Him in those things? Do you obey God from a willing spirit and a happy heart? Or...

### **Bearing Fruit**

The second aspect of living worthy of the Lord is in bearing fruit. So what does this mean? Here is one of Paul’s phrases that he uses to think of all that

the Word and Spirit produce naturally through a Christian. In other words, this is what true members of God's kingdom exhibit by virtue of their being part of the kingdom. Or, in his analogy, this is what being united to the branch produces because it is united to the tree.

We have apple trees in our back yard. I have yet to go out there to admire the cherry blossoms in the spring or to pick up the peaches that have fallen on the ground during late summer. We always have apples. Esther does not have to stand out in the yard and tell the tree to bear apples. I do not have to give it a manual on producing apples. (Although, from the looks of the fruit this year, it could have used some help!!!) But yet, in order to have fruit, Linus comes over and spends a good half-day trimming the tree.

Walking worthy of the Lord has both the "you do"– you seek to please the Lord and the "God produces" – he causes you to produce what Christian's produce.

## Obstacles for Us

(v.11-12)

<sup>11</sup> May you be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy, <sup>12</sup> giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light

Why ask for these particular requests now? Well, probably because the answer to this request overcomes obstacles many Christians face in living a life worthy of the Lord. So here are obstacles when being what God wants is hard and where we need what God gives.

### In weakness, strength

First, we simply need the God's power for all of our life. We are fooling ourselves if we think it is possible to live well in the Kingdom without God's power. But then, there are times of greater weakness where God meets us with greater strength. Times of sickness. Times of opposition. Times of perplexity. Growing older. Living worthy of the Lord, pleasing Him and bearing fruit will simply require that we be strengthened with God's power. Now this does not mean we will no longer be sick, frail, unopposed, full of physical energy. But it does mean that our inner man will experience the soul lifting and energizing power of God even in the midst of weakness.

### In trials, endurance

God's strength to us is for endurance. God strengthens us so that we will carry through to the end. Why do we need endurance? The way is often hard. The road is long. The obstacles are great. And the trials are many. So God enables you to endure. This is not just a gritty, get through it anyway you can. He strengthens you for endurance in deeply knowing and wisely doing His will.

### In difficulty, patience

God also strengthens for patience. Patience is the ability to wait with expectancy. Patience is not stoicism. It is not gritting teeth until it is over. It is not simply resignation even to the providences of God. All these sound tired and passive. Biblical patience is an active virtue. Christian patience happily waits with faith in God and His promises and with hope in God and His purposes.

All of this is marinated in joy and gratitude. This is the tone of God's strength enabling endurance and patience. God's strength causes gladness and gratitude in the midst of weakness, trials and difficulties. It puts a smile on our enduring face and a song in the patient heart.

Do you see this? Many think of endurance and patience as a dark picture with all sorts of looming clouds, formidable mountains and a struggler just trying to keep it all from collapsing on him. Christian endurance and patience illuminates the person and the pain in the glow of joy and thankfulness. I am convinced that the desperately sour and ungrateful of heart will have no strength to bear up under their troubles. The Christian however smiles with wry but genuine joy and gives thanks for the works and wonders of their God.

## What God has Done for Us

(v.13-14)

<sup>13</sup> He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, <sup>14</sup> in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Does this seem like an abrupt shift to you? The petitions in that prayer, God's aim for us and His provisions to us, are grounded in these two important facts. You need to know and to believe this. Now I want to hover over these together. I believe these two statements are at the very core of how Paul thinks of what we call Christianity.

### In Christ's Kingdom (v.13)

A great transfer has taken place. We are no longer in the same domain, under the same rule or authority. Believers used to live in the domain of darkness. But now, we have been transferred into the kingdom of His beloved Son.

#### **We have been delivered from the domain of darkness.**

Paul speaks of this in many ways using other analogies. You have been delivered from the old world, the old creation, the old man you used to be, the flesh, the realm of Satan and here, the domain, the rule of darkness. So God has done a great thing in delivering you from what had so long and so often ruled you. Why then do we live as though this were not true? Why do we live as though the authorities of that realm still have dominion over us?

#### **We have been transferred into Christ's kingdom.**

Make no mistake. It is truly that we are in Christ's kingdom *now*. All the parsing of adjectives and nouns will simply not allow you to get around this text now (which is why I am talking about this text in our series on eschatology). For me, this settles the fact that in Christ we are in His kingdom. Period. What the Old Testament promised, portrayed and prophesied is now unfolding in the kingdom into which we have been placed. So, yes, those who are in Christ, those who are Christians, those who are members of the body of Christ, have been placed into His kingdom. This is why I have interspersed what I have said earlier in this message with "kingdom" language.

#### **This is the kingdom of God's beloved son.**

This is why it is *Christ's* kingdom. If it is Christ's kingdom, then He is on the throne and ruling and reigning over His kingdom. But notice how Paul puts this: it is God's beloved Son. First, this evokes the language of God's ap-

proval of Jesus at His baptism and at the transfiguration. There is an intentional connection being made. We will work on developing this in future messages.

Paul is also drawing this from 2 Samuel 7:12-16, which says:

Moreover, the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. <sup>12</sup> When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. <sup>13</sup> He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. <sup>14</sup> I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son. When he commits iniquity, I will discipline him with the rod of men, with the stripes of the sons of men, <sup>15</sup> but my steadfast love will not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you. <sup>16</sup> And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever.' ”

The fulfillment of this prophetic-promise to David was partially fulfilled in Solomon, his direct physical son. But the final fulfillment is in Christ, David's greater son whose kingdom, throne and house are established forever. Here God speaks of that final king as His Son, One who will forever be the object of His steadfast love. We are now participating in the unfolding fulfillment of this promise as we are placed into the kingdom of God's beloved Son.

This language is both a great comfort and a serious warning. It is a great comfort that we are in the kingdom of a Son who is much loved by His Father, the great High King. What a joy it is to know that our king is loved by His Father and so how much ought we to love Him. But also, it is a serious warning because you had better pay attention to and not trifle with such a beloved King. He has not only His own power, but the loving backing of His Father.

Now, if you have any questions about making such a large statement from this one phrase, consider the following compiled from a search on the word “kingdom” in the English Bible.<sup>1</sup>

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| Matt 3:2   | (John the Baptist preaching, “Repent, for the <b>kingdom</b> of heaven is at hand.”)   |
| Matt 4:17  | From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, “Repent, for the <b>kingdom</b> of heaven is at hand.”   |
| Matt 4:23  | And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the <b>kingdom</b> and healing every disease and every affliction among the people. |
| Matt 6:10  | Your <b>kingdom</b> come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.  |
| Matt 6:33  | But seek first the <b>kingdom</b> of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.   |
| Matt 24:14 | And this gospel of the <b>kingdom</b> will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.                                     |

- Luke 1:33 and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his **kingdom** there will be no end.”
- Luke 4:43 but he said to them, “I must preach the good news of the **kingdom** of God to the other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose.”
- Luke 12:32 “Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the **kingdom**.
- John 3:3 Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the **kingdom** of God.”
- John 3:5 Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the **kingdom** of God.
- John 18:36 Jesus answered, “My **kingdom** is not of this world. If my **kingdom** were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my **kingdom** is not from the world.”
- Acts 1:3 He presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the **kingdom** of God.
- Acts 8:12 But when they believed Philip as he preached good news about the **kingdom** of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.
- Acts 14:22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the **kingdom** of God.
- Acts 19:8 And he entered the synagogue and for three months spoke boldly, reasoning and persuading them about the **kingdom** of God.
- Acts 20:25 And now, behold, I know that none of you among whom I have gone about proclaiming the **kingdom** will see my face again.
- Acts 28:23 When they had appointed a day for him, they came to him at his lodging in greater numbers. From morning till evening he expounded to them, testifying to the **kingdom** of God and trying to convince them about Jesus both from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets.
- Acts 28:31 proclaiming the **kingdom** of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance.
- Rom 14:17 For the **kingdom** of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.
- 1 Cor 4:20 For the **kingdom** of God does not consist in talk but in power.
- 1 Cor 15:24 Then comes the end, when he delivers the **kingdom** to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power.
- 1 Cor 15:50 I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the **kingdom** of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

- Gal 5:21 ... I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the **kingdom** of God.
- Eph 5:5 For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the **kingdom** of Christ and God.
- Col 4:11 ... These are the only men of the circumcision among my fellow workers for the **kingdom** of God, and they have been a comfort to me.
- 1 Thess 2:12 we exhorted each one of you and encouraged you and charged you to walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into his own **kingdom** and glory.
- 2 Thess 1:5 This is evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be considered worthy of the **kingdom** of God, for which you are also suffering—
- 2 Tim 4:1 I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his **kingdom**:
- 2 Tim 4:18 The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed and bring me safely into his heavenly **kingdom**. To him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.
- Heb 1:8 But of the Son he says, “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your **kingdom**.”
- Heb 12:28 Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a **kingdom** that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe,
- 2 Pet 1:11 For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal **kingdom** of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
- Rev 1:6 (He has) made us a **kingdom**, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.
- Rev 1:9 I, John, your brother and partner in the tribulation and the **kingdom** and the patient endurance that are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos on account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.
- Rev 5:10 and you have made them a **kingdom** and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.”
- Rev 11:15 Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The **kingdom** of the world has become the **kingdom** of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever.”
- Rev 12:10 And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, “Now the salvation and the power and the **kingdom** of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God.

We live the way we do because we no longer under the rule of darkness but are in the kingdom of the Father beloved Son.



## Given Christ's Forgiveness

(v.14)

In Christ, we have a release from our bondage and our guilt. This is what redemption and forgiveness mean.

### **We have been redeemed.**

This means that a price has been paid. We have been ransomed or bought. The most common use of this word is to purchase back a slave. We have bought out of the slave market of sin and thus set free.

### **We have been forgiven.**

There are no longer charges of sin against us with the result that we no longer carry the burden of its guilt. You don't do you? You have gladly accepted God's forgiveness in Christ so that you live free from guilt? And when your conscience is pricked over your present sins, you do confess them so as to be forgiven?

Do you see then the parallels? The domain of darkness held us in its thralldom, its slavery. But we have been bought and are now in Christ's kingdom. In that kingdom, all charges of rebellion and insurrection have been forgiven. We are treated now as not guilty.

So, we are to live then as those who are in Christ's kingdom, owned and forgiven by the King. Because this is so, we are to live worthy of Him, pleasing to Him and bearing His fruit in our lives. Furthermore, the King is enabling in us all that is needed to joyfully and thankfully endure with patience. This is not an imperative in the direct sense. But it sure is important given what comes next. Look at who our King is!

## Who Christ is

(v.15-20)

This is who Christ is. In one of the magnificent hymns in the Apostles' writing, he establishes Christ's centrality and preeminence

### **The First in Creation**

(v.15-17)

<sup>15</sup> He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. <sup>16</sup> For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. <sup>17</sup> And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

Three important truths are being asserted here as the basis for Christ's centrality.

### **The Prototype**

Christ is the visible expression of the invisible God. It seems from the Bible that we will not and cannot see the essence of God. But, when we see Christ we have seen God. His being the image of God is an allusion to Adam's own being an image bearer in Genesis 1:26-27. He is the (firstborn) or prototype of all creation. The word here basically means, "template". All that exists outside of God reflects Christ as its original and its first.

### **The Creator**

The reason He is the firstborn is that He is the creator of all things. God brings all things into existence through Him. This connection is made in Psalm 88 and pointed to here. Sometimes we fail to recognize all the ways in

which Jesus is the mediator. He mediates our redemption. He mediates our access to God. Further, He mediates the essence of God. He mediates the creative work of God.

### **The Sustainer**

All things came into existence by the creative power of Christ and everything is upheld by His sustaining power. The glue that holds everything together is not something inside creation – it is the very sustaining activity of Christ.

We are to live worthy of Him because Jesus has total preeminence over and in all things.

### **The Head of the Church (v.18)**

<sup>18</sup> And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.

Christ is preeminent as the authority over the church, the head of the body. He is the source and origin of the church, its beginning through the resurrection. In the same way that He is the prototype, the firstborn, of creation, He is also the prototype, the firstborn from the dead. The church comes into existence, first by His own resurrection from the dead and then by the church being brought from death to life by our regeneration, our receiving His resurrection life.

We are to live worthy of our Lord Jesus Christ because He is our head and the source of our life.

### **The Reconciler of All (v.19-20)**

<sup>19</sup> For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, <sup>20</sup> and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

Drawing from Psalm 67, Paul connects the indwelling of the Messiah in the incarnation with God's pleasure. It pleased God to bring about the incarnation, the indwelling of the fullness of God in a real man. This Jesus is the true Temple. But this has a purpose. It is to make Christ preeminent as the reconciler between God and man. Reconciliation takes place when God became man in Christ and then through Him made peace through His blood, that is, through His death on the cross. Christ's sacrifice brought peace. So, all things created, sustained and saved by Christ can be reconciled to God. Now, by this, the error of universal reconciliation is not being taught. Rather, all that is going to be reconciled, is reconciled through Christ alone. There is no other means of peace with God or return to God.

We are to live worthy of our Lord Jesus Christ because He is our reconciler and peace with God.

## What it is All About

(v.21-23)

The final two verses tell us what this is all about. It is a summary looking backward and forward.

<sup>21</sup> And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, <sup>22</sup> he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, <sup>23</sup> if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.

### Its Glorious Purpose

We who were separated from God have now been brought back to Him so that we can be presented before Him totally pleasing to Him. We may be assured that our living worthy of the Lord will come to a glorious day. We will be presented before God perfect as He intends.

### Its Sobering Requirement

But, there is a sobering requirement. What Paul had commended them for they must continue in. Once again, losing our salvation is not intended here. But hearing commands to persevere is how our salvation is maintained. We will arrive at the day of presentation if we maintain faith and hope.

### Its Global Proclamation

Finally, they had been saved by hearing the gospel proclaimed to them. In a stunning statement, Paul asserts the global proclamation of the gospel. What has happened to them in coming to believe the gospel, love the saints and set their hope on heaven has been and now is spreading throughout the world.

## Reflect and Respond

Think together with me

The gospel comes to them so that their lives are transformed. From beginning to end, the gospel of Christ is believed in an obeying way. The gospel for sinners and for saints is woven all through this text. Do you believe the gospel? All of you, has the truth of the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ brought new life, power from God, love for others, hope in heaven and a heart filling glory of the preeminence of Christ? Or...

The opening and closing of this stresses “the powerful and almost personal character of the gospel: it has made its triumphal progress, coming to the Colossians and taking up a sure place in their lives.”<sup>2</sup> Are you participating in the triumphal progress? We are a Commisssional Church – a church committed to global evangelism and edification. We aim to see the gospel proclaimed in our neighborhoods and the nations so that disciples will be made. What is your part in that? How will you serve? What Spirit enabled gifts do you have to serve the Lord in His kingdom?

What do our prayers for others sound like? Are they so Biblically rich? Are they so Christ centered? Do they sense what God values and pray accordingly?

Do you live worthy of the Lord? This is both a simple and profound question. It is not couched in this text as a command. It is what God is providing for. Are you actively pursuing God's purpose of presenting you holy, blameless and without reproach? Yes, this is what He is doing and what He will certainly accomplish.

We talk a lot about wanting to know Jesus. We want to love Him more. The way to do that is to learn these great truths of who He is and what He has done. The sentences of Paul's hymn are incredibly rich and deep. They bear hours of meditation. They will fill our hearts with the knowledge of Christ. From that knowledge will grow ever abounding love for Him. And this produces godliness in us.

Finally, welcome to the Kingdom of Christ, the beloved Son of God. Submit under His rule. Seek to know His greatness. Serve with joy in the work of the kingdom.

-----

---

## Notes

---

<sup>1</sup> Represents every use of the word in the original not referring to a physical, national kingdom

- Matt 3:2        "Repent, for the **kingdom** of heaven is at hand."
- Matt 4:17      From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the **kingdom** of heaven is at hand."
- Matt 4:23      And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the **kingdom** and healing every disease and every affliction among the people.
- Matt 5:3        "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the **kingdom** of heaven.
- Matt 5:10      "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the **kingdom** of heaven.
- Matt 5:19      Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the **kingdom** of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the **kingdom** of heaven.
- Matt 5:20      For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the **kingdom** of heaven.
- Matt 6:10      Your **kingdom** come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
- Matt 6:33      But seek first the **kingdom** of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.