



THE SCROLLS

Helping one another mature so we can impact our world for Christ

Learning How to Walk

For the week of July 11th, 2005

Beliefs

- Trinity
- Salvation by Grace
- Authority of Bible
- Personal God
- Identity in Christ
- Church
- Humanity
- Compassion
- Eternity
- Stewardship

Practices

- Worship
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- Bible Study
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- Biblical Community
- Spiritual Gifts
- Giving My Time
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- Giving My Faith
- Giving My Life

Virtues

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- Kindness/Goodness
- ? Faithfulness
- Gentleness
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- Hope
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Learning to Walk

We were made to grow, to mature, and to develop. Will Rogers once said, *“Even if you are on the right track, you will get run over if you just sit there.”*

When you were a child you began with simple movements and worked your way up to crawling. Each day you came a step closer to learning to walk on your own. Your parents watched you carefully, amazed perhaps at your progress and tenacity to walk as they walked. Over the years you have perfected your ability to walk. Now you take it for granted. It comes automatically.

The metaphor is deeply similar to walking spiritually. In our early days as a believer, we walk with much effort, trying to figure out this new life we have in Christ. We watch other Christians to discover how it is done. We fall often, but by God’s grace get back up and walk again. With time, if we keep growing, we learn much about walking with Christ and it becomes progressively second nature. It is not that we ever master the Christian life, but the activities of the spiritual life (i.e. the ways of Christ) become increasingly integral to our lives. This week, we learn about spiritual walking - how to, as Paul said, *“keep in step with the Spirit.”* Walk on....

Monday – Praying with Rock-solid Confidence

“Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.” Galatians 5:25

Please read Colossians 1:1-12 (focusing on 9-12).

1. What strikes you about Paul’s prayer in 9-12?
2. In verse 9, Paul says, *“For this reason.”* What was Paul’s reason for praying as he did (see vs. 3-8)?

Text Insight – *“The link with the opening thanksgiving (for this reason) should not be overlooked. It is because of what God has already done that Paul can pray with confidence for what God will do.”* Tom Wright

3. As you look at verse 9, describe Paul’s manner of praying.
4. Why do you think, Paul was able to pray so tirelessly and faithfully for the young church community at Colosse?

Tuesday – Hand and Glove

“God is not aloof. He says continually through the centuries, “I’ll help you, I really will. When you are ready to throw up your hands - throw them up to me.”

Jim Cymbala – *Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire*

Please read Colossians 1:3-12.

Text Insight – The letter to the Colossians seems to indicate that Paul had actually never visited the house church at Colosse. All he knew came from the reliable report of Epaphras (verses 7-8).

1. What had Paul heard about the Colossian believers that led him to conclude that God was at work in their lives?
2. Faith and love are constant companions in the New Testament. Why do they go hand in hand?
3. Please read 1 John 4:7-21. Write down two or more observations about the relationship between faith and love.

Ø**Digging Deeper** – What roles have faith and love played in your own life? How have these two aspects of our relationship with Christ developed and impacted your life?

Wednesday – Paul’s Strange Prayer

“You know the value of prayer: it is precious beyond all price. Never, never neglect it.” Thomas Buxton

Please read Colossians 1:9-12.

1. Paul had a habit of telling people what he was praying for them about. Why do you think he did this?
2. What does Paul ask God for in verses 9-12? How would you write his prayer in your own words?
3. When was the last time you heard someone ask God for what Paul was asking?

Ø**Digging Deeper** – Often we pray for issues of physical health or major decisions. How is Paul’s prayer different than what we normally think of when we think about prayer? Consider praying Paul’s prayer on behalf of other believers for whom you have been praying.

Thursday – Another Strange Prayer

“What were we made for? To know God. What aim should we set ourselves in life? To know God. What is the eternal life Jesus gives? Knowledge of God. What is the best thing in life, bringing more joy, delight, and contentment, than anything else? Knowledge of God.” J.I. Packer - Knowing God

Please read Ephesians 1:15-19a.

1. How is Paul's prayer in Ephesians 1 similar to his prayer in Colossians 1?

Text Insight - When Paul speaks of knowledge in these prayers he is talking about an intimate knowledge or understanding. This isn't a head-knowledge but a heart-knowledge similar to the loving knowledge that a husband has for his wife.

2. How does the “Text Insight” above help to understand what Paul was asking for?
3. What specific things did Paul ask God to help the Ephesians believers to know or understand?

Ø**Digging Deeper** – Take some time to pray for others in the spirit of Paul's prayers in Colossians 1 and Ephesians 1.

Friday – Knowing His Will

“Every year we have more decisions to make and less time to make them. The small decisions don't cost us much but are objectionable by virtue of sheer numbers.... Along with these trivial decisions have come a myriad of relatively new choices that are not at all easy: whether or not to have children and how many; whether both spouses should work outside the home; whether to put Grandma into the nursing home. Trivial or tough, having too many decisions to make in too short a time is vintage overload.”

Richard Swenson – Margin

Please read Colossians 1:9-12.

1. In the above quote, Dr. Swenson addresses one of the great challenges of our time – decision overload. As life sweeps towards complexity how does Paul's prayer give us hope?
2. If we could really possess the “knowledge of his will” as Paul prays, how could that help restore balance and purpose to our lives?
3. What are the results of knowing his will (according to Paul)?

Closing Prayer: *Father, sometimes life seems so overwhelming. There is too much to do and so little time. Even so, we are reminded that you have given us all the time we need to carry out your will. Fill us, Lord, with a deep understanding and knowledge of your will in the ordinary everyday matters of life. And then give us the strength to carry it out. This we pray in the name of the one who lived that kind of life well; Jesus. Amen.*

Saturday – Spirit Filled Living

Please read Colossians 1:9-12 and Ephesians 5:15-21.

Text Insight – The passage we have studied this week is one of several passages from Paul's letters that describes life in the Spirit. This Spirit empowered life produces fruit of the kind that Paul describes in these two passages. In Ephesians 5, the word “filled” means controlled or empowered by.

1. As you look at these two passages, describe the Spirit-filled (or empowered) life.
2. Why is this kind of life impossible to live apart from God's help (through his Spirit)?
3. How does a person go about becoming full of the Holy Spirit?
4. As you look back upon this week, what is the single most important thing you have learned?

Book Recommendation: Margin: Restoring Life's Emotional, Physical, Financial, and time Reserves to Overloaded Lives by Dr. Richard Swenson



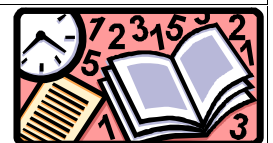
Homegroup Discussion

This section is designed for Home Groups and Small Groups who would like to discuss the Scrolls together. Begin by reading Colossians 1:9-12.

1. What strikes you about Paul's prayer in 9-12?
2. Paul had a habit of telling people what he was praying for them about. Why do you think he did this?
3. What does Paul ask God for in verses 9-12? How would you pray this prayer in your own words?
4. Read the quote by Richard Swenson found under Friday's section. In Dr. Swenson's quote he addresses one of the great challenges of our time – decision overload. If we could really possess the “knowledge of his will” as Paul prays, how could that help restore balance and purpose to our lives?
5. What are the results of knowing his will (according to Paul)?
6. Close your group time by praying Paul's prayer (in your own words) for one another.

Family Time with Kids

Families can use these kid-friendly questions to help your children learn what you studied this week. Begin by reading Colossians 1:9-12.



1. In verse 9, what is Paul asking God to fill the Christians with?
2. Why does Paul ask God to fill them with knowledge, understanding and wisdom? What does it mean to do God's will?
3. In verse 11, Paul asks God to strengthen the Christians so that they will have what two things? Give an example of when you were patient. What is endurance and why would you need it as a Christian?
4. At the end of verse 11, what kind of thanks does Paul give? Have you ever felt thankful to God for something?

Ø**Digging Deeper** – Take the time now to pray for a Christian friend the way Paul prayed for the Christians in Colosse. What would you change or keep the same when you pray for your friend?

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