



*“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, 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; being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy; giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.” (Colossians 1:9-12)*

Reading these verses, I see an embedded checklist, revealing Paul’s clear purpose statement for his request. These five visible manifestations are the cart. The horse is the work of God’s Spirit to produce in us the gift of spiritual wisdom and understanding. To change the metaphor, they are byproducts that come as a result of the powerful collision of our everyday life with the creative work of the Spirit.

I invite you to pause with me in contemplation of Paul’s checklist. Rather than describing each point, I will simply list the quality (or the outcome) and then offer a list of questions as a probe. May each point be a signpost for us on the trail of devotion. Remember, this is *not* Operation Bootstrap, but a call to mindful availability to the work of God wherever he puts his finger when our feet hit the pavement with the people we love.

### **1. "Walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him" (1:10)**

- Does my confessional theology (what I SAY I believe) align with my practical theology (how I actually live)?
- Do my attitudes and responses line up with the mercy and grace Jesus demonstrated in his time on planet Earth?
- Would anyone who shares my home address think of the words "compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, or patience when they think of me? (See Colossians 3)

### **2. "Bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God" (1:10)**

- What solid and practical evidence of a righteous life do I manifest?
- Do I hunger and thirst for knowledge of God?
- What do my calendar and my bank statement reveal as my top priorities in life?

### 3. "Being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might" (1:11)

- Do I actively submit my will to God's--even in the "little" choices I make every day?
- What is my attitude toward the effects of the aging process on my outer, physical person?
- When someone comments on my ministry, is it truthful to reply, "It's God's work through me that you're seeing"?

### 4. "For all endurance and patience with joy" (1:11) • When a situation calls for

gritty patience and endurance, where do I turn for help?

- Is it my tendency to lean into tough times or do I prefer to numb out, escape, and distract myself with trivialities?
- Where am I finding joy these days?

### 5. "Giving thanks to the Father" (1:12) • When I experience an answer to prayer, do I

remember to thank God?

- Do I find that gratitude overrides my natural movement to jealousy, covetousness, resentment, or discontentment?
- When is the last time I gave a verbal, heartfelt thanks to one of the people who does life with me on a regular basis?

In this following life, we are like blue-collar workers, laboring in God's shop using the raw materials he provides. May we build soundly and beautifully, by faith.

Holding You in the Light,



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