

Great Expectations

Colossians 1:9-11

9 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, 10 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. 11 May you be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy...

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Why is it so hard to keep praying, and so easy to skip prayer time or cut it short?

- We don't expect much to happen. We don't expect to make contact with God, or hear His voice, or live a transformed life, or be made strong by his might.
- If we expect and experience those things, we will pray more and more and more.

Great Expectations

1. Fully in tune with God's heart

...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.

2. Fully empowered by God's might

May you be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy...

Setting expectations

- 1. False religions** arouse expectations and offer fulfillment outside of Christ.
- 2. Cautious Christians** lower expectations. They focus on forgiveness of sin, correct doctrine, decent behavior, involvement in church activities, and heaven after death.
- 3. The living God** wants us to be in tune with His heart and empowered by His might.
Keep expectations high, and seek fullness only in Christ, not elsewhere.

Setting expectations

If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him... If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you... No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you.” (John 14:23,15:7,15)

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May you be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy...

that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will

- 1. Cosmic will** for humanity and the universe: to show Jesus supreme over all
- 2. Loving will** to me: to forgive, adopt, and transform into Jesus' likeness. The Holy Spirit seals and witnesses to my spirit.
- 3. Guiding will** for my path each day: applying Scripture, speaking within, making sense of events

that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will

“The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.

When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.” (John 10:3-4)

“The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want ... He guides me in paths of righteousness for his names sake.” (Psalm 23)

in all spiritual wisdom and understanding

...that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit [Spirit] of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened (Ephesians 1:17-18)

You have been anointed by the Holy One, and you all have knowledge. (1 John 2:20)

in all spiritual wisdom and understanding

And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. (Isaiah 11:2)

No one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God... We have the mind of Christ (1 Cor 2:11,16)

so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord

- **We are not trying to make ourselves worthy of God's acceptance and love.**

Rather, we are in tune with our God's heart, and we want our actions to show that **Jesus the Lord is worthy** to be imitated, obeyed, and adored. Our walk shows Jesus' worth.

- **Don't settle for a walk where you are defeated and God is displeased.**

fully pleasing to him

- “This is my beloved son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.” (Matt 17:5)
- God is pleased with Jesus and with those who are in Christ and abide in Christ.
- Jesus is delighted when your actions display the inner reality of “Christ in you.”

bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God

- If there is no fruit, there is no life-giving connection, no saving knowledge of Jesus.
- Being in tune with God's heart bears the Spirit's fruit of godly attitudes and actions.
- As fruitful attitudes and actions flourish, our hearts become more receptive to God's heart, and we increase still more in personal knowledge of God.

May you be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might

That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms (Eph 1:19-20)

Anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these... You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it. (John 14:12-14)

for all endurance and patience with joy

- **endurance** through difficult times
- **patience** with difficult people
- **with joy**, not just muddling along, but enjoying God's companionship and rejoicing to deal with difficult times and difficult people through God's power

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