**Lessons from a Lockdown**

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**Day 18**

**Colossians 1:9-14**

For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light. For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

***Questions for Personal Reflection:***

1. What are the things I have not stopped praying for? What do I ask God for other people?
2. How do I gain knowledge of God’s will? Practically, what do I need to do?
3. What does it mean to live a life worthy of the Lord? Am I living that life?
4. Am I pleasing God in every way?
5. Of the four things Paul listed (bearing fruit, growing in knowledge, being strengthened, giving thanks) in which area to I need to grow in the most? Why?

***Insight:***

Paul never stopped praying for them. Sometimes we can be excited to start praying for things or for other people but lose our zeal after several days. Like the persistent widow (Lk 18:1-8), Jesus wants us to always pray and not give up.

Paul *continually* asked God to fill them with the knowledge of His will. This knowledge is not something we can study on our own. We can read all the books in the world and study in the best universities and still not learn it because of knowledge of God’s will comes from the wisdom and understanding that the Holy Spirit gives. This means that knowing God’s will is not about intelligence. Instead, it is about whether or not we have wisdom and understanding from the Spirit. God’s will is spiritually discerned.

Knowing God’s will is important because this enables us to live a life worthy of the Lord. We need to live the life God wants us to live. But to do that we need to know God’s will for our lives. Do we know what God’s will is for us? Do we know how God wants us to spend the remaining years of our life? Do we know the goals God wants us to have? Or perhaps we don’t know because we have been too busy living our lives the way we want it? Have we even considered God’s will in making our plans or do we simply assume that what we want is what God wants for us as well? Have we ever tried to deliberately and diligently seek God’s will in our lives? God’s will goes beyond us becoming Christians. God’s will should dictate how we live our daily lives, who we build relationships with, how we spend our time and resources, where we should live, what kind of work we should have, who we should marry, how many kids we should have, how we should serve in the church and all other important aspects of our lives. Do we seek God’s will in all these areas?

How do we find out the will of God? First, to know God’s will we need to know God. To know God requires that we know the Word of God. When we read the Bible, we need to go beyond seeking information and rules. We need to seek God’s heart. We need to know how he feels about things, what pleases him and what does not. Second, to know God we need to be obey God. The Bible says that if we hold to Jesus’ teaching, then we will know the truth. There is something about obedience to God that opens the door to a deeper understanding of God. Perhaps it is the Holy Spirit opening our minds to deeper truths because of our obedience. So the more we follow the will of God in one area of our lives, the more we gain understanding of God’s will in other areas of our lives. The more we commit ourselves to obeying God’s will the more he reveals to us his will.

Paul lists four characteristics of living a life worthy of the Lord and to pleasing God. The first characteristic is *bearing fruit in every good work*. Our good works are fruits. The good that we do resulting from our relationship with God are *fruits*. The more fruits we have the better. We should therefore strive to bear fruit every day. The second characteristic is *growing in the knowledge of God.* The key word is *growing*. It is not about how much you know already, but whether your knowledge is still increasing. Are we knowing God more everyday? Do we know more about God now in this stage of the lockdown than when we started? The third characteristic is *being strengthened.* Like knowledge it is not about how strong you are now but whether you are getting stronger and whether your strength comes from God.Are we much stronger now spiritually than when we started this lockdown? Do we have greater endurance and patience now? The fourth characteristic is *giving joyful thanks to the Father.* As Christians God wants us to be joyful and thankful even during this pandemic. Has the threat of sickness, hunger, and financial difficulty taken away our joy? How thankful are we now compared to when the lockdown started?

Let us seek the will of God so that we can live a life worthy of the Lord during this lockdown.