

## Local Matters

Sunday 4/12/26

Bearing Fruit in Every Good Work: Colossians 1:9-14 and 4:2-6

40:00

Teaching (15:00)

Welcome and Local Matters Intro

a consolidated effort of learning opportunities, community-care events, and multi-church collaborations all intended to grow our hearts into action for the very places we live, work, and play.

Colossians 1:9-14 (NIV)

*... 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, 10 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, 11 being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, 12 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. 13 For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.*

Colossians:

- Pauls' 3 years in Ephesus > Epaphras saved and goes home to Colossae
- letter to those Paul had not met personally
- The Colossian heresy (proto or early gnosticism) > Epaphras visit and Paul's writing during first imprisonment in Rome (approx. AD 60)
- summary: encouragement (Christ is all in all, you're doing good!), warning (there are some who will try and trip you up, esp with false ideas) and a vision...

"... that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way:..."

1. bearing fruit in every good work
2. growing in the knowledge of God

3. being strengthened with all power according to His glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience
4. giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of His holy people in the kingdom of light

4 sermons. Today we have time for one mini-sermon.

### Bearing fruit in every good work.

First, let's level-set the vision.

**“Worthy of the Lord?” Measure up? To Jesus? - more like *do right by all He’s done for us.***

Paul repeatedly calls the Colossians to remember the work of Christ and live thankful lives. Doing right by all He’s done for us requires a posture of rehearsing the facts of our salvation and landing in them in wonder.

- Colossians 1:21-22 (NIV) “Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. 22 But now he has reconciled you by Christ’s physical body through death to present you holy in his sight... ”
- Colossians 1:13-14 (NIV) “... he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.”
- Colossians 2:13-15 (NIV) God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, 14 having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. 15 And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.
- Colossians 2:6-7 (NIV) “... just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, 7 rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.”

Good work? - let’s remind ourselves of how the Bible talks about what is good.

- Westerners tend to think of moral or legal transgression - ie, good or bad
- In the Bible “good” = shalom = human flourishing, fully integrated living, order and chaos

- Was always the plan, is being reset in Christ, empowered by the Spirit, and will be complete in eternity
- Live increasingly now like the kind of person you will be fully in the future - new heaven and new earth
- “Are we good?” - slang that actually is quite telling
- Your work can be good work, your family can be good work, your presence in your neighborhood can be good work, your care for those not experiencing good in our community can be good work, your care for the world God built for us to inhabit can be good work.

“... live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work...”

Q: Does this sound like “work harder”, “do more”, “be better”?

Maybe. But Paul helps us in the latter part of this letter.

After addressing the church largely, issues between believers and in Christian households we land at some seemingly summary instructions. Last thoughts. Don't forget this. In light of everything else I've already said...

**Colossians 4:2-6** (NIV) Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. 3 And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. 4 Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. 5 Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. 6 Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

2 Observations:

1. It's inside and out
2. It's Common Good and Uncommon News
  - a. season of my life wary of "good works" theology
  - b. neither evangelical gnosticism nor liberal theology are the Biblical call

**Draw near to God by regular devotion of prayer.**

**Pray for the mission and Pauls' team specifically.**

**In your interactions with non-believers (assumed as regular), be wise, purposeful, gracious.**

**You'll get opportunities to "answer"**

The inner and outer life of a believer are connected, symbiotic.

What we do flows from who we are.

Shalom is an inside-out (and back again) proposition.

Nothing less than a transformative revolution of identity, being, and trajectory.

The key is seeing it as such.

“Stewart...” - it wasn't clicking.

There comes a point when more work only leads to frustration, until there is an awareness of the core, base. For 9th grade Wayne that could have been more time with film, or on the field - but it was definitely tied to a revelation about my place in the whole. My role among ten other teammates. My identity, you might say, as a defensive back. In Christ, the picture of transformation is from the inside-out.

... the Father... has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light. 13 ...he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

“... live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way...” ? - absolutely

**Zip Codes = Incarnational Coordinates**

**Common Good and Uncommon News**

- 1. Bear fruit in every good work**
- 2. Pray. Be thankful. Act wisely.**
3. Not sequential...

During our Local Matters months it's our practice to hear from community partners that are bearing fruit in good works and acting wisely in Ames and surrounding areas. There are many, a dozen or more, that we regularly engage and partner alongside.

To give some life to what we've heard from Colossians this morning, it's my privilege to bring out two of these partners: Sandy Swanson from Overflow and Marcy Ryken from The Well.

While each will give us some updates, I've asked them specifically today to help us understand a couple of principles that I think can apply to every aspect of practicing Common Good & Uncommon News in Ames and surrounding communities. From any vision God may give you to run with to partnering with established agencies, Sandy will

help us understand the idea of being a force multiplier and Marcy will introduce us to the power of holistic care.

Both would love for you to text in some questions at the number on the screen, so we can broaden the conversation after their presentations.

Guest 1 (7:00) - Sandy Swanson, Overflow “Force Multiplication”

Guest 2 (7:00) - Marcy Ryken, The Well Ames “Holistic Care”

Guided Q&A (11:00)

Local Matters Spring Action Steps (5:00) - LM in Action Slides

1. Spring Housewarming - open and ongoing until 5/3
2. You Matter - Sat 5/25
3. Rest Assured - open and ongoing until 5/3
4. Stash the Trash - Fri 4/24-Sunday 4/26
5. Listening Session 2 - Sunday 4/19
6. Caring Fund
7. Discipleship 301- 4/12-26

Common Good and Uncommon News - how?

1. Pray. Be thankful. Act wisely.
2. Pick one awareness item and one action item