

Christ Is All in All

*...and through Him God was pleased to reconcile to Himself **all things**....*
Colossians 1.20

As the creation declares the **glory** of God, Christ, in Whom and for Whom _____ things have been created, declares the **character** of God; for *through Him God was pleased to reconcile to Himself **all things**, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of His cross (Colossians 1.20).*

Christ being All in all is the _____ for Paul's prayer for the Colossians which opens our text today, a prayer which speaks to our lives also.

This is a many layered prayer revealing _____ character traits that are manifested in the lives of those who seek to follow Jesus by becoming like Him: they will live lives worthy of the Lord, they will be made strong, and they will give thanks.

A life fully pleasing to God is a virtuous life that ultimately learns to _____ even as Jesus loves.

We can't *live lives worthy of the Lord* on our own, however, we _____ the second character trait of life in Christ. So, Paul prayed, *May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from His glorious power....* Colossians 1.11

Now, Paul stops here in his discussion of the three character traits of life in Christ to discuss three _____, or fruit of the Spirit, which are the result of being *made strong with all the strength of His glorious power*. They are *endurance, long-suffering, and joy*. Endurance is the ability to persevere in the face of life's challenges and hardships.

Long-suffering is different than endurance in that it is revealed in the face of provocation. The flesh naturally reacts to provocation with a harsh word or even an act of revenge. But, as we grow in the grace and knowledge of God we become more _____ Jesus.

This brings us to the third virtue that rises from living in the power of the Spirit, _____!

Our text this morning does not use the word "_____", but it is implicit in proclaiming Christ to be "All in all."

Having spoken of the three virtues that are the fruit of the Spirit, Paul comes back to speaking of the three character traits of life in Christ. The first two character traits of life in Christ are *living a life worthy of the Lord* and being strengthened in the power of the Holy Spirit, and the third being _____!

Gratitude is the chief virtue of life. For even when I am unloving I can be grateful that God still loves me and forgives me. The reality of God's love for us in Christ ultimately is the

motivating _____ of life in Christ.

Take _____ this week to meditate on this ancient hymn of the Church that reveals the nature of Christ's kingship, and discover the power of living in the Kingdom of God, becoming like Jesus as you *grow in all spiritual wisdom and understanding* that you may *live lives worthy of the Lord!*