

“My desire and hope is that Spiritual Gold will reach our world with the positive message that God is alive and has the answers for the problems facing us today. In his messages at SpiritualGold.org, my husband, Richard, takes the Scriptures and breaks them down so that we can understand and receive practical advice as we live one day at a time.” —Mary Strauss



## Making a List, Checking it Twice

Adapted from *Put This on Your Prayer List*, Dr. Richard L. Strauss, MS-213 delivered May 25, 1986

When we get together to pray in our prayer groups or small study groups, we often have requests that have to do with physical and material needs. We pray for Aunt Suzie’s upcoming surgery, for safety for kids going to camp, and for support money for missionaries. Privately, we usually pray for our own needs: help me with my bad back; help me get that raise. There is nothing wrong with praying for these things. After all, Jesus invites us to pray about them: “Give us this day, our daily bread.”

But only one out of six requests in that model prayer has to do with physical things; the rest are spiritual. Most of Paul’s prayers also deal with spiritual things. Are we putting the proper emphasis on spiritual things in our prayers?

Let’s look at Colossians 1 starting in verse 9 to see what Paul prayed for. Technically there is only one request in this prayer: to be filled with the knowledge of His will through all wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives. Verse 10 is the result of the prayer. The rest of the prayer in verses 11 and 12 explains what a walk with the Lord looks like.

But let’s not be so technical. In actuality, there are five requests here. These requests could revolutionize your prayer life and our church.

*continued on next page*

## Take Note(s)

Transcripts are available for some sermons—useful for highlighting text as you listen.

- Attributes of God (partial)
- Balaam, Life of
- Big Things in Little Books
- Christian Adventure (partial)
- Christ in Hebrews
- Galatians (partial)
- James (partial)
- John the Baptist (partial)
- Jonah
- Miscellaneous (selected sermons)
- Revelation
- Rewards
- Romans

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## Year-End Giving

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This ministry operates solely on gifts. In fulfillment of our ministry’s mission, our Board of Directors strategically supports pastoral training ministries here and around the world—including Africa and the Middle East.

## Making a List (*continued*)

Add these things to your prayer list.

1. Filled with the knowledge of His will through all wisdom and spiritual understanding (Col 1:9)

God's will is revealed first and foremost in His Word. This knowledge will help to guide us. It's coupled with wisdom and spiritual understanding. Know the Word and know how to use that knowledge in everyday living to find guidance and make decisions.

2. A walk that pleases Him (Col 1:10a)

The New American Standard says "a walk worthy of the Lord." *Worthy* is "equal to." Paul is talking about Christlikeness. God is pleased with His Son. He wants you and me to be just like Jesus. We all want to do things that please ourselves; that's our old sin nature. What power we would experience if we prayed for each other that we live a life pleasing to God.

### Colossians 1:9-12

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.

3. A life of increasing fruitfulness (Col 1:10b)

A better translation of this is "being fruitful and increasing in every good work *by* the knowledge of God." Fruit bearing in the New Testament usually means our character (e.g., fruit of Spirit) but in this case it is referring to our works. Pray that the Holy Spirit would motivate and enable us to minister to one another's needs. The better we get to know God, the more we see that He meets our needs and we should seek to meet the needs of others in the body. Let's be praying that each of us will get to know God better. It will make us love and care for each other more.

4. Strength for patience and longsuffering with joyfulness (Col 1:11)

Patience has to do with circumstances; longsuffering (NIV says *endurance*) has to do with people. It's the sense of keeping on, not as a martyr, but with joyfulness.

5. Have a thankful spirit (Col 1:12)

A life that pleases God is a life of continual thanksgiving, it's easier to ask that God remove a trial than to thank Him for it. Pleasant or unpleasant, we should have a thankful spirit. If we don't know what to thank God for, Paul suggests that we thank God that He has allowed us to share heaven. We have an eternal inheritance.

This is the kind of prayer list that produces spiritually powerful Christians and spiritually dynamic churches. You don't need to eliminate the physical and material requests, but please add these five things to your prayers!

*Dear Spiritual Gold,*

[My husband] and I just finished Pastor Strauss' series on David. We go to the lake two times a week and bring a picnic. I look so forward to it. We are now starting the Pride series. God has brought Pastor Strauss' message at just the right time in our lives. Thank you for obeying the Lord's calling to start Spiritual Gold. We are overwhelmed by the Lord's graciousness to us to be able to have such wise Bible teaching from Pastor Strauss again at this time in our lives.

L.

I accepted Jesus as my savior during a message Dr. Strauss was preaching when I was just a few weeks away from my 35th birthday back in 1986. What a joy to hear his voice and soak in his Godly wisdom again after all these years. Thank you!

M. C.

He made a huge difference in my growth as a Christian and strengthened my faith by his preaching of the Word.

M. B.

Great website and great source of good teaching from a man dedicated to God's word. I listen to his sermons often. A few years ago I was able to find the exact sermon Dr. Strauss preached when I became a believer. September of 1976. I know God was leading me, and Dr. Strauss spoke the words I needed to hear that day.

P. T.

I highly recommended this website. I celebrate 40 years this year of my coming to California. Yep, I bought \$90 worth of tapes of Dr. Richard L. Strauss while on vacation and could not get enough of his teaching of God's Word. I will always be thankful for the truth he shared with me and continues to share on this website.

P. G.

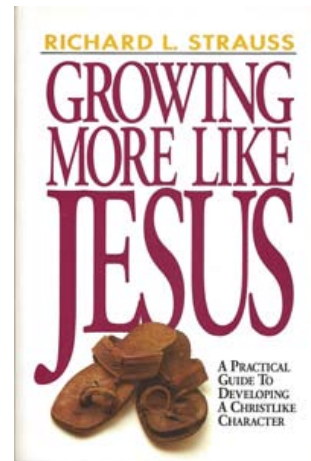


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## Book Spotlight

Christlikeness is what God wants to accomplish in us above all else. He wants to reproduce in us the character of Christ: His love, His compassion, His holiness, His humility, His unselfishness, and His willingness to forgive. *Growing More Like Jesus* takes an intimate look at each of these characteristics and provides practical guidance for developing them in our own lives. (ISBN 978-0872138360, 253 pages)



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## The Plans I Have for You

Each month, Mary sends an email with a brief introduction to a sermon she has selected. The Sermon of the Month is also posted on Facebook. Last October she chose “I Know the Plans,” saying:

This message is one of my favorites. A powerful verse of Scripture is explored and explained: Jeremiah 29:11, the plans I have for you.

At the time Richard was to preach this message, he was getting ready for prostate surgery. But the surgery was canceled. He was diagnosed as having multiple myeloma. Remembering the context of those difficult days adds so much to the power of this meditation over “The plans I have for you.”

That particular message generated many responses, some of which are reprinted here. We share them as a way to encourage you to listen to the Sermon of the Month. As you read these responses, please join us in praise and petition to our Father, the Almighty God.

I was there that Sunday evening when he told the congregation that all these years he taught on how to live a Christian life and now he was going to spend his days teaching on how to die. Not a dry eye throughout the sanctuary. In fact, I was working at Westminster Theological Seminary at the time, and Monday morning one of the Theologians, at the school, talked about how much the message touched him personally.

S.S.

Love Mary’s insight. Love this sermon! Love Doc!

J.B.

Enjoyed listening to this message this morning. A friend and I had just recently been discussing the context of Jeremiah 29:11 (and how that verse is so often used without the context) so it was good to hear Dr. Strauss’ message on it!

B.P.

Thank you for this soooooo much. Just got home from taking daughter to hospital yet again. Having to sell our mobile home. Broke my foot. Have to put our cat down. I love this verse and sat down to check messages and there was the message. “I know the plans. . .” Yes He does. He is the Great I AM, not the I Will Be, or the I Was.

B. J.

### Email Reminders



Need a friendly nudge to listen to the Sermon of the Month? Go to [SpiritualGold.org](http://SpiritualGold.org) to sign up for email reminders and a link to the message. Or type this link into your web browser: <http://bit.ly/2eKQ8WX>