

Praying the Powerful Prayers of Paul

Colossians 1:9-14

A Prayer to be Filled With the
Knowledge of His Will

Overview of Prayer

- Since the day Paul heard of their love in the Spirit in verse 8 he did not cease to pray for the Colossians that they might:
 - be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding
 - walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing
 - be fruitful in every good work
 - increasing in the knowledge of God
 - strengthened with all might according to his glorious power unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness
 - giving thanks unto the father

Colossians 1:9

- This verse is the key to the entire prayer. Everything that Paul prays on behalf of the Colossians steams and flows out of verse 9.
- Filled—this word carries the following meanings:
 - to make full, to fill up, i.e. to fill to the full
 - to render full, i.e. to complete
 - to fill to the top: so that nothing shall be wanting to full measure, fill to the brim
 - to make complete in every particular, to render perfect
- The word translated “filled” in Colossians 1:9 is that same word that is translated “complete” in Colossians 4:12. To stand complete means that nothing else is needed.

Colossians 1:9

- Matthew 1:22
- Matthew 2:15—when a prophecy is fulfilled it is completed, there is nothing left that needs to occur.
- Colossians 2:10—we are complete in Christ, there is nothing we need that hasn't already been given to us freely by Jesus Christ.
- Therefore, it is Paul's prayer on behalf of the Colossians that they might be filled to capacity with a complete knowledge of God's will for them.

Colossians 1:9

- Throughout this series we have already studied a lot of things about knowledge:
 - Ephesians 1:17-18—spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him
 - Ephesians 3:16-21—know the love of Christ
 - Philippians 1:9—your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment.
- Wisdom—we have already seen through this series of studies that when Paul mentions wisdom he is speaking about the wisdom of God in a mystery regarding God's secret purpose in forming the Body of Christ.

Colossians 1:9

- Understanding—once again understanding comes through knowledge. You cannot separate the one from the other.
 - Ephesians 2:4—my knowledge
 - Colossians 2:2—there is no excuse for ignorance in Paul’s writings.
- Paul’s prayer is that through wisdom and spiritual understanding the Colossians would be filled to capacity with the knowledge of what God is doing.
- God’s will for humanity has already been revealed on the pages of Scripture. It is not something that we are charged with going out and discerning by reading the circumstances of our lives rather it’s something the believer has the capacity to be filled with the knowledge of as well as stand perfect and complete in based upon a sound understanding of God’s Word rightly divided.

Popular Teaching on the Will of God

- **Popular Idea 1:** One notion teaches that God has a general and specific will for each believer.
 - General: to be a Christian, serve God, not steal, lie, etc.
 - Specific: who to marry, where to work, what car to buy, which job or career to take, what church to go to, etc.
- **Popular Idea 2:** God has a detailed life plan uniquely designed for every believer revealed through outward circumstance and inward impressions.

Popular Teaching on the Will of God

- Typical 3-Step Formula:

1. Read the Word of God and Pray
2. Read the Circumstances of Your Life, The Road Signs, Opening and Closing of Doors and Windows
3. Listen for God's still small voice, inner voice, or inner feelings, promptings, hunches, and impressions.

Result: According to the prevalent teaching the result of this process will lead you right to center of God's will.

God's Will is in His Word

- Believers need to stop and realize that God's will is not first focused on us but on God and what he is doing.
- If you want to do the will of God find out what God is doing. Do that and you will be doing the will of God.
- How do you find out what God is doing? The word of God rightly divided tells us what God is doing. He is forming the church the Body of Christ.
- Ephesians 1:9—through the revelation of the mystery God has revealed the mystery of his will. There not one single piece of God's will that he has not already make known to mankind.

God's Will is in His Word

- Ephesians 2:13-18
- Ephesians 5:15-17—once again the will of God is to be understood and acted upon and not sought after.
- Ephesians 4:22-32
- I Thessalonians 4:3-5
- I Thessalonians 5:16-23—there are plenty of things to occupy my time and attention without asking God for more revelation.
- Romans 12:1-2—as we have seen over the past couple weeks it based upon knowledge that we exercise judgment that allows us to prove that good, and acceptable and perfect will of God.