

Praying the Powerful Prayers of Paul

Colossians 1:9-14

A Prayer to be Filled With the
Knowledge of His Will

Part 2

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

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.

Circumstances as a Means of Divine Communication

- Circumstances are the context or the stage upon which we live our lives. We are to act upon that stage based on God's written revealed will.
- God has never used circumstances as a means of divine communication.
- Romans 2:17-18
- Deuteronomy 11:16-17
- I Kings 8:32-35
- Leviticus 26, Deuteronomy 28-29
- Deuteronomy 13:1-4

The Example of Gideon

- Judges 6:1-10—why is Israel in this condition? Leviticus 26, Deuteronomy 28 they failed to keep the law.
- Judges 6:11-22—the angel of the Lord already worked the sign that Gideon as a member of the nation of Israel required.
- Judges 6:36-40—Gideon is not operating on the basis of faith in these verses, rather he is functioning in unbelief.
- Believers are constantly fleecing the Lord in this fashion.

Closet Calvinism vs. Pauline Thinking

- The prevalent teaching on God's will not only advocates the reading of circumstances but it also is based heavily in the ideas of Calvinism.
- Calvinism is basically theological determinism. The idea that everything happens for a reason.
 - *Determinism*—is the belief that all events, including human choices are determined or caused by another. For pagans it's the gods for Christian its God.
 - *Indeterminism*—is the belief that all events, including human choices are uncaused.
 - *Self-Determinism*—a person's moral acts are not caused by another, or uncaused, but are caused by oneself. One's actions are freely chosen, without compulsion, in a situation in which they could have done otherwise.

Time and Chance

- I Samuel 6:9
- II Samuel 1:6
- Ecclesiastes 9:11
- Luke 10:31
- There are certain events that God has predetermined but they are all recorded and revealed in Scripture. Including the mystery of his will.

Renewed Mind Thinking

- Paul did not function like a closet Calvinist. Paul made decisions based upon a renewed mind taking into account the objective facts from the word of God.
- I Corinthians 7:39
- I Corinthians 16:12
- II Corinthians 2:12-13
- Philippians 2:25
- I Thessalonians 3:1
- Philemon 15

Concluding Thoughts

- We have a completed book. Inspiration has ceased.
- Signs belong to Israel's program.
- God has never used circumstances as a means to reveal his will.
- Through the cross we have peace with God and a standing in absolute grace.
- Therefore we are free and competent based upon our understanding of the current dispensation of grace and with a renewed mind to make decision for ourselves.
- If you will find out what God is doing and do that you will be doing the will of God in the details of your life.
- God needs his ambassadors in every community and on every job site and place of occupation.