

Sunday, July 19, 2009—Praying the Powerful Prayers of Paul— A Prayer to be Filled with the Knowledge of His Will—Colossians 1:9-14—Part 3

Introduction

- I know that what I have been saying to you the past couple weeks about the will of God is completely different from what is commonly taught about this topic.
- All I am asking is that you give this viewpoint a fair hearing.
- If you have been with us for a long time I hope that you be patient with me as I explain this important topic to our newer families.
- Two weeks ago we began looking at Paul's prayer in Colossians 1:9 that the Colossians would be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all wisdom and Spiritual understanding.
- Because verse 9 is the key to understanding this prayer we paused last Sunday to look some of the problems with some of the traditional teaching about the will of God.

Review of Traditional Thinking

- Popular Idea 1: See PowerPoint
- Popular Idea 2: See PowerPoint
- Typical Three Step Formula: See PowerPoint

Problems with Traditional Thinking

- Undermines the integrity of God by expecting further revelation (extra-Biblical Revelation) when God says that his word is complete.
 - Many Grace Believers will ridicule the Pentecostals for operating in this fashion before turning around and doing it themselves.
 - Ephesians 1:9—God has already made know the mystery of his will. His will is revealed for us on the pages of Scripture.

- Looks to the reading of circumstances as a means of divine communication when that has always been the job of the word of God.
 - An event cannot communicate a message from God apart from an objective standard outside of yourself.
 - Romans 2:17-18—Even Israel the sign people of God know his will not by reading their circumstances but the Law, God’s word to Israel.
- The prevalent teaching on the will of God is heavily steeped in the Deterministic and Fatalistic teachings of Calvinism.
 - Calvinism is basically theological determinism. The idea that everything happens for a reason and is part of predetermined life plan.

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.
- Ephesians 1:11—everything that happens is the outworking of God’s will. The all things in this verse have a context.
- 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 Christians 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.
- As believers do we really want to function with the pagan belief that everything in our lives is determined in advance by a God who then holds us accountable for actions in which we had no choice to do otherwise?

- Tell missionary story about his SUV.
- I Samuel 6:9, II Samuel 1:6, Ecclesiastes 9:11, Luke 10:31
- Story from 6th grade, world trade center
- There are certain events that God has predetermined but they are all recorded and revealed in Scripture. Including the mystery of his will.
- The events that happen in our lives are the result of our own free choices or the intersection of someone else's. Living in a sin cursed world people get sick and die not because God is taking them home but because that is the reality of our existence on earth. There is such a thing as being in the right place at the right time or the wrong place at the wrong time. Everything that happens to you is not the result of a predetermined life plan that has already been decided.
- 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

The Charge of God Not Working in Your Life

- I was teaching this information once and someone asked, “if what you are saying is true, how does the Holy Spirit work in your life?”
- The same Holy Spirit that was active in the inspiration process according to II Peter 1:21 indwells and seals believers unto the day of Redemption.
- I Thessalonians 2:13—the Holy Spirit works in your inner man when we by faith apply God's word to the circumstances of life.
- Ephesians 4:16-20—we have already know for a pervious study in this series that God works today on the inner man of believers who by faith apply his word to the details of their lives.

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.
- We are not under the Law but under 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.
- This puts you in charge of your own life. While time and chance exist according to the Scriptures we make our own lives. We build upon the foundation of Christ in our own way.
 - I Corinthians 3:9-12—every believer will be held accountable for how they built upon the foundation of Christ.
- God needs his ambassadors in every community and on every job site and place of occupation.