

## Colossians 1:9-14 April 13, 2008 - Skip MacMillan

**Colossians is to be read to the Church, like all the rest of Scripture (Col. 4:16).**

God has done a great work in Colosse, brought faith, love, hope and a desire to live out the Gospel. Now Paul prays for this church.

**First, “we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of His will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding” (1:9)**

### **God’s Will**

You will find God’s will in Scripture.

Who He is, His plans, His thoughts, how He designed and built this place, His will for you.

**Deuteronomy 29:29** - “The **secret** things belong to the LORD our God, but the things **revealed** belong to us and to our children forever, that we may follow all the words of this law.”

**1. Secret, decreed (decretive) will of God:** He determines what will be, either as the cause of or what He permits: Psalm 115:3; Daniel 4:17, 25, 32, 35; Romans 9:18-19, 11:33-34; Ephesians 1:5, 9, 11.

This secret will of God is what will happen no matter what; it is absolutely fixed, i.e. Jesus will return, God will raise us from the dead, we will stand before Christ’s judgment seat, we will live forever in either Hell or Heaven.

**2. Revealed (perceptive) will of God:** His commandments, the way to enjoy the blessing of God.

His will for how we should live. It is accessible to all.

This will of God is often disobeyed by us, i.e. love your neighbor.

“It is God’s will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable . . . no one should wrong his brother or take advantage of him” (1 Thess. 4:3-6).

“Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus” (1 Thess. 5:16-18).

Summarized: Love God and love people.

***God’s will is found in Scripture.***

***This is what we know with certainty as the will of God.***

**3. Specific will of God for your specific life**

i.e. what He wants you to do today, career, where to live, what house or car to buy, what to say to that person, how are you to help – you must seek God for these things.

**Yet we do know:**

Prioritize your life around the priorities of God: God, family, work, church, community - mission.

Parents: take seriously the raising of the next generation: pray for your child, laugh with them, disciple them in the LORD, educating and preparing them for life.

## **“through all spiritual wisdom and understanding”**

“**Spiritual**” = **Holy Spirit** teaches, reminds, and guides us in the will of God found in Scriptures.

### **Holy Spirit, John 14-16:**

“...the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will **teach** you all things and will **remind** you of everything I have said to you” (John 14:26).

“He will **guide** you into all truth” (John 16:13).

“He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and **making it known to you**” (John 16:14).

We are in need of spiritual wisdom and knowledge to comprehend the deeper things of God and life. The Holy Spirit provides us with this spiritual wisdom and understanding.

Paul’s prayer for this church was for “**God** to fill you with the knowledge of His will through **all spiritual** wisdom and understanding” (1:9).

You and I need God to fill us with the knowledge of His will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding.

## **The Second Thing Paul Prays For:**

**“And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please Him in every way” (1:10).**

### **1. Questions:** Worthy? Pleasing?

Am I actively trying to live a life worthy of the LORD?

What does this life look like to you? Wouldn’t it be great if you knew?

### **2. Knowledge of God is designed to create Christ-like movement in your life.**

**Equation:** The greater our Biblical understanding of God, the more our life will move toward resemblance of His (revealed) will **and** the more we walk in His ways, the greater our understanding of Him will be.

Always look to the life of Christ fulfilling it for you and setting an example.

## **Here is a life worthy and pleasing to God:**

“...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 joyfully giving thanks to the Father...” (1:11-12).

**Action, Knowledge, Strength, and Attitude: the effect of knowing the will of God and having God in us.**

### **1. Action: “...bearing fruit in every good work”.**

#### **Good Works: James 2:14-24**

- a. Faith in Christ moves you to manifest Him via good works.
- b. You were created for good work, Ephesians 2:10.
- c. Motivated by God’s love, not forced or guilty but moved by God!

**Fruit:** do good works with this in your heart and mind:

- a. Fruit is obeying, “My command is this: love each other as I have loved you” (John 15:12).

- b. Character: Galatians 5:21-22.
- c. Attitude of Christ: Philippians 2:1-11.

## 2. "...growing in the knowledge of God".

Scripture is THE WAY to know God

- a. Get a Bible and read it, think about what it says, let it sink in (NAS or NIV versions).
- b. Find a church that teaches the Bible, not stories, quick fixes, or acts like a carnival.
- c. Get into a small group, ask questions, learn from others.
- d. Read other books about God, downloads, etc.

**Relationship builds desire.** Christianity is about a relationship with God, so the more you grow in the knowledge of God, the more you will want to know, the more you will want to please Him and live a life worthy of being called by His name.

The Scriptures are how we know God, His Will, how He works, what He wants you to be and do.

**NOT knowledge that puffs up:** "Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up" (1 Cor. 8:1). Biblical knowledge speaks to your heart and mind and what it says shows up in your life: humility, power, and love, Deut. 6.

"We need to grow in our knowledge of who God is, of what he has done for us in Jesus Christ, and of how we can express our gratitude in worship and life. We, too, need the warning that true maturity . . . is not to be had by any other road" -NT Wright.

**3. Strengthen:** "Being strengthened with all power according to His glorious might . . . so that you may have great endurance and patience...".

**It is God's glorious might working in you** that provides the strength to live according to His revealed will.

**God in you, Phil. 2:13** - "Continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose."

**Holy Spirit, Acts 1:8** - "you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you".

**The Gospel, Romans 1:16** - "I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes. . .".

**The Resurrection, Ephesians 1:18-20** - "I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know . . . His incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of His mighty strength, which He exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly realms...".

"The power which they long to see manifested in their readers' lives is the power of God Himself – nothing less" -FF Bruce.

God in you, Spirit of God, the Gospel, the power of the Resurrection.

**1. Remember** a time when God's power is all you can point to to explain your ability. Panama 1991 and an Eternal member.

**2. Ask God to empower you so you can live a life worthy of Him and pleasing to Him.** Believe the promises of God and act on them in faith and He will strengthen you within.

**3. God's power enables you to:** endure (persevere), to be patient (fruit of the Spirit, definition of love), power to know the will of God, power to share the gospel to change a person for all

eternity, and power over death and the grave, Rev. 20:6. It is the power to overcome evil: "He who is in me is greater than he who is in the world (1 John 4:4)." Power to be more than conquerors, and it is God's mighty power that enables us to be called the sons and daughters of God.

#### **4. Attitude: "...joyfully giving thanks to the Father".**

**Our joyful thankfulness is found in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.**

**He qualified** you to share in the inheritance of the Saints in the kingdom of light.

**He rescued** us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son He loves.

**In Him we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.**

**Phil. 2:1-11.**

#### **How then should I live?**

Live in such a way as having been qualified, rescued, redeemed, loved, and empowered by God Himself.

You live a life worthy of the Lord, pleasing to Him, through: good works, knowledge of God, being empowered by God, with deep joy of thankfulness.

Sit down, think through: "Who am I living for?", "Who am I trying to please?"

If I were to live for God, what needs to change in my life?