

Colossians 1:9-14, Part 1

We began last Sunday walking our way verse by verse through the book of Colossians. This morning we come to verses 9-14. It will likely take us 2 Sundays to unpack everything in our text. I don't want to race our way through. I want us to glean as much as we can...and there is plenty to see here in v9-14.

READ/PRAY

I. Paul is praying, without ceasing v9a

As we began our study of Colossians last Sunday, we saw that Paul gave thanks for the church at Colossae's faith, love, and hope. He wrote, in verses 3-5:

We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, 4 since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love which you have for all the saints; 5 because of the hope laid up for you in heaven

As we come to verse 9, now Paul says almost exactly the same thing in reverse order.

For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask

Paul is praying without ceasing, asking for what?

II. That they might be filled with the will of God v9b

that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,

Notice that he doesn't say that he wants them to discover God's will as though it was some sort of cat and mouse game.

1. God has his will hidden out here somewhere. Now see if you can find it
2. Let's play some sort of subjective hot/cold game....getting warmer.
3. No, he doesn't pray that they would find or discover God's will but that they would be filled with the knowledge of His will!
 - a. Filled with = controlled by or overcome by
 - b. Filled with fear...filled with sorrow...filled with excitement...with the Spirit
 - c. Ephesians 5:18 *And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit*
4. Filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding.
 - a. If you want to be filled with the knowledge of His will stop looking for a sign
 - b. Start by walking in wisdom...make wise decisions.

So Paul is praying, without ceasing, that they might be filled with, controlled by, overcome by the will of God....

III. In all spiritual wisdom and understanding v9c

God's normal way of guiding us is through wisdom.

1. Ephesians 5:15-17 *Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, 16 making the most of your time, because the days are evil. 17 So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.*
2. Don Carson puts it this way: "Spiritual wisdom and understanding constitute the means by which God fills us with the knowledge of his will."

Proverbs 2:1-5, 9 *My son, if you will receive my words And treasure my commandments within you, 2 Make your ear attentive to wisdom, Incline your heart to understanding; 3 For if you cry for discernment, Lift your voice for understanding; 4 If you seek her as silver And search for her as for hidden treasures; 5 Then you will discern the fear of the LORD And discover the knowledge of God....9 Then you will discern righteousness and justice And equity and every good course.*

God's normal way of guiding us is through wisdom. So how can we walk in wisdom?

1. Be in the Word daily v1
2. Be in Prayer daily v2-3
3. Get Counsel from those who are in the word and prayer daily v4
4. Analyze, Decide, and Trust God's goodness. v5, 9

So Paul is praying, without ceasing, that they might be filled with, controlled by, overcome by the will of God in all spiritual wisdom and understanding....and look at the goal!

IV. So that they may be Christ-like v10a

10 so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord

1. The goal of being filled with the knowledge of God's will in all wisdom is not a happy life, prosperity, God's blessings on your newest business endeavor
2. The goal is walking in a manner worthy of the Lord: i.e. Christ-likeness.
3. *Simply put, God's will is your growth in Christlikeness. God promises to work all things together for our good that we might be conformed to the image of his Son. And the degree to which this sounds like a lame promise is the degree to which we prefer the stones and scorpions of this world to the true bread from heaven. God never assures us of health, success, or ease. But He promises us something even better: He promises to make us loving, pure and humble like Christ. In short, God's will is that you and I get happy and holy in Jesus...The only chains God wants us to wear are the chains of righteousness—not the chains of hopeless subjectivism, not the shackles of risk-free living, not the fetters of horoscope decision making—just the chains befitting a bond servant of Christ Jesus. Die to self. Live for Christ. And then do what you want and go where you want, for God's glory.* Kevin DeYoung

10 so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord

This is not a unique command from Paul. He isn't singling out the church at Colossae!

1. Ephesians 4:1 *Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called*
2. 1 Thessalonians 2:11-12 *we were exhorting and encouraging and imploring each one of you as a father would his own children, so that you would walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.*
3. Putting all of this together we see that Paul is praying, without ceasing, that they might be filled with, controlled by, overcome by the will of God in all spiritual wisdom and understanding so that they may be Christ-like...so that they might walk in a way that brings Him honor and glory...worthy of the Lord.

What does Paul mean practically? I think we can see that unfolded in more detail in Philippians 1.

Philippians 1:27-28 *Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I will hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one*

mind striving together for the faith of the gospel; 28 in no way alarmed by your opponents--which is a sign of destruction for them, but of salvation for you, and that too, from God.

Only...he is about to give us something big. Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ.

1. This is the one thing Paul wants for them
2. This is what we all need...and what would take care of most of our issues
3. Conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel

What does Paul have in mind when he tells them to only conduct themselves in a manner worthy of the gospel...which can help us understand what he has in mind in Colossians 1:10.

1. **Standing** firm in ONE spirit...defense.

a. 1Timothy 3:15 *but in case I am delayed, I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth.*

b. (the parable of the wise and foolish builder)

1. Hear the Word of God!
2. Obey the Word of God!
3. This is how we make a stand!

c. Stand together, in one Spirit...unified around the truth of God's Word!

2. **Striving** With ONE mind TOGETHER for the faith of the gospel....offense.

a. Our greatest offense is not the voting booth! It is not incessant political Facebook posts. It is not AR-15's and ammunition.

b. Our greatest offense in this current struggle is linking arms to advance the gospel to the ends of the earth!

c. Matthew 28:18-20 *And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."*

b. Advancing the gospel from here to the ends of the earth together is our offensive playbook

1. Make disciples locally!
2. Pray, give, go, and send

c. Strive together...unified around the truth

3. This is what it looks like to walk worthy of Christ!

So Paul is praying, without ceasing, that they might be filled with, controlled by, overcome by the will of God in all spiritual wisdom and understanding so that they may be Christ-like...so that they might walk in a way that brings Him honor and glory...worthy of the Lord...which is standing firm together in the truth and striving forward together with the truth.

What happens when we do that? We will see it in more detail next week. But v10-14 happens.

v10-14

to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and

patience; joyously giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light

GOSPEL