

December 6, 2014

The Source of a Life Fully Pleasing to God

Colossians 1:9-10

Today is Pearl Harbor Day.

All Stand and Read Scripture

Colossians 1:9-10 (NASB)

⁹ For this reason also, since the day we heard *of it*, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, ¹⁰ so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please *Him* in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

Prayer

INTRODUCTION:

In the last month, I have been preaching from the book of Colossians. It is a book written by the Apostle Paul to the Colossians. One of the themes in this epistle is an encouragement to the Colossians (as well as to us) to love and serve Christ with all of their heart, soul, mind, and strength.

Last week we learned that if we are a Christian, we should have a

1. **Desire for a Life Fully Pleasing to God.**

Today, Lord willing, we are going to explore the

2. **Source of a Life Fully Pleasing to God.**

In a continuing message we will plan to learn how our Christian life should

3. **Exhibit the Evidence of a Life Fully Pleasing to God.**

The scriptures tell us that when we accepted Christ in our life, that we are **no longer our own**. We have been **bought with a price** by Christ's death on the cross. We are to **love God** with all of our hearts and serve only Him. We are to live a life fully pleasing to God.

Romans 12:1-2 (NASB)

¹² Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, *which is your spiritual service of worship*. ² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove (know) what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

Through the writers of the scriptures, which were all inspired by God, we have been given God's Word (the Bible). It is the infallible Word of God. It is our instruction manual on how to live for Christ.

The prayer that we just read in verses 9 and 10 gives an insight into what Paul's heart or attitude was for the Colossians. I pray that we will use his prayer as an example of how we should live and how we should pray for others.

Paul's prayer was not a selfish prayer. His prayer was that the Colossians would continue to mature in Christ. As we consider Paul's prayer this morning, I would like for you to note the source of three faithful attributes that Paul asked God to provide for the Colossians through His grace.

1. Knowledge of God's Will.
2. Understanding of God's Word.
3. Wisdom to Apply God's Word.

The source of these attributes originates from God's Word and is perfected within us through the Holy Spirit.

BODY:

I. Knowledge of God's Will

Colossians 1:9 (NASB)

⁹ For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,

In order to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord and have a life fully pleasing to God, Paul prayed that the Colossians would **be filled with the knowledge of His will**.

It is the knowledge of God's will that enables us to **be fully pleasing to Him**. It is out of that knowledge that grows a walk worthy of the Lord.

We must ask what Paul is referring to when he talks about God's will. In the scriptures there are two aspects of God's will. The first is what we often call His **Will of Decree** or **His Sovereign Will**.

This will is of those things that God predetermines to happen in history.

Ephesians 1:11 (NASB)

¹¹ also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will,

The **counsel of His will** consists of those things that He has predetermined to happen in history according to His will. Other than a few scriptures of unfulfilled prophecy we do not and cannot know God's **Sovereign Will** until it has occurred.

We know from prophecy that Christ is coming again. We know there will be a judgment day when the sheep and the goats (the saved and the lost) are separated. We know that those who follow Christ will live eternally with God in Heaven. Even though we know, with certainty, **that these things will happen**, we still do not know **when** they will happen until they actually occur.

It was God's will that June would break her foot last Thursday. I was not something that we could predict would happen. In fact, she broke it by simply stepping down from a six inch step. It did not appear that she twisted her ankle or leg in any way. When she stepped down and placed her weight on it, she heard a "snap" and immediately suspected that she had broken her foot.

The **sovereign will** of God occurs with certainty with God, but to us, it is an unknown. We do not know the day we will die or even if we will die before the Lord comes again.

It is because of God's **sovereign will** that we must know the other aspect of God's will which is referred to as God's **Prescriptive Will** or God's **Moral Will**. This is the type of will that Paul is referring to here in verse 9. Since we do not know God's sovereign will in our lives we must know what God's **Moral Will** is for us and be willing to obey His will. God's moral will is revealed to us in the scripture. It is what He wills for us morally to do.

Ephesians 5:15-17 (NASB)

¹⁵ 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.

In order to know the will of God, we must first read the scriptures, which is our source for knowledge of Gods' will. (HOLD UP THE BIBLE) As we read God's Word we learn how to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord that is fully pleasing to Him.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NASB)

¹⁶ All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; ¹⁷ so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

If you want to know what the will of God is for your life and how you are to live your life to be equipped for every good work, you must read God's Word and gain knowledge of God's Word. We MUST make it a habit to read, study, memorize, and hear it taught and preached regularly to gain knowledge. This is the only way God's Word can penetrate within our heart.

The scriptures were written for that very purpose. So, we MUST be students of God's Word. Your life will not be fully pleasing to God if you are not a student of God's Word.

But just reading and memorizing the scriptures does not give us understanding. The understanding comes from the Holy Spirit within us.

II. Understanding of God's Word

Luke 24:44-45 (NASB)

⁴⁴ Now He said to them, "These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." ⁴⁵ Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,

The disciples **knew** the Old Testament scriptures. They had heard the scriptures read over, and over, and over again. In fact, they no doubt had many of them memorized and could quote them. They had also been with Christ through His entire ministry and had heard His teachings. Yet, Luke tells us that they were completely without an understanding of what they actually meant. It was not until Christ was ready to ascend into heaven that their eyes were opened and they finally understood the meaning behind those scriptures and how the recent events had actually fulfilled many of them.

When Paul is talking of understanding here in Colossians, he is talking of the same thing. That is that the real knowledge of God's Word is not just the ability to quote scripture, but being able to understand what that scripture means.

A true knowledge of God's will begins with the ability to understand what the scripture means in context. This is accomplished by studying prayerfully.

1 Corinthians 2:12-13 (NASB)

¹² Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God, ¹³ which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual *thoughts* with spiritual *words*.

Ephesians 1:17-18 (NASB)

¹⁷ that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him. ¹⁸ *I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,*

It is the work of the Holy Spirit to open our minds to know, understand, and comprehend scripture.

So, a study of scripture should always be done prayerfully. We should be asking God to give us understanding and wisdom.

Not only are we to have an understanding, but we must also have spiritual wisdom. Our prayerful study should be done obediently. That is our **third** point this morning that will make us fully pleasing to God.

III. Wisdom to Apply God's Word.

Wisdom is discernment of how to apply God's Truth to our lives. While understanding focuses on our comprehension of the meaning, wisdom focuses on our application of that meaning to our everyday, practical lives.

The source of a fully pleasing life is being filled with the knowledge of God's will. That knowledge consists of an understanding of God's Word and having the wisdom to apply God's Word to our everyday lives. I would suggest that this "understanding and wisdom" is what other scriptures refer to as a "renewed mind". Paul speaks of a renewed mind in

Romans 12:2 (NASB)

² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

Paul says not to be conformed to this world, but to be transformed. If we paraphrased this scripture, it would read "Live a life fully pleasing to God. Walk worthy of Christ and do it by the renewing of your minds." The fruit of our renewed minds is that we will know what the will of God is.

John 7:17-18 (NASB)

¹⁷ If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know of the teaching, whether it is of God or *whether* I speak from Myself. ¹⁸ He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who is seeking the glory of the One who sent Him, He is true, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.

This passage suggests to us that is by OBEDIENCE of doing God's will that we are given greater illumination and greater understanding.

You might ask, "How do I know what God's will is in my life? How do I hear Him speaking to me?"

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (NASB)

¹⁶ Rejoice always; ¹⁷ pray without ceasing; ¹⁸ in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

God wants us to surrender ourselves completely to Him. We should be striving everyday to become more and more like Christ. This is done by keeping our minds constantly on Christ.

If you were to look back in your life a couple of years:

- Would you see a person now that is closer to the Lord?
- Are you more mature in Christ?
- Are you praying more?
- Are you spending more time in God's Word.

As we go about our daily walk in life, we are faced with different situations. As each situation comes up, we should be considering in a prayerful mind how I can use this situation to most glorify God. When we face those situations, God has promised that the Holy Spirit will use our knowledge and understanding of the scriptures to give us the spiritual wisdom to make the proper decisions that we should or should not make. Through the Holy Spirit, we will encounter people who need to know the Lord. If we are living faithfully for Him, they will see Christ in us through our actions and words. He will give us the words to say if we are willing to obediently serve Him.

CONCLUSION:

We should be striving to

- Know God's Will
- Understand His Word
- Seek His Wisdom

So that we can live a life FULLY PLEASING TO GOD!

Matthew 16:24-27 (NASB)

24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. 25 For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. 26 For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? 27 For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and WILL THEN REPAY EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS.

Knowing that we are to take up our cross and do God's will is great, but how are we to know what His will is in our lives if we do not listen for and obediently seek for it in our daily walk with Him?

How are you living your life?

- Are you living your life without any consideration of God's will in your life?
- Do you know that God wants you to live by His will, but you are being arrogant and choosing to do it your own way?

- Have you been prodded by the Holy Spirit to talk to someone or visit someone and you turned away?
- Or, are you constantly seeking, listening for, and doing God's will in your life?

God is not willing that anyone should perish, but that all should come to repentance. Christ died on the cross, was buried, and rose again on the third day. God sacrificed His son so that we could have forgiveness of sins.

Christ died for **all** of our sins once for all. But, unless you accept Him as your Lord and Savior and live by His WILL, you will not receive the forgiveness of sins that He died to forgive for you.

If you have not accepted Christ as your Lord and Savior, do it today. Don't wait until you have cleaned up your life. **You don't clean yourself up to come to the Christ; you surrender yourself to Christ, to let Him clean you up!**

If you have accepted Christ as your Lord and Savior and you are still living like the world and not living a life fully pleasing to God. I urge you to seek the will of God in your life and start submitting to His will in your life. You are either **"dead to sin"** or you are **"dead in sin"**. There is no in between.

The Family of God

I'm so glad I'm a part of the family of God.

I've been washed in the fountain, cleansed by His blood!

Joint heirs with Jesus as we travel this sod,

For I'm part of the family, the family of God.