

Colossians, A Study, pt.7

Verses 10–12

This evening we enter into the seventh installment of our series examining the letter to the Colossians.

(If you have your copy of God’s word, turn with me to the letter to the Colossians... We will read the entirety of the chapter, but we will focus our attention on vv. 10–12.)

Our last study ended by looking at v. 9, where Paul writes, **9** And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,”

The emphasis upon the verse is Paul’s prayer that our brothers and sisters, “be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding.”

Here we underscored three truths about the will of God that comes from this passage. (I will give them to you and make a comment.)

1. That the will of God can be known
2. That the will of God can be accomplished (this becomes more clearing in the next phrase)
3. That the will of God is spiritual (and by “spiritual”, I mean, that it originates with God; that He reveals to and is not of this world!) (THIS POINT IS A WEAK POINT AND CAN BE ASSUMED UNDER THE FIRST TRUTH.

(Here is what I mean: If the will of God can be known, then it necessarily follows that the will of God is spiritual and must be revealed by Him.

So, it would be easier to assume point truth #3 in truth #1. Does that make sense?

And here is where you always want to be mindful of not “straining a gnat” to get a point from the text.

Do you all understand?

Now, concerning the will of God, we discovered that Paul is more concerned with them knowing about obeying what we may call the general will of God, than the granular will of God!

The general will of God could be understood as the commands He reveals in scripture like the Ten Commandments.

The granular will of God could be understood as the particular, personal will God has for you.)

Now, the reason why I make this distinction is so that you can take out that subjective, speculative desire we all have to know the personal, particular will of God (whether I should be a doctor or teacher...)

And I am convinced that if we spend time doing the things the Lord has made clear concerning His will, He will make clear the things that are unclear.

And what Paul is focused on is that general will of God, that all the saints are to know and obey.

One more word of the general will of God.

When I say general, I do not mean random, mundane, unimportant or regular. The will of

God is anything but mundane or unimportant.

By general, I mean universal or something that is commonly known or able to be known.

AND God has made known with crystal clear clarity what His will is for His children.

And what preoccupied Paul's prayers is that they will know God's will in an increasing manner!

TRANSITION: Now, in v. 10, we see why this is Paul's prayer and desire. (read v. 10)

So, Paul is fervent in his prayers for these saints because he desire for them to glorify God by their obedience to the truth (to borrow a phrase from 1 Peter 1:22)

Now, the words in our text make this easy to see. The word, "walk" is a metaphor that speaks of one lifestyle or manner of living.

Paul uses this language in our passages:

Romans 4:11b–12, "The purpose was to make him the father of all who believe without being circumcised, so that righteousness would be counted to them as well, **12** and to make him the father of the circumcised who are not merely circumcised but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised."

Romans 6:4, "We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of

life.”

Romans 8:3–4, “ **3** For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin,^[c] he condemned sin in the flesh, **4** in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.”

Galatians 6:16, “But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.”

Ephesians 2:1, “ And you were dead in the trespasses and sins **2** in which you once walked...”
v. 10, “**10** For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”

Ephesians 5:15, “Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise...”

Philippians 3:17, “Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us.

You get the point!

Biblically, “your walk” is the manner of life you live! It's a lifestyle!

Now, what Paul is after is that our lifestyles or manner of living is “worthy” of the Lord!

The word “worthy” means deserving of or suitable to.

It carries the idea of your life corresponding to the worth or praiseworthiness of God.

To give an example in nature.

Say, if I had a 24k gold necklace that I wanted to sell in exchange for money. Say, if the

necklace was worth \$1,000 and the jeweler wanted to give me only \$500.

The amount that the jeweler is seeking to give me does not correspond to the worth of the necklace.

So, what Paul is after is for us as believers to make sure that our lives correspond to the greatness and good of God!

In other words, Paul wants our lives to receive an, “Amen!” from heaven.

This is why living hypocritically is so shameful, not only because you are living below the standard, but in doing so, you are giving God a poor reputation.

How many stories have you heard about people who have been negatively affected by the lifestyle of a professing Christian.

But, the point here is that Paul is desirous for their lives (and our lives) to glorify God.

I want you to see two immediate connections in knowing the will of God (and we will only look at one tonight.)

The first connection is that ***your knowledge of the will of God informs your walk with God.*** (2x) (Notice the connection in the text, v. 9 and 10.)

The more you understand and are filled with the knowledge of the will of God the more aware you are of your walk before the Lord.

To say it another way: *when you know the will of God, the more conscious you are of how you walk before Him (or at least you should be.)*

Knowing the will of God should have a two-fold effect upon you: **1. It should make you more aware of your need for God and 2. It should make you more desirous to please Him (because you know what He wants!)**

Concerning the first point of knowing the will of God making you more aware of your need, Paul, in Romans 7, talks about the law (which I told you last time is an expression of God's will.)

In Romans 7 he says something interesting in v. 7, “7 What then shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means! *Yet if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin. For I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, “You shall not covet.”*”

It was the law that exposed Paul's sin and consequently exposed his need for God!

The revelation of the will of God, serves as a mirror that reflects your walk with the Lord and therefore should make you more aware of your need for Him.

It has been said that the bible is the only book that you go to read, but it ends up reading you!

This must be the case because this is the reason for which God gave us his law and word (to sanctify and purify us...and by doing this, it reminds us continually of our need for God!)

2 Timothy 3:16, “16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, **17** that the man of God[b] may be

complete, equipped for every good work.”

(If the man or woman of God needs teaching, reproof, correction and training, this is proof of our desperate need for God!)

And this is what knowing this will of God does: It makes us more aware of our need for God.)

Secondly, knowing the will of God, should make you more desirous to please Him, because you know what He delights in!

Knowing the will of God should prompt obedience!

There is nothing more frustrating than trying to honor or please someone who has uncommunicated expectations or desires.

This is not so with God!

God has made His will known!

No Christian can legitimately claim not to know what the will of God!

And if any seeks to, it only reveals the gross laziness that they have given themselves to!

God has made His will known, so believers are without excuse!

The fact that God has communicated His expectations and desires gives us a path forward in knowing how to honor and please Him!

And a brief survey of this in Psalm 119 bears of this desire to please God based off His law: (or His will.)this out:

Psalm 119:22, “My soul is consumed with longing for your rules at all times.”

v. 40, “Behold, I long for your precepts; in your righteousness give me life!”

v. 131, “I open my mouth and pant, because I long for your commandments.”

v. 174, “I long for your salvation, O LORD, and your law is my delight.”

So, when you know the will of God, the more desirous you should be please Him.

Now, as we look at the text further, Paul makes it clear that as we live lives worthy of the Lord, this can and will lead to being fully pleasing to the Lord!

And this is the ultimate aim of every believer: to live a life fully pleasing to Him!

And there is no way to fully please God apart from obedience to His law/word!

There are many Christians who mistakenly think that being “under grace in Christ” means that there is no need for obedience to the law of God!

This cannot be true for several reasons.

One of which is the fact that sin, by definition, is lawlessness!

If sin is defined as lawlessness, then what might be a righteous be defined as?
Obedience to the law!

This is one reason why God is so intent on us not being hear of the word only, but doers of the word. (Turn to James 1 to see this connection. The connection to the law of God and our obedience to it.)

Jesus says, in another context, “if you love me...” or “why do you call me Lord and do not do what I say...”

All in all. The end goal of Paul’s unceasing pray for them to know the will of God is that their life will correspond to the glory that is owed to God.

And the way that is accomplished is by knowing the will of God and doing the will of God! And the doing of the will of God comes from knowing His law/word!

And if we live in this way, we will be fully pleasing to Him and will receive, “well done, my good and faithful servant!”

Let’s pray!