

Col 1.9-14—Paul's Prayer for Christian Maturity

Filled With the Knowledge of God's Will, v. 9

- I. Paul requests that they might be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom & understanding.
 - A. The Colossian believers had been led astray by false teaching because while they gladly received the truth preached to them, they failed to consider its practical impact on their lives and live under its guidance.
 - B. Paul therefore prays that the knowledge they have might be translated by the Spirit into wisdom and understanding for practical living, 2Tim 3.16-17; 4.2
 - C. They didn't need more knowledge than they were already given in the gospel; they only needed to live by it. They needed to go on to maturity.

To Walk in a Manner Worthy of the Lord, vv. 10-14

- I. The blessed result of a saving knowledge of the will of God is a life regulated by that will. In other words, being filled with the knowledge of God's will is always practical and meant to lead us in a life fully pleasing to the Lord.
 - A. As Christians we're to walk worthily of the Lord because we're not our own; we were bought by the Lord's own life, Eph 4.1; 1Cor 6.19-20
 - 1. Our lives are therefore to correspond to what Christ is to us as our Master and Lord and to what Christ has done for us in redeeming us, 1Th 2.12
 - 2. Such a correspondent life involves complete surrender, perfect obedience, and an unwavering love for Christ. If we're aiming short of this then the truth of the gospel has yet to have its due impact upon us and we don't yet know as we ought to know, 1Cor 8.2
 - B. Christians are to walk fully pleasing to the Lord. This is to be our great aim, Col 3.17
 - 1. Just think what a help this singleness of mind is to our daily conduct! Living to please man makes us the slaves of men; but living to please Christ as Lord is true freedom, Gal 5.1; Eph 6.6; Col 3.23; 1Pet 2.16

- 2. And whatever we lose by living to please the Lord will be more than made up with peace in this life and glory in the life to come, Mt 25.21
- II. Paul mentions four things that flesh out what a life fully pleasing to the Lord and worthy of the Lord looks like.
 - A. Bearing fruit in every good work, v. 10
 - 1. Our biblical knowledge is useless and our wishes to please God are lifeless if there's no fruit in good works, Js 2.17; Mt 7.21; Heb 12.14
 - 2. It's true that we're saved by grace and not by works, but it's equally true that we're saved to produce works, Eph 2.10; Jn 15.8. Also, this fruitfulness is to be a universal fruitfulness in all areas of our lives, not a select fruitfulness according to our own desires.
 - B. Increasing in the knowledge of God, v. 10
 - 1. That Christian who strives to bring all his Creed into practice and all his practice under the guidance of his Creed will find that he walks in the path of increasing knowledge, Rom 12.1-2. Knowledge feeds obedience, which increases knowledge.
 - C. Being strengthened with all the power of God, v. 11
 - 1. The Christian life is powered by the divine arm; it's a life which has for its engine all the power of God, Eph 1.19; 3.20
 - 2. But notice that the purpose for which the Lord gives His strength is so that we can win the victory over self-will in our trials, 2Cor 12.7-10; Mk 8.34; Lk 14.26-27
 - D. Giving thanks to the Father, vv. 12-14
 - 1. Thanksgiving should be seen at every stage of our walk before the Lord, and the grand reason why a Christian gives thanks to the Father is because he never loses sight of the miracle of his salvation.
 - 2. When you're ungrateful and complaining about your life, you've forgotten the pit from which you were dug and the heights to which you've been raised, Isa 51.1-3
- III. Set this character before your eyes as the object of all your prayers and the goal of all your striving. This is the Christian God calls you to be and the walk God calls you to walk. Pray this prayer until you see it fulfilled in your own life, Jn 16.23.