

The Will of God!!! Colossians 1:3-11

Almost sixty years ago a young missionary named Raymond Edman staggered in from an Ecuadorian jungle, desperately ill the doctor predicted. **“He’ll be dead by morning,”**

Edman’s mourned and those who knew Edman began to make arrangements for his Funeral (In the tropics funerals must be held immediately.) However, thousands of miles away in Boston, Edman’s friend, Dr. Joseph Evans, interrupted a prayer meeting, saying, **“I feel we must pray for Ray Edman in Ecuador.”** The group prayed earnestly, until finally Evans called out, **“Praise the Lord! The victory is won!”**

The rest is history: Raymond Edman recovered, and went on to become president of Wheaton College in Illinois and to minister for forty years! That story reminds us of the power of intercessory prayer.

Our question Often times is this: how are we to pray for the Church collectively & individually for those who are members of the Body of Christ

A) A classic answer is provided by Paul in the introductory lines of his letter to the Colossians. RD V.3-14

B) In the opening lines of the letter, , Paul celebrated the miracle of this little church’s existence in the Lycus Valley.

1) We noted last week that Paul’s friend Epharas – came with a glowing report about the Church- { Sure Problems – but growing Faith/ Hope/ Love

C) I like Epaphras. He goes around speaking good things.

1) **I want to be like Epaphras** — talking about how great people are doing behind their backs – Focusing on the Good / not the bad

D) See Our words are powerful – What You say about someone – to someone else – it affects their outlook on that person.

1) They will possibly view that person in an entirely different way based on your words – Positive – View positive / Negative – view negative .

COURSON: *The power of words is awesome. For that reason, we must be very careful. Gossip good stuff. That’s what Epaphras did.*

RESULT: What did Paul do when he heard? He rejoiced and prayed blessings upon them

A) Although Paul had never been to Colossae, what he heard about the believers there caused his heart to rejoice and to respond by *praying continual blessing upon them.*

B) My tendency is to only pray for people when I they are doing bad – hurting or backsliding

1) learn from Paul – **He prays when they are doing well – that they would do even better.**

C) Let’s Be like Paul. When you hear or see someone doing well, thank the Lord for them and intercede on their behalf.

The church of Jesus Christ is in desperate need of prayer.

A)We need to pray for one another – A praying People!! Praying for people individually, praying for the church collectively.

B) Because you see it’s when the church is all that it is supposed to be, that’s when the world is going to be impacted the greatest by the church.

1) Praying for God to reach the world is an important prayer, but God has chosen to reach the world through His people.

C) So in order for the world to be impacted by Christ, the church has to be all that it is supposed to be .

1) Paul understood that and he spent much of his time praying for the churches that he established
2) praying for those individual believers that he knew w/in the fellowship.

D) We can learn a lot from his prayers: For one they are INSPIRED – reveal God’s heart for us – What He desires to do in our lives

1) That being the case they give us an example of How we can be praying for our brothers & sisters in the Lord : **Consider Paul’s Prayer**

Note several things – 1st how he prayed – v.9

PRAY W/OUT CEASING – A) TICKLE IN THE THROAT – cough – continually offering up little words of prayer – Lord bless them / work there .

B) The idea is viewing everything that comes into your life in relation to God 1) It is living with this continual awareness of God's Presence with you in every situation.

C) Some people look at the Lord as being just a part of their life – Sun am

1) Pray in the morning – then on my own !!!!!

D) But listen God's desire is **NOT JUST A PART OF YOUR LIFE**- He wants you life revolve around Him

1) That is how Paul was!! When Paul looked around his world, everything he saw prompted him to prayer in some way.

E) Paul **RESPONDED TO LIFE IN PRAYER** – I want to be that way!!!

1) Aware of God – Aware of people { BRACELOT

So First of all we learn that Paul prayed without ceasing – 2nd consider WHAT he prayed

A) Paul's petition is that the Colossians **be filled w/ the knowledge of His will.** (filled) means to be completely filled, or totally controlled.

B) The disciples' hearts were **filled with sorrow** when Jesus told them of His departure (John 16:6).

1) Luke 5:26 tells us the crowd **was filled with fear** after Jesus healed the paralytic.

2) The scribes and Pharisees were **filled with rage** after Jesus healed on the Sabbath (Luke 6:11).

C) The disciples were **filled with the Holy Spirit** (Acts 4:31), while Stephen was **full of faith** (Acts 6:5).

1) In each case they were totally under the control of what filled them.

Paul wants these people to be controlled completely by their knowledge of God's will

A) The will of God is the most important issue facing each one of us today. What is God's will for your life? Do you know that God has a plan for you?

Jer 29:10-11 *For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope*

B) **Do you realize that?** Do you understand that regardless of what you might think of yourself, God has great thoughts toward you/ **He has a plan for you?** 1) I think that some Christians are guilty of thinking that God has a plan for everyone but them. "

C) And sometimes **we even develop this mentality** that God just uses a select few – we focus on others gifts and talents and think – 1) well of course God is using them it is obvious that he would – but the rest of us it is a different story .

D) { **My insecurities not musical not as smart/ not gifted -** } God can't use me like those guys 1) But the Bible makes it clear that God has a plan and a purpose for each of our lives. He has a specific calling upon each of our lives.

In Fact We were created for this one thing, to do the will of God.

A) We're told in Revelation Chapter 4 that all things were created by God for His will. They were created.

B) So the reason that you exist, the reason that you live here on planet earth is because God placed you here & **He placed you here w/ a purpose in mind.** 1) He has a will, He has a plan, He has something for you to accomplish for Him. Isn't that a wonderful thing to know?

C) It makes life truly meaningful to know that , it's not meaningless as modern philosophers want us to think. **Life does have a purpose.**

D) There is design, there is a Designer, and there is a preordained plan that God has for each and every one of us.

1) Paul's prayer is that we might be filled with the knowledge of that will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.

Now there are certain general aspects of God's will that are revealed to us in the Scriptures.

A) For example, it is God's desire that a person be saved (1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:9).

Not all will be – God gives man a free will – Choice – but his desire: none...

B) Once a person is saved, it is God's will that he be filled with the Spirit. Ephesians 5:17-18 says, *“Do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit.”*

C) Furthermore, sanctification is God's will: “For this is the will of God, your sanctification” (1 Thess. 4:3).

1) God also wills that the believer be submissive to the government. *Peter writes, “Submit for the Lord's sake to every human institution ... for such is the will of God” (1 Pet. 2:13, 15).*

D) Finally, giving thanks is God's will. Paul writes, *“In everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus” (1 Thess. 5:17).*

So those are the general aspects of God's will, He wills the same thing for every one of us in those areas.

A) But then of course we're all different & there's a specific aspect to the will of God also that needs to be discovered – not specifically found in the Scriptures

B) So how do I come to know the will of God in the more specific sense? Well, first of all I have to make sure I'm in the will of God generally

C) **Living in God's will in general terms, lines you up with God's will in specific terms/** sometimes the will of God is a progressive thing in our lives

D) What I mean by that is this God doesn't always show you the whole picture of what

His will is, Sometimes He just gives you the first step.

1) And when you have done the first step, the next step appears.

This is well illustrated in the life of Philip in Acts 8. Philip was preaching in Samaria & there was a radical work of God happening

A) **Well right** in the midst of it, God says to Philip, take the Road that goes south from Jerus to Gaza, which would have lead him into the full on desert.

B) **That's all that God gave him, no further instructions**, Philip leave the place of blessing and go to the desert, “why Lord” Not telling, just go.

1) So off Philip goes and he finally comes to the town of Gaza, and it was just like he thought that it would be, desert. *“now what God?” “Just wait”*

C) Along comes this Ethiopian eunuch who had great authority under Candace the queen of the Ethiopians, & he is reading from a scroll of Isaiah.

1) The Spirit says to Philip, *“Run, join yourself to the chariot” There is step two. DIVINE APPOINTMENT*

D) When Philip gets close and sees the man reading the scroll from Isaiah, it all falls into place and as a result this Ethiopian man is won to Christ

1) and I'm sure had a huge impact on his homeland.

The point is, God didn't give Philip step two until he did step one.

A) This often times is how the specific will of God is, we want the whole picture, God says, I'll give you step one.

B) So if you have step one, go for it, God will be faithful to reveal the rest as you go along.

1) **OREGON SILVERTON – BROOKS – SALEM**

C) So in order to discover the will of God specifically, I've got to come into conformity of

God's will generally. Saved / Walking in Holiness /

1) Submitted to GOVT – can't be breaking law expect insight from God !!!

So Paul prayed that they would be filled w/ the knowledge of God's will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding

A) The Greek word here for wisdom is Sophia, this not just more knowledge but the ability to apply that knowledge to real life.

B) This is great thing pray for because as a pastor I so often see a break down between what people know and what people do.

1) I talk to **so many people who are in trouble in different areas** and I will say well let me show you what the Bible says about this, and they will say,

C) **“O Pastor I know what the Bible says about that”** and they proceed to site scripture and verse on the topic.

1) And I think, “if you knew this, why didn't you do it?”

D) That's the problem, they didn't apply what they knew to real life, Hosea the prophet made this indictment against Israel . *Hosea 4:6, “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge because they rejected knowledge .*

TRAFFIC SCHOOL EVERY TWO YRS

– Expert at it

And then he prays for Spiritual Understanding.

A) This is the ability to see the spiritual ramifications that are behind an action or a decision,

B) this is the ability to able to discern what is going on, on the spiritual level. 1) Steve and Janet Alvarado -..... been thru so much in the last year – Janet – ***God isn't finished – still working / refining***

C) Paul understood this as well he knew that all actions have consequences not only in the physical world, but also on the spiritual level as well.

D) So that is what Paul prayed for - *that they would be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;*

What he lays out next is the Purpose of that prayer

10 that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;11 strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy;12 giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light

A) Growing in our Knowledge of God's will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding is going to result in several things

1) The first is v.10 A Worthy Walk

B) Walk is used in the Bible to refer to one's pattern of daily conduct.

1)Worthy = Weight – walk would weigh as much as your calling – It would match your being brought into the Lord

C) We have been called to a very high place. We have been called to be the children of God.

1) And because of our position, our lifestyle is to be indicating the position that we hold.

HIGHER STANDARD & EXPECTATION!!!

True in life - Whenever someone is put in a high position, the standard of living, is raised.

A) Politician for instance – we expect a certain standard.

B) Another Country – Prince or Princess – Family of Royalty – Higher expectation: **ROYAL BLOOD**

1) We too have Royal Blood – God's life in us **!!!!**

C) Higher expectation of work & integrity from a Christian worker – HS in them empower and convict

1) Higher degree of Love and sacrifice from a Christian Husband – same reason – HS in Him **!!!!**

D) We shouldn't expect a non Christian to even try to be like Jesus – But that should be the desire of someone who is saved !!! HS – Desire

2ndly A pleasing life " This word pleasing is used just this one time in the Greek New Testament, there's not another use of it in the whole NT

A) It's found in classical Greek and it means to seek to please one person alone is kind of the essence of the word.

B) So fully pleasing God, in other words living to please the Lord completely and no one else.

1) Sometimes to be pleasing to the Lord is going to set us at odds w/ people.

C) **Unsaved Friends** – who suddenly don't like your new standards – Who are we going to please God or man !!!!

You might even find that you are at odds w/ other Christians –

A) See there are many people who name the name of Christ – who are constantly asking questions like this: *"Can I do this and still go to heaven?"*

B) They're wanting to compromise with the world to some degree or whatever but they don't want to miss the boat to heaven.

1) They have conviction of the spirit that it is wrong – **not pleasing** – but because their motivation is more for pleasing self than God – they wrestle with their compromise –

C) What they fail to realize is that if they sought to live a life pleasing to God – they will be so blessed !!!!

1) the question is not how much can I get away with in a worldly sense and still go to heaven.

D) But how much can I give myself fully and completely to God here on earth and please Him thoroughly?

1) The question every Christian is should be asking, how can I fully please the Lord?

E) So your desire to live a life fully pleasing to God may put you at odds with other Christians who don't have that desire

F) Your Desire to please God by responding to his calling on your life in service might **put you at odds with those who love you.**

1) Mission field – No BABY DEDICATIONS – UNTIL ADULTS

G) SO Paul's prayer is that we would have a worthy walk fully pleasing, seeking to please God above all others..

3rd A Fruitful Life bearing fruit in every good work (1:10b)

A) Fruit is the by-product of righteousness. It is the mark of every redeemed individual.

B) Jesus said in John 15:8, *"By this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples"*

1) **The Bible defines fruit in various ways.**

C) 1st – there is the Fruit of our lives – Romans 6:22 – Paul mentions the fruit of a HOLY LIFE .

1) When you are living – your life for the Lord seeking to walk in uprightness before Him – bearing the Fruit of a Holy life.

D) James 3:18 – Fruit of Righteousness - **18**
Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

E) Then of course there is the Fruit of Love – Gal. 5:22 – **the Fruit of the Spirit is Love :**

1) So there is the Fruit of our lives / Holiness { actions toward God / righteousness { Actions toward man & Love

2ndly THERE IS THE FRUIT OF OUR

LABORS ! – Paul mentions this in a general sense in Phil 1:22 – *fruit of my labors* / What is that?

A) Rom. 1:13 / Phil. 4:6 mention fruit in the context of winning souls

B) When we are involved in Evangelism / sharing our faith we are bearing fruit – that is pleasing to the Lord .

C) In 1 Cor. 16:1 & Romans 15:26-28 – GIVING TO THE WORK OF THE LORD is seen as Bearing Fruit -

1) All examples of the fruit of our labors

3rdly there is the Fruit of our lips - Heb.

13:15 *Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.*

A) The time that we spend in Worship – bearing fruit - pleasing to God

B) SO it is God’s desire that we would be fruitful
!!!!

4th a Growing life: v.10c increasing in the knowledge of God; - The Idea here is intimacy

A) This to me is one of the greatest things about the Christian life, that we can actually grow in our knowledge of God,

B) That we can grow in our relationship with Him. Not some far away distant force but He is close – near – We can Know Him

1) His word is meant to bring us close !!!!!

C) One of the questions that I am always asking myself as I read the Bible is what is this section of Scripture telling me about God,

1) what does this section of Scripture want me to know about God.

D) Think about the passage that we are going through right now, what does this section of Colossians tell us about God?

1) It tells us that **God is approachable**, it tells us that God wants to commune with us through prayer,

It tells us that God has a purpose and plan for our lives which we can know and walk in,

A) It tells us that there are things that we can do to please God, that our actions can bring Him joy.

B) If you approach the Bible with this simple question you will never again say, “I don’t get anything out of the Bible”

1) What you will get out of the Bible is a picture of God that will blow your mind.

C) Through that your knowledge of God will grow and your love for God will grow.

1) SO Paul prayed that these saints would grow in the knowledge of God.

Now What Paul prays for next is the Power that makes all of this possible. Listen to verse 11. *strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy;*

A) Folks, Christianity is a religion of power!

B) Forgive me for being repetitive but we need to hear this over and over !

1) Without God’s power working in you nothing that God ask you to do makes sense, **God’s purposes require God’s power.**

b) **And that is exactly what God supplies.** The way that this verse is worded in the Greek is really neat.

C) The word “Strengthened” is a present participle signifying a continuous action,

1) God is **not like a booster rocket** giving believers an initial boost of power and then leaving them to fly on their own.

D) Might, is Dunamis, which is where we get our English word Dynamite from, this speaks of God’s miracle working power,

1) So Paul is praying that God would continuously provide us with dynamite power according to His glorious explosive strength.

Now most of the time when we think about Being strengthened by God’s super natural power we are thinking about ministry things.

A) So we can **take the gospel around the world**, so we can preach to multitudes, so we can raise the dead and heal the sicketc

But that is not the case here. Notice specifically what this power is for, it’s for all Patience and Longsuffering with Joy.

A) Patience here is the ability to handle difficult situations

B) **And Longsuffering is the ability to handle difficult people, and not just to handle them, but to handle them with Joy.**

C) This so blesses me because it reminds me that God **IS INTERESTED IN EVERY ASPECT OF OUR LIVES**

See When people are in difficult circumstances what is the first thing that we pray for?

A) God get me out of this, remove this difficult circumstance from my life.

B) When we are in a **hard relationships** with people what do we pray? God remove this person from my life, get me out of this relationship.

1) But God knows that the best thing for us is not always to be rescued out of those situations – but supernaturally supplied to make it thru them

C) That is how we are going to really grow and flourish and have opportunity to shine for the Lord – **is the Trial**

1) Because without patience, without longsuffering, without joy, my overall witness is undermined.

D) Who wants to listen **to a grumpy Christian?** Who’s going to be attracted to you when you’re just a big crab?

1) Yea I want what that Guy has
.....

E) So he prays for empowerment for Patience and longsuffering.

Finally A THANKFUL HEART- 12 giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light