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# COLOSSIANS: CHRIST PREEMINENT

Session 3 | Colossians 1:9-13 | Dr. Randy White

## *The goal: The Knowledge of His Will | Colossians 1:9*

- **Knowledge:**
  - The word *ἐπίγνωσις* [*epignosis*] is a strengthened form of *gnosis* (knowledge). Literally, it means “upon knowledge.”
  - The emphasis is on the student's work in gaining the knowledge, rather than a body of knowledge itself.
- **Wisdom and spiritual understanding:**
  - It is easiest to come to "knowledge of the Bible."
  - It is harder to come to **knowledge of his will**
  - It is hardest to come to such knowledge **in wisdom and spiritual understanding**.
  - Much of the false teaching and misdirected application of Scripture in the church today comes from a failure to know God's will in wisdom and spiritual understanding.
- Note that this is the knowledge of God's will in totality, not "God's will for my life."
  - Be careful not to make the focus too small.
  - We do not know the knowledge of his will if we do not know the plan of God for the ages (that is, dispensationalism).
- How to come to a knowledge of His will –
  - Gain a knowledge of the Bible
  - Come to the Bible with a commitment to read the Scripture literally, with only the following preconceived notions:
    - The Bible is its own dictionary
    - Words do not have multiple meanings unless they are found within the Bible itself
    - Words mean what the AUTHOR intended them to mean
  - Have a stubborn refusal to skip over a passage or restate it to have a different meaning.

## *The result of the knowledge of His will | Colossians 1:10*

- The result of Paul's prayer: the knowledge of His will.
  - The result is the knowledge, wisdom, and understanding for which Paul prayed.
  - Those who try to train a believer in a worthy walk by teaching "do's and don'ts" are teaching the wrong things.
- It is impossible to "walk worthy" when you have no clue about his will.

## *The fourfold Evidence of a Worthy Walk | Colossians 1:10-12*

- Evidence 1: **Being fruitful.**
  - On **being fruitful**, Titus 3:14 says that **good works** are essential.
  - Therefore, this must not be internal and spiritual fruit, but the results of good works.
  - If a person doesn't have a **knowledge of his will** (v. 9), then their work, regardless of the effort put forth, will not be fruitful, because it will be against the purposes of God for this age.
- Evidence 2: **Increasing in the knowledge of God**
  - This is not a priority of the church today.

- The only way to know God is to know His Word, in which He is revealed.
- Many modern Christians would rather feel good about God than have knowledge of God. This is why books like "The Shack" are so popular.
- Evidence 3: **Strengthened with all might**
  - Each of these is in the participial form (--ing), "bringing forth fruit, growing, being strengthened."
  - These are ongoing actions to the one who is attempting to **walk worthy**.
  - We are **strengthened...according to his glorious power**.
    - Literally, "according to the power of His glory."
    - This phrase, like **in every good work** (v. 10) can go either with the preceding phrase ("increasing in the knowledge of God with all might") or the succeeding phrase ("with all power being strengthened according to the power of his glory").
  - **Unto all patience** - This is the goal or outcome of being **strengthened**. It does not good to have spiritual strength if that strength does not result in something beneficial.
- Evidence 4: **Giving thanks**
  - This is the fourth sign of a worthy walk (v. 10). Like the previous three, it is in the participial form, an ongoing action.
  - Why we are thankful: He **made us meet**.
    - Our sufficiency being in Christ, He is the one who completes us and makes us competent in all that we are.
    - The sufficiency in Christ is as much God's grace as the justification that he gives us. The word is also used in 2 Cor. 3:6.
    - We are **meet to be partakers**. To be partakers is literally "to have a portion."
    - We have a portion of the **inheritance**.
      - Matthew 25:34 tells what the **inheritance of the saints in light** is: the future Kingdom.
      - Note that we are made competent "unto the share" or "for the share" of the inheritance. There is nothing grammatically in this verse which states or implies that we already have the share of the inheritance. The inheritance is future.

### *Transferred to His Kingdom | Colossians 1:13*

- The Greek word for **translated** is μεθίστημι [metahistami] is *meta* (a change) and *histami* (to stand). Thus God has given us a new standing.
- Are we already in the Kingdom? While it would be easy to interpret this in such a manner, consider:
  - Paul often speaks of future blessings as present reality. Hebrews 12:22-23, Romans 8:30.
  - Has the "inheritance" of Matthew 24:30 been given, or is Matthew 24 in context of the second coming?
  - Are we delivered from the power of darkness, or can we succumb to its power? If death is part of the power of darkness, are we free from its power? (Jesus speaks of "the power of the darkness" to refer to death in Luke 22:53).
  - Are we **translated into** or **translated unto**? That is, it is still good grammar to translate that God has changed us *for* the Kingdom.
- In the end, we can only conclude we are currently in **the kingdom of his dear Son** if we are also fully **delivered from the power of darkness**.