



Title: Fully pleasing Him (Colossians: week 3)

Text: Colossians 1:9-11

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Intro: There is much for us to learn in this short prayer from Paul in Colossians 1:9-11. In it we see Paul's desire for the Colossians to know God and his ways so that they might display God to the world around them. In a culture that often wants to reduce faith in God to mere pragmatism for helpful answers, this prayer expands the reasons for knowing God's will to something much bigger than just specific instruction for life. Namely, the bearing of spiritual fruit that points people around us to Jesus.

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,

1. Filled with the knowledge of his will.

Probably one of the questions asked most is how do we find God's will? For many people, it is a frustrating pursuit. But I think the approach we take is often the problem.

- Not a pragmatic exchange of information: Paul is not talking here about facts download. (i.e. — what job should I take or what should I major in or whom should I marry).
- “will” (theleματος) “...not to be conceived as a demand, but as an expression or inclination of pleasure towards that which is liked, that which pleases and creates joy. When it denotes God's will, it signifies His gracious disposition toward something. Used to designate what God Himself does of His own good pleasure.”

2. A word about super-spirituality.

This is not what Paul is talking about, a strange higher level or secret knowledge. This was part of the false teaching that Paul is later going to confront. This is a tangible faith and knowledge that you can touch and people can see. This is wisdom that is deep, but simple. It's not intimidating but rather humble and gracious.

3. But why does Paul pray this for the Colossians?

Definitely not so this knowledge would dead-end on them.

10 so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.

1. Notice the purpose of knowing—that we display God!

- 2 Corinthians 2:14-17—we are the aroma of Christ.
- 2 Corinthians 4:7-12

2. Many people who claim to be Christians do not think this way!

Their supposed faith is nothing more than semi-regular church attendance, and the self-comforting notion that they are okay with God because they give intellectual agreement with the social ethics of Christian morality.

- Their life has not been transformed.
- They're not thinking about how they live and how it reflects on Christ.
- They basically do what they want but because they raised their hand once after a sermon they think they've got things settled with God.
- This is not biblical Christianity!
- John 15 and the Parable of the Sower (Mark 4) has some very troubling and difficult things to say to people who think they are Christians and do not bear fruit. Namely, that they are not Christians.

3. How exactly do you increase in the knowledge of God?

- Word, Spirit, Community
- A word about the absolute essential nature of community. (2 Corinthians 6:11-13).

4. Notice the circle of Paul's logic

- Know God and his ways so that you will reflect and display God so that you will know God.

11 May you be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy,

1. All power, according to his glorious might

- Ephesians 1:15-20

2. This power does not guarantee earthly success—but it does guarantee eternal joy.

- Hebrews 11:29—12:13