

## Lesson 3 – Colossians 1:9-14

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### Review

After nearly 20 years of ministry including three journeys across the eastern Mediterranean and a journey to Rome as a prisoner, the apostle Paul is imprisoned in Rome. It is here that he writes his “prison epistles”. One of those letters was to the church at Colossae – a church he does not know and one that is facing heretical attacks on the supremacy and sufficiency of Christ. This heresy later became known as Gnosticism, emphasizing a special knowledge (gnosis), and denying the deity and saving work of Jesus. Paul greets the church in his standard fashion and then prayed for them, first with the thanksgiving, now with supplication.

### Introduction

God is omnipotent. He is all powerful and able to accomplish anything consistent with His nature (Job 42:1-2; Psa 115:3; Jer 32:17; Rev 19:6). God is sovereign. All things are under His rule and control, and nothing happens without His direction or permission. He works all things after the counsel of His own will. God's purpose is all inclusive and is never thwarted. Nothing takes Him by surprise (2 Kings 19:25; Isa 14:24; Isa 46:9-11; Eph1:11; Rom 8:28). God is also good, loving, and wise. These attributes, along with all His other attributes, give believers confidence in our prayers. If God is not able to accomplish anything that He wills, then prayer is useless. But the truth is that God can accomplish anything that He wills which is consistent with His nature.

The Scriptures are clear in teaching and example that God responds (and *IS MORE THAN ABLE* to respond) to prayer: Moses (Ex 32:10-14); Jabez (1 Chron 4:10); Elijah (James 5:17-18); Daniel (Dan 9-10); Amos (Amos 7); and Peter and the believers (Acts 12).

<sup>21</sup>And Jesus answered and said to them, “Truly I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, ‘Be taken up and cast into the sea,’ it will happen. <sup>22</sup>**And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.**” (Matt 21:21-22)

<sup>7</sup>**Ask, and it will be given to you;** seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. <sup>8</sup>**For everyone who asks receives,** and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. (Matt 7:6-8)

<sup>16</sup>“You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that **whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you.** (John 15:16)

It is unfortunate that individual believers and “Christian” organizations and churches take these verses and think, “I can have this or that”, or “I can get whatever I want if I believe enough and use a verbal formula.” However, there is a qualifier for answered prayer. The prayer that will be answered in the positive is the prayer that is according to *God's* sovereign will, not our desires.

<sup>14</sup>This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, **if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.** (1 John 5:14)

So how are we sure that our desires are God's desires? You delight yourself in the Lord. You commit your way to Him.

<sup>3</sup>Trust in the Lord and do good; Dwell in the land and cultivate faithfulness. <sup>4</sup>Delight yourself in the Lord; And He will give you the desires of your heart. <sup>5</sup>Commit your way to the Lord, Trust also in Him, and He will do it. (Psa 37:3-5)

### **Prayer of supplication for the Colossians (1:9-14)**

Paul moves from greeting to prayer. He began with thanksgiving for the believers at Colossae. Now, he is going to pray for the Colossians; a prayer according to God's will. And a prayer that attacks the heresy that teaches against the supremacy and sufficiency of Christ.

Paul's prayers for people fall into two general categories: the unsaved for salvation (e.g. Rom 10:1; 1 Tim 2:1-4) and the saved for spiritual growth (e.g Eph 1:16-19; Phil 1:9-11; and here in Colossians). Paul's prayer for spiritual growth is one that we should pray for ourselves and for our body at VBC. Verses 9-14 form one long sentence in the Greek. Paul connects all these thoughts as he prays.

#### 1. Petition for proper knowledge (v9)

<sup>9</sup>For this reason also, since the day we heard *of it*, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,

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<sup>9</sup>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, (ESV)

"For this reason also, since the day we heard of it," starts off Paul's petition and directs his readers back to what was previously stated. Here is the reason the team is going to beseech God on their behalf. Specifically, Epaphras' report that the Colossians had been chosen by the Father for salvation and had received the gift of true saving faith. Without this underlying reality, the following petition is the wrong petition. The petitions that follow are only for believers.

Paul reassures the Colossians that he has "not ceased to pray for" them. He said this previously in verse 3, "praying always for you". The team was praying for them without exception, on every occasion, every time, without end. What great comfort to have believers praying for one another; to know that "I'm praying for you" is not just a platitude, but an unceasing action.

#### **❖ Do you follow through on "I'm praying for you"? Do you pray for other people more than you do for yourself?**

Paul asked "that may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding". "Filled" (pleroo) means to be filled to the brim, to make complete in every particular, to cause to abound, to furnish or supply liberally, to flood, to diffuse throughout, to pervade, to take possession of and so to ultimately control. It is a passive verb meaning that believers are to allow this filling of knowledge to happen to them. This is similar to Ephesians 5:18 where the filling of the Holy Spirit is a passive event.

This is a common word used by Paul. In Colossians it is translated “*be filled* with knowledge” (Col 1:9), “*fully carry out* the preaching” (Col 1:25), “in Him you have been *made complete*” Col 2:10, and “that you may *fulfill* it” (Col 4:17). In the sister-letter, Ephesians, it is translated “the fullness of Him who *fills* all in all” (Eph 1:23), “that you may be *filled* up to all the fullness of God.” (Eph 3:19), “that He might *fill* all things.” (Eph 4:10), and “but be *filled* with the Spirit” (Eph 5:18). Again, carrying the idea of being completely filled or totally controlled.

Paul asks that the Colossians be filled (infused with or controlled) with “the knowledge of His will”. “Knowledge” (epignosis) refers to full, perfect, personal (rather than just intellectual) knowledge. This type of knowledge powerfully influences one’s character or spiritual life. This is not just an intellectual understanding, but also a heart submission. Paul again attacks the Gnostic heresy at Colossae.

“Knowledge” is preceded by the definite article indicating that this is the one, only “knowledge of His will”. God’s will is only found in God’s Word. There is no other place to be seeking His will. No other secret, hidden knowledge. No other means for salvation than the pure gospel. No other means for sanctification for the believer. No other method for ministry within the body of Christ.

❖ **Where do you go for all you need for life and godliness? Do you seek spiritual resources apart from Christ and His Word?**

Paul prays that the Colossians would be filled with the knowledge of His will “in all spiritual wisdom and understanding”. “Spiritual” things deal with those things of invisibility and power, the non-physical realm. Its usage is only post-Pentecost. Here it is used to contrast “wisdom and understanding” that are empowered by the Holy Spirit as opposed to by the flesh or demons.

<sup>13</sup>Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom. <sup>14</sup>But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and *so* lie against the truth. <sup>15</sup>**This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic.** <sup>16</sup>For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing. <sup>17</sup>But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy. (James 3:13-17)

“Wisdom” is the ability to judge correctly and to follow the best course of action, based on knowledge and understanding. “Understanding” is the ability to understand concepts and see relationships between them and thus describes the faculty of comprehension, intelligence, acuteness, grasping with the intellect.

Paul is praying for the Colossians to have true, complete knowledge of God’s will (His Word), enabled by the Holy Spirit, with the ability to comprehend spiritual truths and apply them to their lives. All in stark contrast to the untrue, incomplete, supposed secret knowledge of the heresy that he is attacking.

❖ **Are you consistently walking in the Spirit with your mind saturated with His Word?**

## 2. Petition for the natural results of proper knowledge (v10-12a)

<sup>10a</sup>so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please *Him* in all respects,

<sup>10a</sup>so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: (ESV)

The result of a true, complete knowledge of God's will (His Word), with the ability to comprehend spiritual truths and apply them to their lives enabled by the Holy Spirit, is a walk worthy of the Lord. Here is a critical truth: right thinking results in right behavior. We see this as a pattern in entire books (Rom 1-11/12-15; Eph 1-3/4-6; Gal 1-4/5-6; Col 1-2/3-4, etc.) as well as specific teaching. Sound doctrine precedes sound living.

<sup>1</sup>Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, *which is* your spiritual service of worship. <sup>2</sup>And do not be conformed to this world, but **be transformed by the renewing of your mind**, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. (Rom 12:1-2)

<sup>22</sup>that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, <sup>23</sup>and that you **be renewed in the spirit of your mind**, <sup>24</sup>and put on the new self, which in *the likeness of* God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. (Eph 4:22-24)

<sup>9</sup>Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its *evil* practices, <sup>10</sup>and have **put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge** according to the image of the One who created him (Col 3:9-10)

<sup>13</sup>Therefore, **prepare your minds for action**, keep sober *in spirit*, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. <sup>14</sup>As obedient children, **do not be conformed to the former lusts *which were yours in your ignorance***, <sup>15</sup>but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all *your* behavior; <sup>16</sup>because it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy." (1 Peter 1:13-16)

It should also be noted that if a worthy walk does not result from a true knowledge, then only head knowledge (facts) is resulting from your interaction with the Word. If this is the case, then there is a heart-level disconnect between knowledge and behavior.

A heart that is submitted to God and whose mind is saturated with God's Word with a heart to be a doer of it, will walk in a manner that honors Him. A mind that seeks sanctifying methods (other knowledge or complete self-effort) apart from a Spirit-filled life infused with the Word will not have been progressively sanctified and will not walk in a manner worthy of the Lord.

### ❖ **Are you striving to renew your mind with the truth of God's Word?**

"Walk" is the main verb describing the results of the true knowledge and means literally to walk around. Paul only uses the word metaphorically referring to one's conduct of life, habitual way or bent of life, life-style, behavior.

Paul uses the metaphor to describe the habitual pattern of life of the believer throughout his epistles: in newness of life (Rom 6:4); by the manifestation of truth (2 Cor 4:2); by faith, not by sight (2 Cor 5:7); by the Spirit (Gal 5:16); in the good works which God has prepared for us (Eph 2:10); in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, (Eph 4:1); in love (Eph 5:2); as children of Light (Eph 5:8); not as unwise men but as wise (Eph 5:15); according to the pattern you have in Paul (Phil 3:17); in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please *Him* in all respects (Col 1:10); as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, *so* walk in Him (Col 2:6); with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity (Col 4:5); in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory (1 Thess 2:12); that you excel still more (1 Thess 4:1); properly toward outsiders and not be in any need (1 Thess 4:12).

“In a manner worthy” is an adverb which describes how the believer is to walk. It means worthily, fittingly, suitably, properly. This is walking in a way that Christ deserves, in a way that honors Him, in a way that glorifies Him. This is to conduct yourself daily in a way that is consistent with who you are in Christ. Here in Colossians it is to conduct oneself in the manner worthy of the Lord. In other NT usages, the believer is conduct themselves in a manner worthy of the saints (Rom 16:2), worthy of the gospel of Christ (Phil 1:27), worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory (1 Thess 2:12), worthy of the calling with which you have been called (Eph 4:1), and in a manner worthy of God (3 John 6).

“To please” is only used here in the NT. It means a desire or willingness to please, an endeavor to please, a disposition to please or comply, exhibiting a fawning attentiveness. It is the desire to do something that produces satisfaction. It was used especially in public documents, descriptive of exceptional public service or expression of devotion.

“In all respects” indicates that nothing is left out of submission to a desire to please the Lord. Nothing is held back that is not submitted to the Lordship of Christ in a desire to please Him.

A manner worthy, fitting, suitable, proper of the Lord is walking in the same way He walked because of abiding in Him (filled with the Spirit).

<sup>6</sup>the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked. (1 John 2:6)

❖ **Are you walking in a manner worthy of the Lord? Are you desiring to be pleasing to the Lord in everything? Are you holding anything back from Christ’s Lordship?**

There are four participles that describe and expand on “to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord”.

a. Bearing fruit in every good work (10b)

<sup>10b</sup>bearing fruit in every good work

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<sup>10b</sup>bearing fruit in every good work (ESV)

“Bearing fruit” means to bring forth fruit, to be fertile, productive. Figuratively, it refers to bringing forth deeds or works (fruit) and in the positive refers heart motives, thoughts, words, and actions that glorify/honor God. This is in the present tense indicating that bearing fruit occurs continually.

Fruit is born in “every good work” or any kind of God directed activity (ultimately found in His Word) undertaken to live for Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus stated that bearing fruit is the demonstration of being His disciple. And that ultimately God is glorified by fruit-works.

<sup>8</sup>My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples. (John 15:8)

Fruit bearing glorifies God and is therefore a sub-purpose in our salvation.

<sup>4</sup>Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ, so that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, **in order that we might bear fruit for God.** (Rom 7:4)

<sup>16</sup>Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven. (Matt 5:16)

**Are you striving, in the power of the Spirit, to bear fruit for God’s glory?**

b. Increasing in the knowledge of God (10c)

<sup>10</sup>and increasing in the knowledge of God;

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<sup>10c</sup>and increasing in the knowledge of God; (ESV)

“Increasing” means to cause to grow and pictures the believer's continual (present tense) spiritual growth. This is the passive voice indicating here that God causes the growth. Remember that “knowledge” refers to full, perfect, personal (rather than just intellectual) knowledge. It is experiential knowledge.

God causes growth (progressively sanctifies us), but He causes growth as you “cooperate” with Him. God does His part and you do your part.

<sup>12</sup>So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; <sup>13</sup>for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for *His* good pleasure. (Phil 2:12-13)

Believers need to be careful where they get the “knowledge” of God. The specific knowledge of God is revealed only in God’s Word (Psa 19). It is the Word that believers need for growth.

<sup>2</sup>like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, (1 Pet 2:2)

❖ **Are you striving to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ (2 Pet 3:18)?**

MacArthur in his Colossians commentary notes several marks of growing spiritually: an increased love for God's Word (Psa 119:47-48, 97, 127, 159, 163), an increase in obedience (1 John 2:3-5), an enlarged faith (2 Thess 1:3), and a greater love (Phil 1:9). Over time, you should see an increase in the life of Christ living through you (Gal 2:20). Otherwise you should be concerned that something is amiss in your walk.

c. Strengthened with all power for perseverance (11)

<sup>11</sup>strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously

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<sup>11</sup>being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy; (ESV)

The Spirit-walking believer is continually (present tense) “strengthened” by the Spirit (passive voice). “Strengthened” means to be enabled and speaks of an inherent power which gives one the ability to do something. “All” describes the all sufficient source for all the trials of life, all the time. “Power” refers to the power or ability to carry out some function. “Might” means strength or might the power to rule or control or dominion (power to rule, supreme authority, sovereignty, the right to govern or rule or determine). Believers are continually enabled with all ability from the divine supply for a purpose.

“Steadfastness” portrays a picture of steadfastly and unflinchingly bearing up under a heavy load and describes that quality of character which does not allow one to surrender to circumstances or succumb under trial. It is steadfastness, constancy, and endurance. It does not describe a grim resignation or a passive "grin & bear" attitude but a triumphant facing of difficult circumstances. It is courageous gallantry which accepts suffering and hardship and turns them into grace and glory. Jesus was our ultimate example of “steadfastness” (endurance), “who for the joy set before Him **endured** the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.” (Heb 12:2)

“Patience” or “long-suffering” is a fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:23). It is a long holding out of the mind before it gives room to action or passion. It describes emotional calm or quietness in the face of provocation, misfortune or unfavorable circumstances. It expresses itself in patience without complaint or irritation in the face of injustice or unpleasant circumstances.

The ESV is better here with “joy” going with verse 11. “Joy” is from the root for “grace” and means having an awareness of God's grace. It is grace dependent and circumstance independent. It is the feeling of inner blessedness or gladness of heart at knowing God's favor.

A believer who is walking in the Spirit, filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord. They will have a full supply of strength to glorify God in trials with steadfastness, patience, all infused with joy.

❖ **How do you respond to the trials of this life?**

d. Giving thanks to the Father

<sup>12a</sup>giving thanks to the Father,

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<sup>12a</sup>giving thanks to the Father, (ESV)

“Giving thanks” is literally “thankful for good grace.” It describes one’s awareness that God’s grace works well, leading us to the give thanks. It is the quality of being grateful, with the implication of also having the appropriate (Spirit filled and enabled) attitude.

The believer should give thanks in and through all situations (Rom 8:28-29, 1 Thess 5:18) because 1) God is in control, 2) our position with Him is secure, and 3) He is working out the situation for my sanctifying good and His glory.

❖ **Do you give thanks or do you wag your finger at God?**

3. The Father’s amazing work (v12b-14)

<sup>12b</sup>who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light. <sup>13</sup>For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, <sup>14</sup>in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

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<sup>12b</sup>who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. <sup>13</sup>He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, <sup>14</sup>in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. (ESV)

As Paul finishes his four attributes of someone who is walking worthily of the Lord, pleasing Him in all respects, he goes on to expand on the Father’s great work in salvation for His children.

a) The Father qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light (12b)

“Qualified” means to make fit, adequate, sufficient, or to render competent or worthy. It is a past completed act (aorist tense) that we receive (passive voice). There is simply no other way to share in the inheritance unless God qualifies us. By contrast the Gnostics believed that in one’s own effort enough knowledge was attainable to become “enlightened”.

It is important to understand that you had a desperate need to “be qualified” by God because of your unqualified state before Him. In summary from the sister letter to the Ephesians. You were dead in your trespasses and sins (Eph 2:1), walked according to the course of this world according to the prince of the power of the air (Eph 2:2), lived in the lusts of your flesh (Eph 2:3), indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind (Eph 2:3), were by nature children of wrath (Eph 2:3), separate from Christ (Eph 2:12), having no hope and without God in the world (Eph 2:12), walking in the futility of your mind (Eph 4:17), being darkened in your understanding (Eph 4:18), and excluded from the life of God (Eph 4:18). Your condition was dire and yet God chose to qualify you.

❖ **Do you have a complete view of your desperate need before an all holy God?**

“To share in the inheritance” is literally “for the portion of the lot”. It pictures dividing up an inheritance for individual allotments of the total inheritance. The Father has allotted to each of His children an inheritance. There are many detailed aspects of the believer’s inheritance, but the primary aspect is salvation (Heb 1:14), eternal life (Matt 19:29) – a quantity (forever in heaven) and quality of life (abundant life in Christ, John 15:10; Gal 2:20; 5:22-23).

<sup>29</sup>And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or farms for My name’s sake, will receive many times as much, and **will inherit eternal life**. (Matt 19:29) (See also 1 Cor 15:50-53; Eph 1:13-14; Heb 1:14; 1 Pet 1:3-5)

“The saints in light” refers to those who have been separated from the world and set apart to God. Every believer is a saint and has a portion of the inheritance. Believers are “in light” with the “fruit of the Light *consists* in all goodness and righteousness and truth” (Eph 5:9).

❖ **How do you demonstrate your gratitude for your inheritance?**

- b) The Father rescued us from the domain of darkness (13a)

“Rescued” or “delivered” (ESV) means to draw or snatch someone out of severe and acute danger or great peril and so to save, rescue, deliver, preserve. It is a past completed action (aorist tense) which was initiated and carried out by God (middle voice). God saw our great peril and helpless state and by His great love and grace initiated our salvation, rescuing or delivering us from the “domain of darkness”.

“Domain” is a word that describes authority, power, right over someone. The realm is the absence of light (which is not where saints dwell) that is currently owned by Satan.

Satan is currently the “god of this world” (2 Cor 4:4) and “ruler of this world” (John 16:11). When we speak of “world”, we mean the current world system that belongs to Satan. It is his worldwide system of deception and wickedness that leaves God out and is opposed to Him (1 John 2:15-17; James 3:15-17). Satan’s aim is to make the values of this godless system seem attractive; appealing to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the boastful pride of life to entice us to sin.

❖ **Do you understand your great peril and what God has done to rescue you?**

- c) The Father transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son (13b)

God has rescued you from the domain of darkness and transferred you to the kingdom of His beloved Son. “Transferred” means to remove or change and referred to removing persons from one country and reestablishing (resettling) them as citizens (Phil 3:20) in a new one. God completely removed us from Satan’s domain and authority to the kingdom of Christ. A kingdom is a group of people ruled by a king. You are ruled by Christ!

❖ **Do you live each day as a citizen of Christ’s kingdom?**

... In the beloved Son we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins (14)

Paul just mentioned the Father's beloved Son. As if distracted, but really not as he is moved by the Spirit, Paul cannot help but expand on the glorious Son (see similarly Eph 5:26-27). He now gives a snapshot of what believers have in Christ, then in v15-23 will expand more on Christ's person and work.

"Redemption" means to let one go free upon payment of a ransom price. It was a term for money paid to free slaves from bondage. Before Christ, you were a slave to sin (Rom 6). You were a slave under the power of sin and death from which you could not free yourself. It was Jesus' substitutionary death which paid the price that sets you free (Mark 10:45). Redemption is something "we have" now. It is not something we work toward.

"Forgiveness" means sending away or pardoning or canceling a debt. God has forgiven the penalty of eternal damnation for our sins through faith in Jesus. God has "As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us." (Psa 103:12).

You have been bought from the slave-house of sin "through His blood" (Eph 1:7) and the debt of sin that you owed and could never pay has been cancelled. What an amazing work done by the glorious, beloved Son!

❖ **Does your gratitude for all that Christ has done for you result in offering to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe (Heb 12:28-29)?**

## Conclusion

Paul's prayer is his first attack against the false teachers. They promised a special knowledge and superior spirituality. Terms like filled, knowledge, wisdom, and spiritual understanding were part of their vocabulary. So, he uses these same words in his prayer. He asks that God "fill" them with "the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding" (v 9). Paul uses the word "filled" here carrying the idea of being fully equipped or controlled. Paul's prayer was that the Colossians be controlled by the full knowledge of God's will, which would lead to obedience and moral excellence.

## Additional Study

1. What is the content of your prayers? Read Paul's prayers referenced below. Do you pray like Paul did for yourself and the body? If not, strive to make your prayers more in-line with those revealed in Scripture that are according to God's will.  
Rom 1:8-10; 10:1; 15:5-6; 15:13; 15:30-33; 1 Cor 1:4-9; 16:23; 2 Cor 1:3-7; 2:14-16; 13:7-9; Gal 6:18; Eph 1:3-14; 1:15-23; 3:14-21; 6:19-20; Phil 1:3-6; 1:9-11; 4:23; Col 1:3-14; 4:2-4; 1 Thess 1:2-3; 2:13-16; 3:9-13; 5:23-24; 5:28; 2 Thess 1:3-13; 1:11-12; 2:16-17; 3:2-5; 3:16; 1 Tim 1:12; 2:1-3; 2 Tim 1:3-7; 1:16-18; 4:22; Titus 3:15; Philemon 1:4-7; 1:25
2. What does your "walk" look like? Is it worthy of the Lord, pleasing to Him?
3. Does your life demonstrate fruit, growth, perseverance, and thankfulness? If not, what needs to happen to cause these demonstrations of true saving faith to be present?
4. Meditate on your unqualified state before God and what He did to qualify you for His inheritance.