

13087-A October 20, 2013
What We Really Need
Colossians 1:9-14, part 1

- I. Mark 3:1-6. How could religious people, with Bibles, be so off-page with God?**
- A. *By thinking more about their own obedience than about God's character.*
 - 1. All legalists make this mistake. Rom.9:30-10:4
 - B. Paul wrote Colossians to warn his Christian friends about false teachers who were more interested in religion than in Christ.
 - 1. Spiritual Narcissism: legalism, asceticism, spiritism, traditionalism
- II. The Primary Prayer for Christians is Growth. 9-14.**
- A. That we might be filled with the knowledge of His will. 9-10
 - B. And strengthened by the presence of His life. 11
 - C. Because we have been qualified for a share in his inheritance. 12
 - D. By virtue of the redemption he supplies through his Son. 13-14
- III. Four questions to open the first half of this passage up for us.**
- A. What is the knowledge of God's Will?**
- 1. It is a body of knowledge of ultimate reality centered in the gospel.
 - a) Reliable Knowledge of how God is saving and transforming his fallen universe—who God is and what he is doing in the world.
 - b) Not primarily personal guidance (“God’s will for my life.”)
 - c) Not just “values” or opinions about religion, but factual knowledge of reality.
 - d) *God's values are facts.* Note the “fact/value” distinction.
 - e) So, moral goodness (love) is a law of the universe like electromagnetism or gravity
 - 2. It is centered on Christ.2:3
 - a) To grasp in ever deeper ways the authority, presence, and grace of Christ.
- B. What does it mean to be *filled* with this knowledge?**
- 1. To be so aware of the Lord's grace and authority that it affects everything in your life.
 - 2. To be confident in the truth of Christ such that we evaluate everything else from the gospel's standpoint.
 - a) Having the gospel as the prime worldview.
- C. How does this knowledge come to us?**
- 1. *Through Spiritual wisdom and understanding. 1 Cor.2:6-3:3*
 - a) Spiritual: pneumatikos = sourced in the Holy Spirit.
 - (1) Flesh is thinking in the old way. 1 Cor.3:1-3 (Jas.3:13-18)
 - b) Wisdom: sophia = the ability to use knowledge that grows from the gospel correctly in life. Knowledge of reality, rightly applied.
 - c) Understanding: sunesis = intelligence, insight, comprehension.
 - 2. The Holy Spirit teaches us how to think in entirely new ways—*like Jesus himself.*

D. How can you tell if you have this knowledge? You have 3 things. 10

1. Skill at the Eternal kind of life. Walk: peripateo = live, do life.
 - a) *Eternal life is a skill, a way of interpreting and responding to life in this age. A life that reflects the quality and wisdom of the Lord*
 - (1) Worthy: axios = comparable in merit or worth, quality, value.
 - b) Less “religious” and more aware of God as Father and the Son as the saving king.
 - c) The primary skill is love. Jn.13:34; 1 Cor.13
2. Fruit in the form of practical goodness. Eph.2:8-10
 - a) Fruit = Good work = Stuff we say and do that benefits others.
 - (1) Not an extra list of religious duties and responsibilities that is added to an already overloaded life.
 - (2) Not “official ministry.” “Witnessing” being at church etc.
 - b) Just benefitting the people around you, closest to you, in every way you can.
 - (1) It’s what comes naturally to a person walking with the Lord.
3. A relationship with God that gets stronger with time.
 - a) *This is not academic knowledge, but personal, interactive relationship. Jesus put love of God over the Decalogue **Mk.12:29-31***
 - (1) *To know the Lord is to Love Him—for who He is.*
 - (2) *The greatness of the being of God demands a love that can never be the result of a demand.*
 - b) How does this love for God grow? *By being stressed and then re-building.* Through trials and failures and restorations. Gospel in experience.
 - (1) *Not by impressing him with your faithfulness (legalism).*
 - (2) *But by pressing in to him as you are weakened in this life.*
 - (a) (Like Jacob wrestling with the Angel, Gen.32)

IV. How can we Christians, who have Bibles, remain on page with the Lord?

- A. We can pray for exactly what Paul prayed for.
 1. All of this is done by the Father, through the Spirit. Not primarily by us.
- B. We can be Christ/gospel centered rather than church/religion/spirituality centered.
 1. *The Lord is more important than our church, program, our idea of mission.*
 2. *The Lord is more important than our spiritual growth.*