

# Colossians 1:9-14

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 26 May 2024

Preacher: Seth Powers

[ 0 : 00 ] We are on a schedule of alternating teachings. Josh Christopherson, for those of you who are visiting, he's an elder from Bellicose. He's kind of our de facto elder now.

We don't have elders right now. We're at the new church plant. And he's alternating his time between teaching at Bellicose and then teaching here. So on the off Sundays, some of the men are rotating through teaching through Colossians.

So this is the second go at that. Chris taught last time, starting us off. He did Colossians chapter 1 up to verse 8. And I'm going to teach verse 9 through 14 today.

So get right into it. Okay, so a little bit of context here. There is a thanksgiving that Paul was giving on behalf of his team, his apostolic team.

They had heard this good news, this wonderful report from the Colossians about their faith. And that that faith had genuine fruit attached to it. There was love. You know, this is something you can't fake.

[ 1 : 05 ] And so they'd heard this and they said, that's real. That's real faith. And because of that evidence, it had caused them to do something. And we're going to start digging into what that had produced in this apostolic team.

So starting in verse 9. And so from the day we heard of this good fruit, this good testimony from the Colossians, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will and all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner that is worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy, giving thanks to the Father who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in life.

Okay, so I do have a few points in here.

I have three points. If I forget this, by the time I get to the end, I'm going to tell you what these points are. Point number one is that each of us has a responsibility to know God's will.

This is Paul's prayer, that they might be filled with the knowledge of God's will. And we have a responsibility to own that, you know, on an individual basis. And the second is that there is a power to endure in patience and joy, and that comes from God.

[ 2 : 45 ] It's his power. And it's a miracle. And the third is that we are beloved in the beloved. So those are the three prominent points that jumped out to me. There's a whole lot more in there, but those are the ones that have really kind of hit home in my heart, and I want to try to give words to today as best as I can.

So for the first one, I'm just going to read. That comes from verses 9 and 10. So verse 9, I'll just read that again. 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 and all spiritual wisdom and understanding.

So this made me think of this verse in Psalms 32. Psalm 32, verse 8 through 9 said, I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go.

I will counsel you with my eye upon you. Be not like a horse or a mule that is without understanding, which must be curbed with bit and bridle, or it will not stay near to you.

So I have experienced many times in my life where I feel like I'm on a really short leash with God, and it's actually a comfort to me. I've always felt like I'm on a really short leash.

[ 3 : 59 ] Like I can't get away with things that most people can get away with. And it's just, it's always been my experience. It's gone very poorly with me when I have tried to do things that my friends do. You know, not necessarily like godly friends, but this has just been the experience of my life.

I feel like this. And I have always thought, thank you, Lord, for keeping me on a short leash. This is his love towards me.

You know, Hebrews 12 says that if we're without discipline, we're bastards, not children. And the clear evidence that we are children of God is that God disciplines us. He intervenes. Okay?

And if we have an experience of divine non-intervention, that's a problem. We ought to cry out to God and say, Lord, start intervening in my life.

Okay? But when you think of being on a short leash, you think of like training maybe a dog, you start off with the animal on a short leash.

[ 4 : 59 ] But that's not the end goal. The end goal is not for them to perpetually need like two feet of slack in their leash so that, you know, every time they do something they're not supposed to do, they get yanked. You know, and they're kept on the narrow way by brute force, by discipline, by correction, left and right.

That's what God's saying right here. He's saying, don't be like a horse or a mule that does not have understanding. They need a short leash. So praise God for a short leash.

It's from the Lord. He loves us. He's our father. But he's challenging us as his children to not stay there. Like, and that's what Paul's saying right here. He's like, I know you guys are children of God.

I've heard about it. I heard about your faith. I heard about your love, you know, and this is amazing. So now I'm going to pray for something else, for maturity, that you be filled with his will and all spiritual wisdom and understanding.

Ephesians 5. So Ephesians is like the parallel passage. It's like one gigantic parallel passage to Colossians. You can't even almost teach through Colossians without simultaneously teaching on Ephesians, I feel.

[ 6 : 03 ] So I'll probably have a lot of those parallel passages. But one of them is Ephesians 5, verse 15 through 17. Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise, but as wise. So there we have, you know, image of an animal walking on a leash.

Making the best use of the time because the days are evil. Therefore, do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. He wants us to go on to maturity.

He wants us to have an understanding. You know, a dog that's been well-trained, it understands its master's will. You see someone walking around with a dog off of their leash, and the dog, they have a sense of, the owner has a sense of security because they know the dog is well-trained.

It can run off there and it'll say, come here. And they'll immediately turn around and come back. And a lot of times they don't even need to say anything because the dog knows it has an understanding of its master's will and has been trained by it.

So in the same way it's saying, don't be unwise, but learn what it is that the Lord wants. You know, we should know. So there's a lot on this, understanding the will of God, but I want to look at two means in particular.

[ 7 : 13 ] These are God's means for helping us understand his will. One is the word of God, and the second is the empowering of the Holy Spirit. So along the lines of the word of God, 2 Timothy 3, verse 14 through 17 says, this is Paul's writing to Timothy, his son in the faith.

He says, but as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you've been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

All scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

The Bible is sufficient. And there is an ownership that God has put on every Christian. Like we can't outsource this.

He says, you, you are able to be built up. It is sufficient. And from a child until you're old, this is able to equip you for everything I'm calling you to do.

[ 8 : 26 ] We need to hear that. We need to hear that for, we need to hear the word of the Lord for us, particularly that I have a responsibility for God to handle this rightly and be a good workman.

And the second means is the empowering of the Holy Spirit. John 16, verses 12 through 14. Jesus, he's talking to the disciples at the time. This is before he dies and the sins.

He says, I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth. For he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears, he will speak and he will declare to you the things that are to come.

He will glorify me for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. So the word of God isn't enough all by itself. We actually need an interpreter.

We need the spirit of God to open it up and communicate this truth to us. Like if I had everything I needed with just the Bible, God could have in his sovereignty just given us a Bible.

[ 9 : 29 ] And it would not have required Jesus to die and to ascend on high and give the Holy Spirit for me to be filled with God's will.

But he did. He needed to. He needed to actually send the Holy Spirit. Jesus was in person trying to teach his disciples. And he's like, there are things I just can't even share with you right now because the Holy Spirit's not here.

But when he comes, which is, that's the situation we're in right now. The Holy Spirit has come. He's going to lead you in all the truth. And we have that inheritance as believers. We have a Holy Spirit who knows our deepest problems.

He knows how the word applies exactly according to our need. And he's promised if we're a sheep, he says, my sheep hear my voice. And the Holy Spirit has come to take what is from him and communicate it to us in a personal way.

And, you know, this is different than listening to a bunch of sermons online. Okay. Like those are great. Podcasts are awesome.

[ 10 : 34 ] Books are awesome. Sermons are awesome. The Lord uses these as means. They're wonderful. But it's not a substitute for personal ownership of the responsibility we have before God to come to him and to search the scriptures and to trust that the spirit, I have the same spirit that raised Jesus from the dead.

And he's right there doing this work of ministering and opening the word of God to me. And this is, there's something in us that doesn't really want to come right to God.

Okay. We'd much rather, like, I don't know about you, but there's something in my flesh I notice is a pattern. It's way easier for me to listen to a thing about God or read a book about God or listen to a podcast about God than it is to actually come to the word of God and, and say, Lord, I believe that you're my savior.

Will you teach me? There's like this thing, there's like this, this wall, this kind of barrier. And it's, that barrier is not there with all of that content. Okay. But I find that like just something as simple as getting up and spending time with the Lord, there's like a wall there, you know, and I feel it in my spirit.

This is why sometimes like if I'm discouraged, morning quiet times are kind of discouraging because I have this sense of like, I don't know what that is. Well, it's because the spirit, it, the spirit is who communicates and opens the word to us.

[ 11 : 58 ] You know, second Corinthians three talks about this, this veil that's over the scripture. All right. And this is a real thing, but it says, when we turn to the Lord, the veil is taken away because the veil is done away in Christ.

That's a spiritual reality that we all experience, but the Holy spirit has come to open up the word to us in, in a living way. So anyway, just kind of a little bit of an aside, but let's not let these good things become a substitute for the main thing.

In Acts 17, verse 11, there's a, there's a great example of people who didn't allow this to happen. And it was the Bereans. It says, now these Jews, the Bereans were more noble than those in Thessalonica.

They received the word with all eagerness, examining the scriptures daily to see if these things were so. So Paul was there communicating a message. He was sharing the gospel. The things he was sharing were true, but they didn't just take it because it sounded true.

They just didn't, they didn't listen to it and like, oh man, that was awesome. That was the word of God. Awesome. They took it and they received it like that, but then they also coupled it with their personal responsibility before God to search the scriptures themselves to prove whether it was true.

[ 13 : 15 ] That's the same way that we ought to approach messages from God. You know, whether they're messages here that we hear preached by, you know, preached at church on Sunday or podcasts we listen to or online sermons, we need to fear God and come before him and say, Lord, I need to be like a Berean.

I want to be more noble, you know, and I want to, I want to trust that the same spirit that's in these guys is in me. And you've given me a Bible and I have an authority before God to test these things.

I think, especially when we're thinking about starting a church and laying good foundations, this is essential. So, you know, it's so easy to just get caught up with some movement or some fine sounding arguments.

Talks about that later on in Colossians two, to not be led astray by fine sounding arguments. Um, this has happened to me so many times, you know, we were locked up in church movements that seemed really good.

And I knew that some of the things that they were teaching weren't quite exactly like the Bible taught, but I ignored it. I just kind of stuffed that down. And the longterm fruit was like a train wreck for our family.

[14:30] And I wish I had owned that responsibility more to hold what's being taught to me by these, uh, super preachers and test it with the word of God.

And when we're thinking about starting a new church, I think this is, this is so essential. I think the Lord wants to work this into our culture, a culture of being Bereans. You know, no one gets a pass. Um, you know, uh, the apostle Peter didn't get a pass.

You know, he was in, in, you know, among the Galatians, he was led astray, uh, with the error of the Judaizers and Paul just blasted him. You know, he didn't let Peter's status in any way, dissuade him from his responsibility to hold him account to what the Bible said.

And we have the same responsibility. Well, um, anyway, I think that's that on that. Um, so why do we need, why do we need to know God's will?

Verse 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, we must know God's will in order to walk in a manner that pleases him.

[15:35] Um, you know, we think of God as being really just all about our intentions. And in a lot of ways that there's a precious truth to that. We don't want to set that aside. Um, but in, in terms of living and walking in a way that pleases him, good intentions alone, don't cut it.

Uh, there's a good, there's a example of this. Um, I'm going to read the story real quick in second Samuel chapter six. Um, this is, uh, the ark of God.

This is during the time of David being King. The ark of God had been captured by the Philistines and was stuck at this guy's house. And, uh, and they wanted to bring it back to Jerusalem. Uh, and I'll just read this story real quick.

This is second Samuel chapter six. And we'll read verses one through 10. David again, gathered all the chosen men of Israel, 30,000. And David arose and went with all the people who are with him from Baal Judah to bring up from there, the ark of God, which is, excuse me, which is called by the name of the Lord of hosts who sits enthroned on the chair of him.

And they carried the ark of God on a new cart and brought it out of the house of, Abinadab, which was on the hill. And Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab were driving the new cart, the ark of God.

[16:52] And Ahio went before the ark. And David and all the house of Israel were celebrating before the Lord with songs and lyres and harps and tambourines and castanets and cymbals. And when they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah put out his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it for the oxen stumbled.

And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah. And God struck him down there because of his error. And he died there beside the ark of God. And David was angry because the Lord had broken out against Uzzah.

And that place is called Perez Uzzah to this day. And David was afraid of the Lord that day. And he said, How can the ark of the Lord come to me? So David was not willing to take the ark of the Lord into the city of David.

But David took it aside to the house of Obed-Edom, the Gittite. So they had good intentions. You know, it was wrong for the ark of God to stay over here when it ought to be here in Jerusalem. And they wanted to fix that problem. Okay. And they partly follow God's rules. You know, I think they had some Levites there for as best I can understand.

[18:04] Uzzah and this other guy were Levites. So they were the right people. But they didn't take the time to understand the will of God. So in Numbers 4, there's explicit instructions on how you handle the ark of God.

It's got to be carried by Levites. It's got to be carried on poles. It can't be put in a cart. You know, there's very explicit instructions. There was these poles that were going to go through it. And you can't touch it. If you touch it, you die.

So these guys, they had all the good intentions in the world. They were trying to do the work of God. They didn't take the time to figure out what God wanted, how he wanted to do it. And God struck him dead.

You know, and so, you know, the ark is, this is a picture of the household of God. You know, and so we need to be careful how we go about building the house of God. You don't build the house of God on a bunch of good intentions and everybody agreeing.

You know, I thought I read one commentary on this. It was very interesting. I didn't go back to fact check this. You can fact check. But David said that David had received counsel at this time.

[19:06] He'd run this idea by a bunch of the leaders in Jerusalem. And they all agreed. Yeah, this is a good idea. Okay. So, like, translate that to us.

We have a high value for the different, you know, gifts in the body of Christ. For unity of the spirit and the bond of peace. God working through his different members. You know, maybe we have a thought that if we can all agree about something, that's evidence that God wants us to do that. Does God say it? No. Has God said it? Does the word of God substantiate and affirm that this is how we ought to do it?

That's what matters. I mean, history is full of this. A lot of people being totally on board with something that was absolutely not God's will, and God judges it. And the scary thing is, sometimes he lets it last a long time. You know, we need to fear God.

You know, I think about IHOP. You know, and I know that some of us in this room were in that in different seasons. You know, my parents were very early on in things.

[20:07] And it's good to ask yourself the question. With all the stuff that came up recently, with all the leaders being exposed as being sexual immorality and all that stuff, what if that hadn't happened?

You know, what if they just kept continuing doing the thing that they were doing? Is there anything about their ministry that would be concerning? Is there anything about what they were teaching that is evidence that there's something wrong going on?

You know, do we really need leaders to be exposed as having been living in sin for us to be like, no, that's not in accordance with the word of God?

You know, and this is the same with me. I'm not throwing stones at IHOP. This is just a good example. Like, there were teachers that my family and I followed for years, and there hasn't been any major exposure of sin.

They were still teaching things that were contrary to the word of God and it destroyed lives, though. And for so long, I felt unempowered to hold them to account to what the Bible says.

[21:18] And we need to. And we need to. Things like this happen. Ultimately, God will judge his church. The Bible says that the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God.

You know, and if we barely escape, what's going to happen to the ungodly and sinners? You know, so he's zealous for his house. And part of that zeal is expressed in the individual members taking responsibility to hold what we do and how we build to account to what the Bible says.

You know, if there had just been one leader at that time who'd raise his hand, be like, you know what? You know, I was digging in the law the other day and there were some really clear instructions about how we should do this. I think that's a bad idea to put it on a cart.

You know, because it says if you touch it, you'll die. It's like, whoa, wow, I didn't even know that, you know. So like, we have a responsibility to do that. You know, the body works together and builds itself up in love as each member does its part.

So anyway, I'm digressing a little bit on this. Let's see here. I'm going to skip a little bit.

[22:28] One point, a sub-point of this, you know, this verse also speaks of bearing fruit in every good work. And increasing in the knowledge of God. You know, body ministry is not a replacement for knowing God personally.

Okay. It's a fruit, knowing God personally. We can't outsource this responsibility to others. There's not two mediators between God and man. There's one, the Lord Jesus Christ.

And we experience this body ministry, this bearing fruit in knowing the Lord, when we are personally in a living way connected with the head.

It says in Ephesians 4.16. I like how the Berean study Bible put this. From him, Jesus, the whole body. From him, the whole body, fitted and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love through the work of each individual part. We, together, are built up in a living way. And we experience the giftings of each other when we are personally responsible to maintain that connection to the head. [ 23 : 36 ] When we're going on to know him in a living way. And anyway, this is an outflow. This is part of the goal of us being filled with the knowledge of his will is so that we can bear fruit in this walk.

Okay, moving on. Verse 11. Being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might for all endurance and patience with joy.

The thing that jumped out to me on this is that the strength for this endurance, this pleasing, this knowing, this fruit bearing comes from God's glorious might. This is not a quality we dredge up in ourselves.

It comes from him. Romans 8, verses 10 through 11 said, But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life because of righteousness.

If the spirit of him who raised up Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his spirit who dwells in you.

[ 24 : 40 ] So this being strengthened with all power, there's a corollary to Christ being raised from the dead. It's a miracle. Okay. This is like less of kind of maybe, I don't know, a counter analogy.

It's a miracle. It's being raised from the dead. Our body is as good as dead because of sin. And we experience that. Like my body is not good for doing God's will. It doesn't have endurance.

It doesn't have patience. It doesn't have joy for sure. In any event. Okay. That's why I need the life of another Christ. If the spirit of Christ lives in you, the same power that was at work raising Jesus from the dead, that's a miracle.

Will work in me raising me from the dead on a day-to-day basis to do God's will with joy and peace. You know, it's a miracle. So God's not looking for us to have an experience that's any less miraculous than Jesus raising from the dead.

And so there's a very real sense in which we can acknowledge, man, I am not cut out for this naturally at all. But praise God, his spirit lives in me. I know he lives in me. And the same power that's at work in raising Jesus from the dead is going to give life to my mortal body, is going to give me a strength with all power according to his glorious might for all endurance and patience with joy.

[ 26 : 02 ] Anyway, not a whole lot on that one, but did want to point that one out. Moving on to verse 12. Giving thanks to the Father who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.

He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

There's a lot in there, but there are two phrases that I wanted to key in on. And they are his beloved son and in whom.

I find that this is personally true. I think this is true for more than just me, but I know this is true personally. Often our insecurity and lack of worth stems from a lack of understanding of how God has qualified us.

He doesn't just say, I chose some people to be saved, and you'll know that you're one of these people based on the fruit you bear. Though there is a sense in which that's true. Okay? Jesus says, you'll know a tree by its fruit.

[ 27 : 08 ] Okay? He chose us in the beloved son. And thus receives us as he received Christ. And in union with Jesus, we do bear fruit.

Okay? It's impossible not to. You can't be connected to the son and not bear fruit. So, you know, this is very easy for me to think that Jesus is beloved.

It's not hard for me to think that at all. God says it. He's worthy of being loved. You know, God says in Matthew 3, 17, he said to Jesus after he's baptized, he said, this is my beloved son with whom I am well pleased.

It's a lot harder for me to think that I'm beloved, though. I got to do a lot more, you know, a lot more number crunching to try to get there. You know, especially if I'm, you know, maybe not, maybe my sanctification has not been so hot that week.

You know, this week. I'm a little bit worried. You know, maybe, you know, God says I'm very pleased in my son. But Seth, I don't know. Well, that's because I'm thinking of my relationship with God the Father, my sonship, apart from Christ.

[ 28 : 16 ] Okay. He didn't just choose me. He chose me in the beloved son. Okay. So we need to remember that we have a mediated relationship with God.

Okay. First Timothy 2, 5 says there is one God and there is one mediator between God and men. The man, Christ, Jesus. I have to have a mediator.

Okay. And if I receive this, it's life and joy and peace and rest. Because Jesus is beloved, I am beloved.

Because he put me into Jesus. And the same relationship that Jesus enjoys with the Father, I enjoy. Not by works, but by faith.

Okay. First Corinthians 1, verse 30 through 31 said, And because of him, God the Father, you are in Christ Jesus, who has become to us wisdom from God, righteousness, and sanctification and redemption, so that, as it is written, let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.

[ 29 : 26 ] My boast is in Christ when he is my righteousness. And this doesn't in any way detract from my personal sonship with the Father. It's sonship through the Son.

This is what it means to be, we are beloved. I can be totally confident that I'm beloved because the Son is beloved. And like, when this truth really lands, when it goes from our head to our heart, the fruit is, we're free to just suck.

Okay. We're free to be Christians who have nothing to prove. You have nothing to prove. I'm done. I don't need to try to please God anymore. Because Jesus pleases God for me. This is not a, this is not a license to sin.

The Holy Spirit's got that. So like, don't worry about that one. Just stay as long as you need to on the reality that when Jesus is my righteousness, I don't have any righteousness.

Okay. Paul talks about this wonderful freedom in Philippians 3. I don't have time to turn there, but he said, everything that was gained to me. And he wasn't talking about worldly accomplishments. He's talking about what he'd gained in his pursuit of having a righteousness of his own.

[ 30 : 36 ] He tried real hard. He tried harder than everybody. He said, whatever was gained to me in that pursuit, I count as loss for the sake of knowing him. That I might be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own, which is what?

By the law. When am I confident? When I'm keeping all the commands. When am I not confident? When I'm not. Guess what? You're not. So you can never be confident.

Okay. So the Bible says the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did by which we draw an eye to God. The better hope is there is a beloved son who does and did keep all the commandments and God put me into him.

That's why Paul says, I have left that behind. I no longer have a righteousness, which is of my own. It's not Paul's righteousness anymore. It's righteousness of another man.

The alien, Martin Luther called it the alien righteousness of Jesus Christ. It's the righteousness of another person. And this is life and joy and peace. And so in short, we are beloved in the beloved son.

[ 31 : 44 ] We partake of Christ's relationship with the father because we are in him. And this is a wonderful thing. And this is the, so much of the theme of Colossians is, this is a preview of it, but it feeds up into this, the preeminence of Christ, the headship of Christ.

Um, God did a work in his son that is a capital W. And this is why we as sinners can be totally confident at rest in him.

And we're free to just, you know, this is a silly, this is a stupid saying, but let go and let God. Like it really is. It's like that. Now people, people, uh, take that and they, they use it as a license for sin.

That's not what I'm, that's not what I'm advocating. But in a very real way, you're letting, you're giving God the authority and responsibility to produce fruit in our life.

And we're free to do that because another man is standing before God on my behalf. So in closing, um, I'm going to, I'm going to review these three points real quick.

[ 32 : 55 ] Just one more time. One is each of us has a responsibility to know God's will so that we can collectively, we individually have responsibility to know God's will so that collectively we can walk in a way that pleases him.

Okay. This can't be outsourced. We have a personal responsibility. And the fruit is evidenced in collective, uh, outworking of body gifts.

The power to, the second point is the power to endure in patience and joy is God's and it's a miracle. It's, it's in accordance with the same power that work in raising Jesus from the dead. And the third is that we are beloved in the beloved.

This is, this is the foundation. This is what allows us to have a reset button every single day. Um, I want to close with Ephesians, the passage from Ephesians chapter one, verse three through seven. Blessed be the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenly places in Christ. According as he has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love, having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself.

[ 34 : 10 ] See, it's over and over again. It's by the means of his son, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise and the glory of his grace, wherein he has made us accepted in the beloved.