



# A LEADER'S PRAYER

COLOSSIANS 1:9 – 12 (NKJV)

Warren W. Wiersbe,

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Commentary](#), vol. 2

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1996), 110–114.



## COLOSSIANS 1:9 – 12 (NKJV)

9 For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;

10 that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

11 strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy;

12 giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.



# The prayers in paul's prison letters are undoubtedly unique.

To begin with, he prays for others and not for himself. The requests in his prayers center on spiritual blessings, not on material or physical matters.

Of course, it is not wrong to pray about physical or material needs. But spiritual needs are vastly more important.



# How would you pray for a group of people you had never seen?

- All that Paul knew about the believers in Colossae, he learned from their faithful pastor, Epaphras.
- Paul knew that the false teaching was threatening the church, so he focused on that problem. In his prayer, Paul made three requests.



# PAUL PRAYED FOR...

- **Spiritual Intelligence (Colossians 1:9)**
- **Practical Obedience (Colossians 1:10)**
- **Moral Excellence (Colossians 1:11 – 12)**



# PAUL PRAYED FOR SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE (COL. 1:9)

- The false teachers promised the Colossian believers that they would be “in the know” if they accepted the new doctrines.
- Words like *knowledge*, *wisdom*, and *spiritual understanding* were a part of their religious vocabulary, so Paul used these words in his prayer.



**Satan is so deceptive! He likes to borrow Christian vocabulary, but he does not use the Christian dictionary! Long before the false teachers had adopted these terms, the words had been in the Christian vocabulary.**



**The phrase, *for this cause*, relates the prayer to what Paul had written in Colossians 1:6: “and knew the grace of God in truth.”**

- The report from Epaphras convinced Paul that these believers truly knew Christ and were born again. But there was much more to learn *from Him and about Him!*





**“You do not need a new spiritual experience,” Paul was saying. “You only need to grow in the experience you have already had.”**

- When a person is born into God’s family by faith in Jesus Christ, he is born with all he needs for growth and maturity.



# This is the theme of Colossians:

**Colossians 2:10 (NKJV)**

and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.

**No other experience is needed than the new birth.**

- “Do not look for something new,” Paul warned the church. “Continue to grow in that which you received at the beginning” (author’s paraphrase).



Every believer needs to have “the knowledge of His will.”

The Greek word translated “knowledge” in this verse carries the meaning of “full knowledge”.



- There is ALWAYS more to learn about God and His will for our lives.
- No Christian would ever dare say that he has “arrived” and doesn’t need to learn anything more.
- The will of God is an essential part of a victorious Christian life.



**God wants us to *know* His will and *understand* it.**

**Acts 22:14 (NKJV)**

Then he said, 'The God of our fathers has chosen you that you should know His will, and see the Just One, and hear the voice of His mouth.

**Ephesians 5:17 (NKJV)**

Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.



# God is not a distant dictator who issues orders and never explains.

- Because we are His friends, we can know what He is doing and why He is doing it.



## **John 15:13 – 15 (NKJV)**

**13** Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.

**14** You are My friends if you do whatever I command you.

**15** No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.

As we study His Word and pray, we discover new and exciting truths about God's will for His people.



**The word *filled* is a keyword in Colossians.  
[*Complete* = “filled full”].**

It was also a keyword in the teachings of the false teachers who had invaded the Colossian church.





## Paul used it many times:

### Colossians 1:19 (NKJV)

For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell,

### Colossians 1:25 (NKJV)

of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God which was given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God,



## Colossians 2:2 (NKJV)

that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, and attaining to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ,

## Colossians 2:9 – 10 (NKJV)

**9** For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;

**10** and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.



## Colossians 4:12 (NKJV)

Epaphras, who is one of you, a bondservant of Christ, greets you, always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.

## Colossians 4:17 (NKJV)

And say to Archippus, “Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it.”



**The word carries the idea of being fully equipped. It was used to describe a ship that was ready for a journey.**

- The believer has in Christ all that he needs for the journey of life.
- “And you are **complete in Him,**” (Col. 2:10)
- “And of **His fullness** we have all we received,” (John 1:16)



In the language of the New Testament, to be *filled* means to be “controlled by”.

- When we are filled with anger, we are controlled by anger.
- To be “filled with the Spirit” (Eph. 5:18) means to be “controlled by the Spirit.”



## **Ephesians 5:17 – 18 (NKJV)**

**17** Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

**18** And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,

- **Paul's prayer, then, is that these believers might be controlled by the full knowledge of God's will.**



# But how does this take place? How can believers grow in the full knowledge of God's will?

Paul's closing words of Colossians 1:9 tells us: "By means of all wisdom and spiritual insight" (literal translation).

## Colossians 1:9 (NKJV)

For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;



# ***We understand the will of God through the Word of God.***

The Holy Spirit teaches us as we submit to Him.

## **John 14:26 (NKJV)**

But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.





**As we pray and sincerely seek God's truth, He gives us through the Spirit the wisdom and insight that we need.**

**Ephesians 1:15–17 (NKJV)**

**15** Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints,

**16** do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers:

**17** that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him,



# The will of God for all His children is given clearly in the Bible.

- The *specific* will of God for any given situation must always agree with what He has already revealed in His Word.
- The better we know God's will, the easier it will be to determine His specific guidance in daily life.



- Paul did not encourage the Colossians to seek visions or wait for voices.
- He prayed that they might get deeper into God's Word and thus have greater wisdom and insight concerning God's will.
- He wanted them to have "all wisdom"—not that they would know everything, but that they would have all the wisdom necessary for making decisions and living to please God.



# Spiritual intelligence is the beginning of a successful, fruitful Christian life.

- God puts no premium on ignorance.
- A preacher once said, “I never went to school. I’m just an ignorant Christian, and I’m glad I is!” A man does not have to go to school to gain spiritual intelligence; but neither should he magnify his “ignorance.”



# A LEADER'S PRAYER

- Many great men of God like Charles Spurgeon, G. Campbell Morgan, and H.A. Ironside never had the privilege of formal Bible training.
- But they were devoted students of the Word, learning its deeper truths through hours of study, meditation and prayer.
- The first step toward the fullness of life is spiritual intelligence—growing in the will of God by knowing the Word of God.

