

HWMR - KNOWING AND EXPERIENCING THE ALL-INCLUSIVE, EXTENSIVE CHRIST, Week 1

The Will of God Concerning the All-Inclusive, Extensive Christ

Scripture Reading: Rev. 4:11; Eph. 1:5, 9, 11; Col. 1:9-10, 27; 2:6-7; 3:4, 10-11; 4:12

Revelation 4:11	You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power, for You have created all things, and because of Your will they were, and were created.
Ephesians 1:5	Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,
Ephesians 1:9	Making known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself,
Ephesians 1:11	In whom also we were designated as an inheritance, having been predestinated according to the purpose of the One who works all things according to the counsel of His will,
Colossians 1:9	Therefore we also, since the day we heard of it, do not cease praying and asking on your behalf that you may be filled with the full knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,
Colossians 1:10	To walk worthily of the Lord to please Him in all things, bearing fruit in every good work and growing by the full knowledge of God,
Colossians 1:27	To whom God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory,
Colossians 2:6	As therefore you have received the Christ, Jesus the Lord, walk in Him,
Colossians 2:7	Having been rooted and being built up in Him, and being established in the faith even as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.
Colossians 3:4	When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.
Colossians 3:10	And have put on the new man, which is being renewed unto full knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,
Colossians 3:11	Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all.
Colossians 4:12	Epaphras, who is one of you, a slave of Christ Jesus, greets you, always struggling on your behalf in his prayers that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God.

Day 1

I. God is a **God of purpose**, having a will of His own pleasure, He created all things for His will that He might accomplish and fulfill His purpose—Rev. 4:11; Eph. 3:9-11; Col. 1:9:

- A. **God's will** is God's wish; God's will is what He wants to do—Eph. 1:9
- B. **God's good pleasure** is of God's will; His good pleasure is **embodied** in His will—v. 5.
- C. God's will is His determination for the **carrying out** of His purpose—v. 11; 1 Cor. 1:1.
- D. God has made known to us the mystery of His will through **His revelation in Christ**, that is, through Christ's **incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension**—Eph. 1:9; 3:9.
- E. God works all things according to the counsel of His will God's will is His intention, and His counsel is His consideration of the way to accomplish His will—1:11.

Day 2

II. Colossians is a book concerning the **great, eternal will of God**—1:9; 4:12:

- A. The **will of God** mentioned in this book is not His will in **small matters**—it is the eternal will of God, the **great will of God**
- B. **Colossians** reveals what God's will is according to His **desire** and **intention** in the whole universe, in creation, in redemption, in the present age, in the coming age, and in eternity—Eph. 1:5, 9, 11; 3:9-11; Matt. 16:18; Rev. 19:7-9; 11:15; 21:2.
- C. We need to be **filled** with the **full knowledge of God's will**—Col. 1:9:
 1. God's will in Colossians 1:9 is His will regarding His eternal purpose, regarding His economy concerning Christ—Eph. 1:5, 9, 11.
 2. To have the **full knowledge of God's will** is to have the **revelation** of God's plan so that we may know what God plans to do in the universe—Rev. 4:11:
 - a. **God's plan** is to make **Christ everything** in the divine economy—Matt. 17:5; Col. 1:15-18; 3:10-11.
 - b. The revelation of God's plan opens the way for us to have more experience of Christ—2:16-17; 3:4, 15-16.
 3. To know and experience the **all-inclusive, extensive** Christ requires "**all spiritual wisdom and understanding**"—1:9.
 - a. Spiritual wisdom and understanding are of the Spirit of God **in our spirit**—Eph. 1:17; 1 Cor. 2:11-12; 6:17; 1 John 5:20.
 - b. **Wisdom** is in our **spirit** to perceive God's eternal will; spiritual **understanding** is in our **mind**, renewed by the Spirit, to understand and interpret what we perceive in our spirit—Eph. 1:17; 4:23.

In All Spiritual Wisdom

To know and experience the all-inclusive Christ requires **all spiritual wisdom and understanding**. The words “all” and “spiritual” modify both wisdom and understanding. Spiritual wisdom and understanding are of the Spirit of God in our spirit in contrast to Gnostic philosophy, which is merely in the darkened human mind. Wisdom is in our spirit to perceive God’s eternal will; spiritual understanding is in our mind, renewed by the Spirit, to understand and interpret what we perceive in our spirit.

Wisdom is the intuition in our spirit, whereas understanding is the realization in our mind. Through the intuition in our spirit, we sense something concerning Christ. Along with this, we need our mind to interpret what we sense in our spirit in order to have understanding. Then we shall have the utterance to speak forth what we sense and understand. This requires the **exercise of all spiritual wisdom and understanding**.

The will of God is profound in relation to our knowing, experiencing, and living the all-inclusive Christ. In verse 9 Paul was not praying that the Colossians would know whom to marry, where to live, or what kind of job they should have. His heart was not occupied with such trivial things. In this verse God’s will refers to Christ. It was not God’s will for the Colossians to follow Judaistic observances, Gentile ordinances, or human philosophies. Furthermore, it was not God’s will for them to practice asceticism, to treat the body severely in order to bridle the indulgence of the flesh. **God’s will for the Colossians was to know Christ, to experience Christ, to enjoy Christ, to live Christ, and to have Christ become their life and their person. God’s will for us today is exactly the same.** It seems as if Paul was saying, “Colossians, you have been distracted, misled, and defrauded by Gnosticism, mysticism, asceticism, observances, and ordinances. You need to be filled with the full knowledge of God’s will. God’s will is that the all-inclusive Christ be your portion.”

If we know that God’s will is for us to be saturated with Christ, then we have the proper knowledge of God’s will. Whatever we do should be done in the will of God. We should marry in Christ, work in Christ, and move in Christ. Christ should be our life and our person. This is the will of God.

(Life-Study of Colossians, chapter 3, section 1)

Day 3

- D. **Walking worthily** of the Lord **issues from** having the **full knowledge** of god’s will; such a walk is one in which we **live Christ**—Col. 1:10; Phil. 1:19-21a.
- E. We need to stand **mature** and **fully assured** in all the will of God—Col. 4:12.

Day 4

III. The will of God for us is to that we know the **all-inclusive, extensive** Christ, **experience** Him, and **live** Him as our life—1:9, 15-18; 3:4:

- A. The **will of God** is in Christ, **concentrated** in Christ, and **for** Christ; Christ is everything in the will of God—1:9.
- B. For Christ to be **Firstborn** of both the original creation and the new creation means that He is **both all-inclusive** and **extensive**—vv. 15, 18:
 1. The **extensive** Christ is the Christ who is **more** vast than the universe and who is everything to us—Eph. 3:18.
 2. Christ, the Savior and Lord in whom we believe, is **limitless** and **inexhaustible**; since He is without limitation, the revelation concerning Him must also be without limitation—vv. 2-5, 8-9.

Day 5

- C. The Christ unveiled in Colossians is the **all-inclusive, extensive, preeminent** One, the **centrality** and **universality**, the **center** and the **circumference**, of God’s economy—1:15-18, 27: 2:16-17; 3:4, 10-11; Eph. 1:10; 3:11:
 1. Colossians reveals the all-inclusive Christ—the one who is God, man, and the reality of every positive thing in the universe—2:9, 16-17.
 2. In God’s economy **Christ is everything**; God wants Christ and Christ **alone**—The wonderful, preeminent, all-inclusive Christ, who is all in all—Matt. 17:5; Col. 3:10-11.
 3. The all-inclusive, extensive Christ is the **center** of God’s economy; God’s dispensing is altogether related to Christ and **focused** on Him—Eph. 3:17a.
 4. God’s will His intention, in His economy is to **work** the wonderful, **all-inclusive, extensive** Christ **into** our being as our life and everything so that we may become the **corporate** expression of the Triune God—Col. 1:27; 3:4, 10-11.

Day 6

- D. The **will of God** is that the all-inclusive, extensive Christ be our **portion**, our **life**, our **constituent**, and our **peace**—1:9, 12; 3:4, 10-11, 15:
 1. In 1:9 **God’s will** refers to Christ; the will of God is profound in relation to our **knowing, experiencing**, and **living** in the all-inclusive, extensive Christ.
 2. **God’s will** for us is that we would **know** Christ, **experience** Christ, **enjoy** Christ, be **saturated** with Christ, and have Christ become our life and person—3:4, 10-11; Eph 3:16-17.
 3. **God’s will** is that we, having the all-inclusive, extensive Christ, should **walk** in Him—Col. 2:6:
 - a. To walk in Christ is to live, act, behave, and have our being in Him.
 - b. As we walk in Christ, we will be **rooted** in Him to have **downward** growth and be built up to have **upward** growth—vv.6-7.

- E. We should estimate and evaluate everything according to the all-inclusive, extensive Christ—v. 8:
1. Christ is the **governing principle** of all **genuine** wisdom and knowledge, the **reality** of all genuine teaching, and the **only** measure of all concepts acceptable to God.
 2. **Only** when we have a **clear view** of the place of the all-inclusive, extensive Christ in God's economy will we be able to **see through** delusion and deception.
- F. We need to be **infused**, **saturated**, and **permeated** with the **all-inclusive, extensive Christ** until in our experience He is **everything** to us—1:27; 2:16-17; 3:4, 10--11:
1. The all-inclusive, extensive Christ is in us, **but** we need to **see** Him, **know** Him, be **filled** with Him, be **saturated** with Him, and be **absolutely** one with Him.
 2. We should **allow** the all-inclusive extensive Christ to **fill** our whole being and to **replace our culture with Himself**—Eph. 3:17a; Col. 3:10-11:
 - a. The more Christ replaces our natural life and culture with Himself, the more we will be able to declare, "**To live in Christ**"; to us, to live will be the Christ who take **full possession** of us, **occupies** us, and **fills** us with Himself—Phil. 1:21a.
 - b. The **all-inclusive, extensive Christ desires** to replace every element of our natural life and culture with Himself so that we may be the **one new man as His corporate expression**; this is the message of the book of Colossians—3:10-11.

CHRIST—ALL AND IN ALL

In the book of Colossians Paul points out that Christ must be **all and in all**. In the new man there is **no room for culture or personal practices**. God's intention in His economy is for **Christ to be everything**. Christ should be our life, our living, our patience, our holiness, our kindness. Christ should be the way we deal with our wife or husband. Moment by moment in our daily living, Christ should be everything we need. Instead of living by certain practices, we should simply live Christ.

In 3:16 Paul goes on to charge the saints, "*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.*" Negatively, we must set aside our cultural standards, and positively, we need to be filled with the word of Christ. This means that we must allow the word of Christ to fill our mind, emotion, will, thought, and consideration. **Every fiber of our being needs to be occupied by the word of Christ.**

God's desire is that we live Christ moment by moment and leave no room for culture and philosophy. Our only practice should be the **living Person of Christ Himself**. Second, we should **lay aside our cultural standards**. Our standard should not be any form of culture; it should be the indwelling peace of Christ. Third, we need to **allow the word of Christ to fill our entire being**. We need to let our whole being be permeated and saturated with the word of Christ. If we do these three things, we shall experience Christ spontaneously. Not only shall we have a lofty revelation of Christ, but we shall also experience Him in a practical way in our daily life.

(Life-Study of Colossians, chapter 32, section 3)

WALKING IN CHRIST

Having received such a Christ, we should now **walk** in Him. Many Christians think of the Christ they have received only as their Redeemer, Savior, and life. They appreciate Him as the Redeemer who shed His blood for them, and as the Savior who saved them from sin. However, they do not realize that the very Christ whom they have received is the **embodiment of God and the reality of all positive things**. We need to walk in such an all-inclusive Christ. When you eat, walk in Him. When you dress yourself, walk in Him. Walk in Him when you converse with your husband or wife.

We need to be those who are **filled** with Christ, **saturated** with Christ, **clothed** with Christ, and **fully taken over** by Christ. Many of us in the Lord's recovery are not yet saturated with Christ. In the church meetings we may pray in Christ or sing in Christ. But as soon as we get back home, we may neglect Christ altogether and live according to our culture. In the meetings we may proclaim that to us to live is Christ. But in our daily life, especially at home, we may live by the self, not by Christ. What a difference there would be if in our daily living at home we would live by Christ! While a sister is cooking, she may realize that to her to cook in the kitchen is Christ. If we all exercise to live by Christ day by day, we shall **live** Christ, **grow** Christ, and **produce** Christ. In daily life we need to see Christ in all things and walk in Him.

(Life-Study of Colossians, chapter 35, section 3)