

Message One

The Will of God concerning the All-inclusive, Extensive Christ

Hymns:

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

- Rev. 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.
- Eph. 1:5 Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,
- Eph. 1:9 Making known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself,
- Eph. 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,
- Col. 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,
- Col. 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,
- Col. 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,
- Col. 2:6 As therefore you have received the Christ, Jesus the Lord, walk in Him,
- Col. 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.
- Col. 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.
- Col. 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,
- Col. 3:11 Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all.
- Col. 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.

Outline

I. God is a God of purpose, having a will of His own pleasure, and 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:

- Rev. 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.
- Eph. 3:9 And to enlighten all that they may see what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things,
- Eph. 3:10 In order that now to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenlies the multifarious wisdom of God might be made known through the church,
- Eph. 3:11 According to the eternal purpose which He made in Christ Jesus our Lord,

- Col. 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,
- A. God's will is God's wish; God's will is what He wants to do—Eph. 1:9.
 Eph. 1:9 Making known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself,
- B. God's good pleasure is of God's will; His good pleasure is embodied in His will—v. 5.
 Eph. 1:5 Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,
- C. God's will is His determination for the carrying out of His purpose—v. 11; 1 Cor. 1:1.
 Eph. 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,
 1 Cor. 1:1 Paul, a called apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, and Sosthenes the brother,
- 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.
 Eph. 1:9 Making known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself,
 Eph. 3:9 And to enlighten all that they may see what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things,
- 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.
 Eph. 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,

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

- Col 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,
- Col 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.
- 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.
 Eph. 1:5 Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,
 Eph. 1:9 Making known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself,
 Eph. 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,

- Eph. 3:9 And to enlighten all that they may see what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things,
- Eph. 3:10 In order that now to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenlies the multifarious wisdom of God might be made known through the church,
- Eph. 3:11 According to the eternal purpose which He made in Christ Jesus our Lord,
- Matt. 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.
- Rev 19:7 Let us rejoice and exult, and let us give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.
- Rev 19:8 And it was given to her that she should be clothed in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteousnesses of the saints.
- Rev 19:9 And he said to me, Write, Blessed are they who are called to the marriage dinner of the Lamb. And he said to me, These are the true words of God.
- Rev. 11:15 And the seventh angel trumpeted; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He will reign forever and ever.
- Rev. 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

C. We need to be filled with the full knowledge of God's will—Col. 1:9:

- Col. 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,

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.

- Col. 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,
- Eph. 1:5 Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,
- Eph. 1:9 Making known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself,
- Eph. 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,

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:

- Rev. 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.

a. God's plan is to make Christ everything in the divine economy—Matt. 17:5; Col. 1:15-18; 3:10-11.

- Matt. 17:5 While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold, a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is My Son, the Beloved, in whom I have found My delight. Hear Him!
- Col. 1:15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the Firstborn of all creation,
- Col. 1:16 Because in Him all things were created, in the heavens and on the earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or lordships or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through Him and unto Him.
- Col. 1:17 And He is before all things, and all things cohere in Him;

- Col. 1:18 And He is the Head of the Body, the church; He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;
- Col. 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,
- Col. 3:11 Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all.

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.

- Col. 2:16 Let no one therefore judge you in eating and in drinking or in respect of a feast or of a new moon or of the Sabbath,
- Col. 2:17 Which are a shadow of the things to come, but the body is of Christ.
- Col. 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.
- Col. 3:15 And let the peace of Christ arbitrate in your hearts, to which also you were called in one Body; and be thankful.
- Col. 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to God.

3. To know and experience the all-inclusive, extensive Christ requires “all spiritual wisdom and understanding”—1:9:

- Col. 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,

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.

- Eph. 1:17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of Him,
- 1 Cor. 2:11 For who among men knows the things of man, except the spirit of man which is in him? In the same way, the things of God also no one has known except the Spirit of God.
- 1 Cor. 2:12 But we have received not the spirit of the world but the Spirit which is from God, that we may know the things which have been graciously given to us by God;
- 1 Cor. 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.
- 1 John 5:20 And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding that we might know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.

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.

- Eph. 1:17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of Him,
- Eph. 4:23 And that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind

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.

- Col. 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,

- Phil. 1:19 For I know that for me this will turn out to salvation through your petition and the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,
- Phil. 1:20 According to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I will be put to shame, but with all boldness, as always, even now Christ will be magnified in my body, whether through life or through death.
- Phil. 1:21a For to me, to live is Christ...

E. We need to stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God—Col. 4:12.

- Col. 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.

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

- Col. 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,
- Col. 1:15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the Firstborn of all creation,
- Col. 1:16 Because in Him all things were created, in the heavens and on the earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or lordships or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through Him and unto Him.
- Col. 1:17 And He is before all things, and all things cohere in Him;
- Col. 1:18 And He is the Head of the Body, the church; He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;
- Col. 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.

A. The will of God is in Christ, concentrated in Christ, and for Christ; Christ is everything in the will of God—1:9.

- Col. 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,

B. For Christ to be the Firstborn of both the original creation and the new creation means that He is both all-inclusive and extensive—vv. 15, 18:

- Col. 1:15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the Firstborn of all creation,
- Col. 1:18 And He is the Head of the Body, the church; He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;

1. The extensive Christ is the Christ who is more vast than the universe and who is everything to us—Eph. 3:18.

- Eph. 3:18 May be full of strength to apprehend with all the saints what the breadth and length and height and depth are

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.

- Eph. 3:2 If indeed you have heard of the stewardship of the grace of God which was given to me for you,
- Eph. 3:3 That by revelation the mystery was made known to me, as I have written previously in brief,
- Eph. 3:4 By which, in reading it, you can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ,

- Eph. 3:5 Which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in spirit,
- Eph. 3:8 To me, less than the least of all saints, was this grace given to announce to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ as the gospel
- Eph. 3:9 And to enlighten all that they may see what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things,

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:

- Col. 1:15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the Firstborn of all creation,
- Col. 1:16 Because in Him all things were created, in the heavens and on the earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or lordships or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through Him and unto Him.
- Col. 1:17 And He is before all things, and all things cohere in Him;
- Col. 1:18 And He is the Head of the Body, the church; He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;
- Col. 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,
- Col. 2:16 Let no one therefore judge you in eating and in drinking or in respect of a feast or of a new moon or of the Sabbath,
- Col. 2:17 Which are a shadow of the things to come, but the body is of Christ.
- Col. 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.
- Col. 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,
- Col. 3:11 Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all.
- Eph. 1:10 Unto the economy of the fullness of the times, to head up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth, in Him;
- Eph. 3:11 According to the eternal purpose which He made in Christ Jesus our Lord,

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.

- Col. 2:9 For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily,
- Col. 2:16 Let no one therefore judge you in eating and in drinking or in respect of a feast or of a new moon or of the Sabbath,
- Col. 2:17 Which are a shadow of the things to come, but the body is of Christ.

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.

- Matt. 17:5 While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold, a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is My Son, the Beloved, in whom I have found My delight. Hear Him!
- Col. 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,
- Col. 3:11 Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all.

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.

- Eph. 3:17a That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith,...

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.

Col. 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,

Col. 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.

Col. 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,

Col. 3:11 Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all.

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:

Col. 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,

Col. 1:12 Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you for a share of the allotted portion of the saints in the light;

Col. 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.

Col. 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,

Col. 3:11 Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all.

Col. 3:15 And let the peace of Christ arbitrate in your hearts, to which also you were called in one Body; and be thankful.

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.

Col. 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,

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.

Col. 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.

Col. 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,

Col. 3:11 Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all.

Eph. 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,

Eph. 3:17 That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

3. God's will is that we, having the all-inclusive, extensive Christ, should walk in Him—Col. 2:6-7:

Col. 2:6 As therefore you have received the Christ, Jesus the Lord, walk in Him,

Col. 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.

- 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.
 - Col. 2:6 As therefore you have received the Christ, Jesus the Lord, walk in Him,
 - Col. 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.
- E. We should estimate and evaluate everything according to the all-inclusive, extensive Christ—v. 8:
- Col. 2:8 Beware that no one carries you off as spoil through his philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the elements of the world, and not according to Christ;
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:
- Col. 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,
 - Col. 2:16 Let no one therefore judge you in eating and in drinking or in respect of a feast or of a new moon or of the Sabbath,
 - Col. 2:17 Which are a shadow of the things to come, but the body is of Christ.
 - Col. 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.
 - Col. 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,
 - Col. 3:11 Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all.
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:
 - Eph. 3:17a That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith,...
 - Col. 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,
 - Col. 3:11 Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all.
- a. The more Christ replaces our natural life and culture with Himself, the more we will be able to declare, “To live is Christ”; to us, to live will be the Christ who takes full possession of us, occupies us, and fills us with Himself—Phil. 1:21a.
 - Phil. 1:21a For to me, to live is Christ ...
 - 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.

- Col. 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,
- Col. 3:11 Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all.