

2. What Makes Knowledge of God's Will Possible?

By Dr. Paul M. Elliott

From the **TeachingtheWord** Bible Knowledgebase

Part two of a series. Read [part one](#).

Often Christians try to complicate the answer to this question, but the Holy Spirit through the Apostle Paul tells us that it is actually not complicated.

Seven Key Declarations

In our current series, we are studying one of the Christian's most-asked questions: How can I know God's will? Our focus is on Paul's great prayer for the Colossian believers:

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; that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. (Colossians 1:9-12)

We are focusing especially on the phrase, "that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding." We began looking at the intent of the original language of these verses, and we saw that these words are the underpinning for seven declarative statements:

1. Believing the Gospel of Christ is what makes knowledge of God's will possible.
2. Precise and correct knowledge of God's will is possible.

3. Precise and correct knowledge of God's will comes because of two things - prayer and study of the Word of God.
4. Knowledge of God's will involves wisdom in the general sense.
5. Knowledge of God's will involves understanding in the specific sense, and it is an understanding that involves joining various aspects of God's revelation together in the mind.
6. The Christian's knowledge of God's will is superior to the world's false and speculative knowledge and wisdom.
7. Knowledge of God's will has a specific purpose.

The Prerequisite for Knowing God's Will

So let us begin with the first point: Believing the Gospel of Christ is what makes knowledge of God's will possible. As we noted in our first article, Paul is not praying for something for these believers that is impossible. He is praying for something to be imparted to them that is indeed possible, but only because they are now in Christ.

How do we know this is true? Well, we have many other passages in Scripture that tell us this is so. In the second chapter of First Corinthians Paul has more to say on this subject, and in the strongest possible terms:

9. ...as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him."

10. But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.

11. For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God.

12. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.

13. These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

14. But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

15. But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one.

16. For "who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him?" But we have the mind of Christ.

In these verses, Paul puts this first declaration both positively and negatively. First, he puts it negatively: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has entered into the heart of man" - that is, the natural man, the unsaved man - "the things which God has prepared for those who love Him." "[T]he natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Knowledge of the will of God is impossible for the natural, unsaved man. It has not been revealed to him, and he does not have the discernment to understand it. It is foolishness to the unsaved person.

But then Paul also puts it positively. Knowledge of the will of God is possible - but only for the believer. Believing the Gospel of Jesus Christ is what makes knowledge of God's will possible. "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has entered into the heart of man" - the unsaved man has no clue. "But," Paul says, "God has revealed [these things] to us through His Spirit." "[W]e have received," Paul says, "not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual." And we can do this, Paul says, because "we [believers] have the mind of Christ."

Knowledge of the will of God is possible, Paul says, and it is my fervent prayer that you Colossian believers will have it. I am able to pray for that because you are believers in the preeminent Lord Jesus Christ. Because God the Holy Spirit now lives in you, you can understand God's Word, and therefore you can understand God's will.

Next: [Is Precise Knowledge of God's Will Possible?](#)

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