**Truth-Fueled Living**

Colossians 1:9-12

**Introduction**

As Americans, we are concerned about energy—whether it’s at the fuel pump, when paying our utility bills, or what’s on our dinner plate. In many ways we may be more concerned about the fuel that runs our homes, our vehicles, and our bodies than we are about that which runs our lives.

Paul is concerned about that which is fueling the lives of the Colossians. In today’s text, he prays that they might be filled with the knowledge of God’s will. He could have prayed for many other issues in their lives: health issues, financial setbacks, or persecution. Yet his prayer was not centered around their happiness; his prayer focused on the reception of truth that produces holiness.

1. **Paul prayed that the Colossians might be filled with spiritual truth. (v. 9)** 
   1. Paul prayed and desired. “These two together indicate the intensity of Paul’s prayer request.” (O’Brien).
   2. Paul could pray with confidence because of what God had already accomplished in their lives.
   3. Filled: To make something total or complete.
2. God is the One who does the filling. If God did not give them the truth or help them understand it, they would not have it.
3. This is an important term in the letter (1:19, 2:9-10).
4. The false teachers emphasized that they had not received the fullness because they needed additional revelation and experience. Paul wants them simply to understand what they have already received.
   1. Knowledge: Content of what is definitely known. “What Paul is speaking of here is not an esoteric knowledge, confined to private religious experience or exclusive sects. It is a knowledge of His will, which is open to all God’s people.” (Wright).
   2. Will: That which is purposed, intended, or objectively willed.
5. “What Paul has in mind is not some particular or special direction for one’s life (as we often use the phrase ‘God’s will’), but a deep and abiding understanding of the revelation of Christ and all that He means for the universe (v. 15-20) and for the Colossians (v. 21-23).” (Moo)
6. This is more in line with the context. They needed to better understand who they were in Christ. They needed to know how they were to live in light of it. They needed to know what conduct was pleasing to the Lord.
   1. There are two realms mentioned that help to clarify what he means.
7. “In all wisdom” - the capacity to understand and, as a result, to act wisely.
8. “In spiritual understanding” - that which is understood or comprehended; insight.
   1. It is where your life intersects with truth.
9. He is focused on skill for living.
10. Christians are to be a thinking people. Beware of religious movements that urge you to lose control.
11. Our source for thought—the Holy Spirit—is different than the world’s source and different than the source for the philosophies of the false teachers (2:8, 18).
12. Thus, we are talking about Spirit-given insight into God’s will, not that which is produced in the minds of men.
13. “The Spirit is the source of the wisdom and understanding that the Colossians require as they negotiate (navigate) their way through the maze of first-century worldview options” (Moo).
14. **Central Idea: Paul prayed that the Colossians might be filled with spiritual truth so that they might live spiritual lives. (v. 10a)** 
    1. “That ye might walk” – A person’s walk refers to their daily living.

B. The purpose of being filled with spiritual knowledge is spiritual living.

1. It is not intended to make one proud, but to make one humble.
2. It is not intended to simply make someone smart, but to make one wise.
3. It was not for letters at the end of their name. It was not for a degree. It was to increase the degree of truth applied to their lives.
4. It is to help them combat doctrinal error, but the expressed purpose is to help them live.
5. A comprehension of truth will produce a walk that is worthy of the Lord.
6. “Walk” – to live. A person’s life is viewed as a road that one travels.
7. “Worthy” - bringing up the other beam of the scales, equivalent; suitably, in a manner proper to.
8. See Ephesians 4:1, Philippians 1:27, I Thessalonians 2:11.
9. A comprehension of truth will produce living that is pleasing to the Lord in all respects. Lives that run on truth pleases the Lord.
10. **Paul describes the life that is pleasing to the Lord with four traits. This is what a life looks like when it is running on truth.**
    1. A trait is that which describes a person. It is their characteristics or qualities.
    2. Let’s take a closer look at each of these traits to see if they describe your life. If they do not, there is a breakdown somewhere in your spiritual life.
11. When truth is applied to their lives, they will be “fruitful in every good work.” (v. 10b)
12. Their lives had produced bad fruit. (1:21; 3:7).
13. Now that they are fruitful in good works, they are to continue in what they have already experienced. (v. 6) Their good start should not be abandoned due to complacency or to follow a new course.
14. Their fruitfulness would apply to every area of life, and be evidence of the work of the Spirit. (Galatians 5:22-23)
15. When truth is applied to their lives, they will be “increasing in the knowledge of God.” (v. 10c)
16. They will experience closeness with God.
17. They will come to know the Lord more intimately. (Illustration: Taking a road trip or traveling with someone helps you really get to know a person.)
18. When truth is applied to their lives, they will be “strengthened with all might.” (v. 11)
19. The person whose living is based on truth lives an empowered life, which indicates how they were able to live a life pleasing to the Lord.
20. Ironically, the standard of living for the Colossians (3:12-14) was actually higher than the standard for the false teachers (2:16). Therefore, they needed an outside power source; they could not do this in their own strength.
21. “All” describes the extent of this power; it is complete, unlimited, and constantly available. The idea is that we are strengthened with the greatest strength imaginable.
22. The source of strength is His glorious power; His overwhelming presence.
23. This power, unleashed through the gospel, is more than sufficient for their need.
24. Illustrations: There is no way I am going to drain the electrical power plant when I plug in my cell phone to charge it. Imagine searching the couch for quarters, because you live without tapping into a $100 million inheritance. Neither of these illustrations suffice when you consider the access to the power of the God who created the universe! What will you face in life that He cannot handle?
25. The goal of being so strengthened is joyful steadfastness, endurance, patience, and longsuffering—even in the midst of the most adverse circumstances.
26. When truth is applied to their lives, they will be “giving thanks unto the Father.” (v.12)
27. Thanksgiving is significant because it indicates that they understood who they are in Christ and realized they did not earn it. It also indicates the superb nature of the gift received; they did not need what the false teachers were promoting for greater fulfillment.
28. The Father made them meet (suited, sufficient, qualified, competent) to be partakers (to have a share in) the inheritance of the saints in light. Remember, Paul is writing to the Gentiles! God did what was necessary to make us the people of God.

**Conclusion:** Christians fail to live lives that are pleasing to the Lord because they do not have an understanding of spiritual truths or have not applied these truths to their lives. They are running on the wrong fuel for life. Is your life fruitful? Are you close to God? Are you living in God’s power? Are you thankful? Make sure that you are tapping into the right fuel for life and pray the same for other believers.