

A Faithful Community

Key Verse: *“For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.”*
—Colossians 1:9

Selected Scripture:
Colossians 1

PAUL ATTRIBUTES HIS apostleship to the will of God, affirming he did not receive his calling to this station through any human ordination, but rather his ministry was carried out solely through a realization that the Heavenly Father had appointed him to his office. The epistle of Colossians is addressed to saints and faithful brethren who are leading lives of holiness. Paul bestows upon them his usual benediction of grace and peace from God the Father and the Son, Jesus

Christ, while expressing his thanksgiving for these believers that he had never actually met; but he was encouraged by the reports he had received regarding their faith in the Master and their love shown to all fellow believers.—Col. 1:1-4

In the Key Verse of our lesson, Paul proceeds to pray on their behalf that they might receive a knowledge of God's will, characterized by spiritual wisdom and understanding. His petitions on behalf of the brethren continue in succeeding verses and cover several areas. He desired that the Colossians would live in a manner that would glorify and please God and that they would walk worthy of their calling. This would be evidenced by

putting on the fruits and graces of the spirit in their character. Growth in their knowledge of God's will is also a part of this walk.

Paul further reminds the brethren as to some of the wondrous results of their relationship with God. They would be partakers of a great and heavenly inheritance if they persevere in their course of obeying the Word of God. They have been delivered from Satan's control and translated by faith from darkness into the kingdom of light if they submit to the authority and leading of their Master, Christ Jesus. Additionally, these believers, purchased by the blood of Christ—no longer belonging to themselves—have received the forgiveness from sin.—vss. 10-14

Christians today should be grateful that the Heavenly Father has explained through the Apostle Paul his dealings with these early believers, because they form a blueprint as to the benefits of our relationship with him even now at the close of this present Gospel Age.

There have been many examples of faithful individuals whose exploits have been chronicled in the Bible for our admonition. The Book of Hebrews records the names of several Old Testament personalities who had the testimony that they were pleasing to God, often under extremely difficult circumstances. They did not have the hope of a heavenly calling because they lived prior to the First Advent of Christ, who brought "life and immortality to light."—Heb. 11:39,40; II Tim. 1:10

In addition to these noble examples of the past, are faithful brethren of the early Christian church. "Seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus." (Heb. 12:1,2) Let us emulate the supreme example of our Master by following in his footsteps as we strive to be a part of the body of Christ. ■