

SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

LESSON 4

STRENGTHENED WITH ALL MIGHT



Scripture Text: Colossians 1:8-14

Last week we learned that obedience to God's will is necessary to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Today we see how human beings are able to obey God acceptably. Why do many say, "Yes, I know I ought to do this or that, but I don't," or "it seems I can't"? But here and there are a few whose godly lives impress us as being according to God's

will. What is the difference? Whose strength is each using? God does not require us to do what we cannot. There is help for our inability.

God has provided us the means of living pleasing to Him by giving us His strength through the Holy Spirit living in us.

MEMORY VERSE: *The Lord will give strength unto his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace.*

—*Psalms 29:11*

Paul Answers a Report

Colossians 1:8 Epaphras, a minister of the church at Colosse, had given Paul news of that church. It was good news of a people full of faith, love, and fruit bearing. It brought joy and thanksgiving to Paul. He prayed that the blessings would continue and increase. They were eligible for blessings, for they loved **in the Spirit**, not with faulty, human love.

The Great Need

Colossians 1:9-10 Paul was ready to express plenty of criticism of the Colossians concerning their many unsound beliefs and practices. But he began by praising the things in their lives which were good. Paul assured these Colossians that he was praying for them. For what did Paul pray? He prayed that these saints:

(1) **Be filled with the knowledge of his will.** Last week we learned the absolute necessity of doing God's will. Knowing it is necessary to doing it. Mere head knowledge of God's will is not enough. We may memorize Scripture and learn the doctrines without truly knowing God's will. We need to know it **in all wisdom**—able to grasp God's meaning, separate it from our own, compare and harmonize Scriptures, to wisely apply them. **And spiritual understanding**—to understand with the heart, to know with insight that the Holy Spirit gives. To know God's will we must first know God. We cannot know it with natural, unregenerate powers only. Read **1 Corinthians 2:14**.

(2) **Walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing.** Worthy to bear His name. Pleasing Him in all things.

(3) Be **fruitful in every good work.** Yes, God expects good works from us. They do not save, but they are a part of salvation, **for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure (Philippians 2:13)**. Good works spring from a good heart, a heart made pure by Christ. First is the fruit of the Spirit inside which produces fruit of good works outside. Read **John 15:5** and **Galatians 5:22-23**.

(4) Be **increasing in the knowledge of God.** Knowing Him better and better as they walk with Him day by day. We **MUST** know Him, for to know Him **is life eternal (John 17:3)**. Knowing Him is more than knowing facts about Him. To know Him requires His presence in one, brought about by surrender and obedience to Him.

Paul presents a high standard here, but it is not too high. He prayed it for the Colossians. He wrote it to us through the inspiration of God.

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The Promise of Deliverance

Colossians 1:11 Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, not ours. He gives us of His own power. It enables us to live as these verses say. Added with power are **patience and longsuffering** to endure disappointment, hardship, suffering, opposition or persecution and remain faithful. Even **with joyfulness**.

Colossians 1:12-14 What are some of the things Christ does for us when we put our trust in Him? (1) He makes us **partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light**. By sending the gift of His Son, God gave all He had to give and all we need for our salvation. Salvation brings each saint the promise of a place in God's kingdom and a home in Heaven. Truly, a rich inheritance! The Holy Spirit is the first payment, or earnest, of this inheritance (**Ephesians 1:13-14; 1 Peter 1:4**). (2) Sin is darkness. Christ is light. God not only leads us into light, but He delivers **us from the power of darkness**, and translates **us into the kingdom of his dear Son**. (3) He forgives our sins, redeems us **through his blood**. These works of God place us in condition for His strength to come into us, and all His promises become personal to each saint.

Only when we make things right with God relative to our past, our present, and our anticipated future, do we really start to live the good life in God.

Paul's Experience

Paul had lived **in the flesh**, and then began living **in the spirit**. He found that living in the flesh, or by his natural powers, was not satisfying. In **Romans 7:5, Romans 7:18, Romans 7:24-25** he says: **When we were in the flesh, the motions of sins . . . did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death . . . To will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not**. He asks, **Who shall deliver me . . . ?** He answers, **Through Jesus Christ our Lord**. How had Paul found this out? When he yielded to Jesus (**Acts 9**), was saved and filled with the Holy Spirit, he found that living **after the Spirit** set him **free from the law of sin and death (Romans 8:1-2)**. With His commands, God always provides the means to carry them out.

There is much preaching but little practicing. People hear, then go away unchanged. They read, and do nothing. Why? One reason could be that they desire the RESULT but do not obtain the MEANS. Some know they should go to church, but have no desire to go. They know they should love people, but they do not have love in their hearts. They desire to live holy lives but do not have Him Who is holy. The heart of a Spirit-filled person is filled with desire and love and holiness seeking an outlet. When God saves a person, He gives him a new nature that rejoices to do His will. He offers this strength. It is one of His promises.

We do not attain victory in life as the result of what we do, but only as the result of what we receive. Salvation is not any achievement of ours; it is God's gift, and it will be given to everyone who is willing to take it. Have you taken it?

JUST A THOUGHT

**"God is not only able to satisfy every legitimate longing of the human heart,
but He is able to make every longing legitimate."**

American Holiness Journal

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