

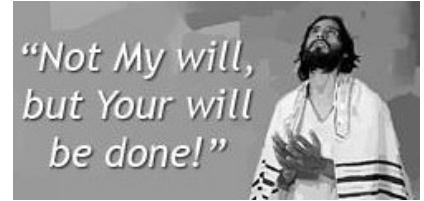
The Book of Colossians

Theme: "ALL YOU NEED IS CHRIST!"

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**Date:** 12-16-18    **Lesson:** 13    **Text:** Chapter 4:11b-18



**TEXT:** (11b) These are the only men of the circumcision among my fellow workers for the kingdom of God, and they have been a comfort to me.

(12) Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant 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**. (13) For I bear him witness that he has worked hard for you and for those in Laodicea and in Hierapolis.

(14) Luke the beloved physician greets you, as does Demas.

(15) Give my greetings to the brothers at Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her house.

(16) And when this letter has been read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans; and see that you also read the letter from Laodicea.

(17) And say to Archippus, "See that you fulfill the ministry that you have received in **the Lord**."

(18) **I, Paul**, write this greeting with my own hand. Remember my chains. **Grace** be with you.

**STUDY NOTES:**

A. These are the only men of the circumcision (Jews) among my fellow workers for the kingdom of God, and they have been a comfort to me.

(1 Cor 7:18-20; Gal 6:12-18; Php 2:25; 3:3-7)

B. Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant 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**. (13) For I bear him witness that he has worked hard for you and for those in Laodicea and in Hierapolis (6 miles from Laodicea).

(Col 1:7; Philemon 23) Note: Epaphras was the founder of the church in Colossae.

C. Luke the beloved physician (from Antioch) greets you, as does Demas.

(2 Tim 4:10,11; Philemon 24)

The Gospel of Luke (Lk 1:1-4; 16:10; 22:44); The Book of Acts (Acts 1:1-3; 28:8)

Note: Luke travelled with Paul and he did careful research in writing the Books of Luke and Acts.

D. Give my greetings to the brothers at Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her house.

(Ac 12:12; Rom 16:5; 1 Cor 16:19; Col 2:1; Philemon 2; Rev 1:11; 3:14)

Christians in the early church gathered in house churches for worship.

E. And when this letter has been read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans; and see that you also read the letter from Laodicea.

Note: All the epistles were read aloud publicly in the divine services, copied and then shared with other congregations throughout the world. The epistle to the Laodiceans is lost to history.

(Luke 4:16; Acts 13:27; 1 Tim 4:13)

F. And say to Archippus, "See that you fulfill the ministry that you have received in **the Lord**."

(Philemon 1:2)

G. **I, Paul**, write this greeting with my own hand. Remember my chains. **Grace** be with you.

(Rom 16:22; 1 Cor 16:21; Gal 6:11; Col 4:18; 2 Thess 3:17; Philemon 1:1,9,19)

(He would dictate his letters, the scribe would write it down, and sometimes Paul would add his own note and signature in his own handwriting, proof of his authorship)

## LIFE APPLICATION:

1. How can we be fellow workers for the kingdom of God, and be a comfort to others?
2. When are we struggling on others' behalf in our prayers?
3. In what ways can you stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God?
4. Who can bear witness that others have worked hard among us?
5. Where can we see that we fulfill the ministry/calling that we have received in the Lord?

## LUTHER ON THE WILL OF GOD - Vol. 25, Page 437

“2. *That you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.* Some interpreters refer the word *good* to those who are beginning, *acceptable* to the advanced, and *perfect* to those who are perfect. And this is not a bad application.

It can also be related to the three earlier expressions “living, holy, acceptable to God” (v. 1). It is the “good” will of God that we do good; the “acceptable” will that we live purely and abstain from sin; and “perfect” will that we should desire to be pleasing to God alone. But when the apostle says that the proving of this threefold understanding of the divine will comes from being transformed to a new mind, he is suggesting something even more profound than can be expressed in written words, something which can only be understood by experience.

Therefore those “who are led by the Spirit of God” (Rom. 8:14) are flexible in mind and thinking. “The right hand of God leads them wonderfully” (cf. Ps. 45:4) where they neither think nor want to go, but above all thought. And when they are led in this way, the will of God seems to go against them sharply and displeasingly and almost desperately.

However, in this leading they show themselves as humbly resigned and enduring all things in faith, and even when they may have been most harshly tested, they then begin to learn how good this will has been, even though hidden, and even misunderstood when it was being fulfilled. But the unbelievers “have spurned the counsel” (Ps. 107:11) of God, because they act according to their own preconceived notion and want things done that way, nor are they willing to set aside their own ideas or to be transformed.

Hence they do not “prove what is the good will of God,” but they “are conformed to this world,” since they rely only on their own feelings and experience. For faith itself transforms the thinking and leads us to acknowledge the will of God. Eph. 3:18 ff. expresses this same idea: “that you may have power to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.”

And it continues: “Now to Him who is able to do far more above that we think, etc.”