

**All Things New**  
**Week 2: Made New**  
**Colossians 1:9-14**

I have this problem. Maybe you can relate. I'm really good at starting things, but I don't always finish them. Like, I'm great at *starting* books, or TV series that people say, "You've got to watch this!" but I don't always finish them. I've got shelves filled with half-read books. Ques with half-watched shows. I've got a couple of projects around the house that I'll finish *eventually*, but not today. Anyone else?

And, I have the best of intentions, but then something else comes along that distracts me, or that seems more interesting. And so, I put it down believing I'll get back to it, but then I never do. I move on to the next thing and, often times, forget about the last thing.

Have you ever felt like God has forgotten you? Like, maybe He started doing something in you, but then moved on to something or someone else? He got distracted and forgot to come back to you and now you're like, "Alright. I guess this is just where God left me. I've got to take it from here."

I imagine many of us have probably felt that way. I think it's why the Apostle Paul writes in another letter that we can be confident that God is going to finish the good work He's started in us. He's going to carry it on to completion. Paul wants us to know that God's house is filled with works in progress, but none of us are abandoned projects. What He has started in you, He's going to see it through.

And if you're like, "I don't know that God has started *anything* in me," I'd say the fact you're here today is proof that God is drawing you to Himself. You might be here because someone invited you, or you decided to check us out, but I believe there's something greater going on. God is pursuing your heart because He loves you...and he wants you to experience the fullness of His love through Jesus. Who he is and what he's done for you.

And, here's what I've found to be true in my own life during those times when I feel like maybe God has forgotten about the work He's started in me...**Remembering what God has done gives us confidence in what God is doing.**

Remembering what God has done for me...how he saved me by grace, how Jesus took the guilt of my sin to the cross, how he found me when I was lost and looking for hope...remembering all the incredible things God has done for me gives me confidence in what God is doing in me.

Through Jesus, he is making us new. He is renewing our minds, or lives. He's giving us new strength and standing with Him. A new identity and a new hope. We are being made new in Christ, and that's the focus of what Paul and Timothy and others are praying over the Colossians in our text today. And in this prayer, we catch a glimpse of some of the work God is doing in us as He makes us new. And, the first thing is, **He is filling us with the knowledge of his will.**

Look at our text again. Colossians 1, starting in verse 9...(READ vs. 9-10a)

God is filling us with the knowledge of his will...and who doesn't want to know the will of God, right? We all do! When it comes to God's will, I think what many of us want him to give us a trail map that shows us which path to follow. Which way we should turn when there's a fork in the road. Dangers we should avoid. We think of God's will as this path marked out for us to follow and if we don't get it just right, then we're going to wind up off course and get lost in the woods, or we might miss something He has for us.

And, though there are times God may give us a map, I think they're incredibly rare. Instead of a trail map, I believe God's will is more like a compass, and Jesus is our True North. So, the knowledge of God's will is knowing what God has done for us in Jesus and then letting his life, death, and resurrection transform the direction of our life. We fix our eyes on Jesus, how he lived and loved others, and allow that to inform how we live and love others in our life.

I've got this nifty compass built into my watch that shows me where True North is. And, as long as I keep heading in that direction, then I'm going north. So, if Jesus is my True North, then as long as I keep walking towards him, then I'm moving in the right direction. But, every now and then, I get off course.

Maybe you feel it when you're driving through the parking lot of Kroger on a Saturday afternoon and people are racing through like it's the Motor Speedway! You can start to veer off course from living and loving like Jesus. Or, when you're folding what feels like your 20<sup>th</sup> load of laundry for the day and your kids are on their third outfit of the day for some reason and you're like, "Why do you wear so many clothes in a day!?" You can start to veer of course from living and loving like Jesus.

The knowledge of God's will is knowing who Jesus is and what he's done for us, and then letting that set the direction of our life. THAT'S God's will for you. Living and loving others the way Jesus lived and loved you. And, following the compass of God's will takes a lot of wisdom and understanding, but as followers of Jesus, we have the Holy Spirit living in us that gives us those nudges along the way to keep us moving in the right direction.

And as we walk in the way of Jesus, what we find is that He is filling us with the blessing of knowing Him. That's why Paul prays for the Colossians to know the will of God. He says in verse 10...(READ vs. 10-12 Note: Point out colon mark. Descriptions of the new work God is doing in us.)

As we walk in a way that keeps in step with Jesus, God is filling our life with the blessings of knowing Him. Our life begins to bear fruit of every good work. We become someone known for our love and joy and peace. Our kindness and gentleness. Those qualities that people saw in Jesus, they begin to see in us because God is growing that fruit in our lives.

We grow in our knowledge of God, which again, isn't just a head knowledge...knowing more about him. It means we're surrendering more of ourself to him; growing in our trust of Him, which brings a deeper level of spiritual maturity and confidence in the Lord to our lives. Our souls are able to rest knowing that we're not in control and we serve a God we can trust.

Paul says in verse 11 that we are being strengthened with God's power. But, it's not so we can smite our enemies or do anything we want. He says it's "so you may have great endurance and patience."

God fills you with his power so you can endure what you're going through and not give up. On your own, you don't have the strength to walk the journey you're on...and I know a lot of you are on some really hard paths. So God strengthens you with His power to give you what you need for the next step. And it might just be for that next step, but then He gives you the power to take the next and the next and the next. He gives you endurance to keep on pressing on.

But he also gives you patience. And, this isn't patience like, "Lord, give me patience to deal with that co-worker today!" or "Give me patience with my dog that keeps waking me up in the middle of the night, begging to go out, but when we do, all she does is sniff around the yard and bark at the wind"...hypothetically!

Patience here means having the strength to endure pain or unhappiness. It's the opposite of wrath or a spirit of revenge. It's an even-tempered presence in this world that doesn't retaliate to insult or injury. And we can't summon up that kind of strength on our own. It takes God making us new and giving us HIS strength to endure.

And, as God fills us with these blessings of knowing Him, our lives are marked with gratitude to our Father. We can't help but thank him for giving us a new identity, a new purpose, a new joy. **Gratitude is the crowning virtue of a life marked by knowledge of God and His power at work in us.** When all of those things come together in our life, joyful thanks to the Father is bound to flow out of us.

When we remember what God has done for us, it gives us confidence in what God is doing in us. He's making us new! He's filling us with the knowledge of His will. He's filling us with the blessings of knowing Him. And **He's finishing the work He started.** He'll never move on. He'll never get distracted. He'll never abandon you. Ever. Because listen, what God is doing in you has never been *about you*, anyway. It's not about ME. It's about what HE is doing. And He is faithful, even when we are not.

Paul says in vs. 12 that God is the one who qualifies us to be loved by Him. We have nothing on our own that makes us worthy of sharing in God's inheritance. We are not good enough or smart enough. It is God who qualifies you to be a part of His family. He is the One who has given you the full rights of a daughter or son of the King! And He made it all possible through Jesus. Paul says in **verse 13...(READ vs. 13-14)**

By the cross, Jesus has rescued us from the broken down, tattered kingdom of our lives that were falling apart. He's held us in his safe and loving arms and ushered us into His Kingdom. Jesus has paid the price to release us from the bondage of our sin and shame. And Jesus has offered us forgiveness and grace.

We use that word forgiveness a lot in Church, but what does it mean? Forgiveness literally means "a sending away." Jesus paid the debt of our sin on the cross and when we put our faith in him as our Savior, we are handing him our sin and saying, "Here, it's all yours." And not just the sin up to that point in our life, but everything that follows. We are giving it to Jesus.

And Jesus doesn't use those things to throw them back in our face and remind us of everything we've done wrong. All the ways our actions have separated us from God and hurt others. He sends them away. He removes our sin from us so there is no longer a barrier that separates us from God. He sends them away so we no longer have to wallow in the guilt and shame of them.

Psalm 103:12 says, "As far as the sunrise is from the sunset, he has separated us from our sins." Just like the sunrise will never catch up with the sunset, when we put our faith and trust in Jesus, our sins will never catch up with us. Jesus has already paid the price for them on the cross.

This happens the moment we put our faith in Jesus. The moment we repent, turn to Jesus, and find the new life God has for us. And I know that word repent is kind of old school and out of style, but it's biblical, so we're going to talk about it. When the Apostle Peter preached the first sermon about finding forgiveness in Jesus, he says...(READ Acts 2:38-39)

As we close out this morning, I want to call us into a time of repentance. A time to reflect on our own life and all the times we've followed our own ways instead of God's. I want to challenge us to walk towards Jesus, our True North, and live in a way that is worthy of Him.

Today, I invite you to turn from the things that have been destroying your life. Turn from your sin and guilt and shame, and addictions, and bondage. I invite you to turn away from the "little k" kingdom of your life that has led to so much darkness and pain. To repent and let Jesus rescue you into His Kingdom. Let him reestablish your life in his home.

He's paid the price for you. He's made a way for your sin to be separated from you and for you to be in a relationship with the Father. So, this morning, I want to challenge you to come to him.

Maybe you've made a decision in the past to follow Jesus, but you haven't been walking with him. You've wandered and you need to repent and turn to him again. (Front of stage) Maybe you're ready to die to yourself and live for Jesus. Live in the new life he has for you. (Baptism)

We're going to sing...video of people over the last few months who have made the decision to turn to Jesus and find new life in Him. You come.