

**Outline of
the Messages for the Full-time Training
in the Fall Term of 2014**

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
THE HEART OF THE BIBLE—
GALATIANS, EPHESIANS, PHILIPPIANS, AND COLOSSIANS**

Message Thirteen

Colossians

(1)

The Will of God

(1)

**One Person and One Way—
the All-inclusive Christ and the Cross of Christ**

Scripture Reading: Col. 1:9, 12, 15-19, 27; 2:2, 9, 11-17; 3:4, 10-11, 15; 4:12

- I. The will of God is one person—the all-inclusive Christ—Col. 1:12, 15-19; 2:2:**
- A. The will of God is in Christ, concentrated in Christ, and for Christ; Christ is everything in the will of God—1:9; 4:12.
 - B. The Christ unveiled in Colossians is the all-inclusive and preeminent One, the centrality and universality of God's economy—1:15-18, 27; 2:16-17; 3:4, 10-11:
 - 1. Colossians reveals the all-inclusive Christ—the One who is God, man, and the reality of every positive thing in the universe—2:9, 16-17.
 - 2. Christ is the preeminent One, the One who has the first place in all things—1:18.
 - 3. The all-inclusive, extensive Christ is the centrality and universality, the center and circumference, of God's economy—Matt. 17:5; Col. 1:15-27; Eph. 1:10.
 - C. The will of God is that the all-inclusive Christ be our portion—Col. 1:9, 12:
 - 1. In 1:9 God's will refers to Christ; the will of God is profound in relation to our knowing, experiencing, and living the all-inclusive, extensive Christ.
 - 2. God's will is that we know Christ, experience Christ, enjoy Christ, be saturated with Christ, and have Christ become our life and person—3:4.
 - D. The all-inclusive Christ dwells in us as our hope of glory—1:27.
 - E. The all-inclusive Christ is our life—3:4:
 - 1. The expression *our life* is a strong indication that we are to experience the all-inclusive Christ, the One who is the reality of every positive thing—2:16-17.
 - 2. Because Christ is our life, all He has and all He has attained and obtained become subjective to us—Rom. 8:34, 10.
 - F. The all-inclusive Christ is the unique constituent of the one new man—Col. 3:10-11:
 - 1. The content of the church as the new man is Christ alone; in the new man there is room only for Christ, for He is everyone and in everyone.

- 2. In the church as the new man we are in Christ, through Christ, and unto Christ, and we subsist in Christ to be God's expression in Christ—1:16-17.
- G. The all-inclusive Christ is our peace—v. 20; 3:15.

II. The will of God is one way—the cross of Christ—1:20-22; 2:11-15:

- A. Christ, the unique person, is versus all things, and the cross, the unique way, is versus all ways—1:20.
- B. The one person—Christ—is the center of the universe, and the one way—the cross—is the center of God's government—1 Cor. 2:2; 1:17-18, 23; Gal. 6:14:
 - 1. God governs everything by the cross and deals with everything by the cross—Col. 1:20; 2:14-15.
 - 2. By the cross God has dealt with all the negative things in the universe, and He is still governing everything through the cross—Eph. 2:14-16.
- C. The book of Colossians teaches us that in the church life Christ must be all and in all; everything that is not Christ must go to the cross—1:18; 3:10-11:
 - 1. Through the cross we need to become nothing, to have nothing, and to be able to do nothing.
 - 2. If we avoid the cross, what we are, what we have, and what we can do will become a substitute for Christ—1 Cor. 1:17-18, 23.
- D. “Through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross—through Him, whether the things on the earth or the things in the heavens”—Col. 1:20:
 - 1. Because of the rebellion of Satan and the angels who followed him, the heavens were contaminated; therefore, not only things on the earth but also things in the heavens needed to be reconciled to God—v. 20b.
 - 2. As sinners, we needed redemption, and as enemies, we needed reconciliation—vv. 14, 21-22.
- E. “Wiping out the handwriting in ordinances, which was against us, which was contrary to us; and He has taken it out of the way, nailing it to the cross”—2:14:
 - 1. *Ordinances* refers to the ordinances of the ceremonial law with its rituals, which are the forms or ways of living and worship—Eph. 2:15.
 - 2. *Nailing it to the cross* means to abolish the law of commandments in ordinances.
- F. “Stripping off the rulers and the authorities, He made a display of them openly, triumphing over them in it”—Col. 2:15:
 - 1. Activities involving Christ, God, and the evil angelic rulers and authorities were brought to a focus on the cross; thus, the cross became God's eternal, central, and unique way—vv. 14-15.
 - 2. By His crucifixion Christ was laboring to accomplish redemption, and God the Father was working to judge sin and nail the law to the cross; at the same time, the evil rulers and authorities were busy in their attempt to frustrate the work of God and Christ, pressing in close to God and Christ; thus, a warfare was raging at the cross—v. 14.
 - 3. God openly made a display of the evil angelic rulers and authorities on the cross and triumphed over them in it, putting them to shame—v. 15.