

**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.