

When Paul wrote to Timothy he penned these words about God's will, he wrote God;
1Ti 2:4 ... will have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

Salvation is one thing, to come to the acknowledging of truth is an ongoing learning experience with great rewards both now and in the life to come. We must never give up on personal Bible study. Now turn to some prayers of our Apostle penned after Acts 28, after Israel was nationally set aside.

Eph 1:15 Therefore I also, hearing of your faith in the Lord Jesus and love to all the saints,

Eph 1:16 do not cease giving thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers,

Eph 1:17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in *the* knowledge of Him,

Paul was praying for saints and faithful ones when he penned this prayer. They already "knew" Christ our Lord as Saviour. I don't think this prayer meant that God would grant them understanding of what the cross meant as regards to sin and sins forgiven. No, the prayer was that they would be given wisdom and revelation in the "knowledge of Christ".

The word translated knowledge in 1Tim.2:4 and Ephesians 1:17 means recognition, full discernment and acknowledgment. This, I believe, goes beyond simply knowing Christ as our Saviour. The knowledge of Him needs to be understood in the context of the Ephesians letter.

Paul's important prayer continues;

Eph 1:18 the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of His calling, and what is the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

Eph 1:19 and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us, the ones believing according to the working of His mighty strength

Eph 1:20 which He worked in Christ in raising Him from the dead, and He seated Him at His right hand in the heavenlies,

Eph 1:21 far above all principality and authority and power and dominion, and every name being named, not only in this world, but also in the coming age.

Eph 1:22 And He has put all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,

Eph 1:23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

Eph 2:6 and has raised *us* up together and made *us* sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus,

The knowledge of our Lord relates to the hope of His calling. This knowledge of our Lord relates to the riches of the glory of the inheritance and His ascended position at the Father's right hand as Head of our calling today, the Church which is His Body.

In chapter 3, Paul writes about the dispensation that was given to him for us Gentiles and about that gospel which proclaimed the unsearchable riches of Christ. These things were tied to the fellowship of the mystery, the one given to Paul alone;

Eph 3:1 For this cause, I, Paul, am the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you nations,

Eph 3:2 if you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given to me toward you,

Eph 3:3 that by revelation He made known to me the mystery

The knowledge of our Lord must be understood in regard to these things of Ephesians as well.

Colossians is another letter written by Paul after Israel was put aside at Acts 28;

Col 1:9 For this cause we also, since the day we heard, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that you might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding,

Is it possible to be filled with the knowledge of God's will today? The answer is a resounding yes! We can, by the gracious granting of God, understand the "knowledge of Him" and the "knowledge of His will".

"Filled with the knowledge (same word in 1Tim.2:4 & Ephesians 1:17) of His will" must be understood in the context of this letter. Further down the chapter Paul writes;

Col 1:23 if indeed you continue in the faith grounded and settled, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which you have heard and which was proclaimed in all the creation under Heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister,

Col 1:24 who now rejoice in my sufferings on your behalf, and I fill up the things lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh, on behalf of His body, which is the church;

Col 1:25 of which I became a minister, according to the administration of God given to me for you, to fulfill the Word of God;

Col 1:26 the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints.

Paul's prayer for the Colossians that they be filled with the knowledge of His will relates to this administration given to him alone. Notice it was previously hidden away from ages and generations. What is the knowledge of the Lord that relates to this dispensation? Look at God's will in this verse;

Col 1:27 For to them (His saints) God would (determine, chooses, wishes) make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the nations, which is Christ in you (plural, you Nations), the hope of glory,

It is God's wish or will that all saints should know the riches of the glory of this mystery.

Remember the riches of the glory of His inheritance in Ephesians 1:18? Knowing God's will as found in the dispensation given to Paul, goes beyond the revelations of the Old Testament, the Gospels and the Acts period because this mystery was hidden away from ages and generations and unsearchable.

It is a miracle every time someone turns to the Lord in faith and believes into Him and His efficacious work on the cross. It is the gracious granting or gift of God when we receive a wise and revealing in the knowledge of His Son.

Wisdom and spiritual understanding come through the Word; the Word explains the Word and our God grants the insight. Here are some of the related subjects in context with Paul's prayers for the saints regarding the knowledge of Christ and the knowledge of God's will. As we can see, these things go way beyond our the knowledge of our Lord dying on the cross for our sins;

1. The Hope of His calling (the calling which is His Body).
2. The riches of the glory of His inheritance found in Ephesians.
3. Christ as Head.
4. The power in us which raised and seated us in the heavenly places.
5. The dispensation given to Paul alone.
6. Unsearchable riches. Riches past finding out previously.
7. The dispensation previously hidden in God.

Praise God if you are saved, now let us all study Paul to facilitate the second half of 1Timothy 2:4. May the Lord give us all grace and meekness as we try to show the Lord in the light of this present dispensation.