

FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

“Epaphras, who is one of you and a servant of Christ Jesus, sends greetings. He is always wrestling in prayer for you that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured.”

—COLOSSIANS 4:12

Before we are likely to be confident of God’s specific plan for our lives, we have to be interested in God’s general will for all His people. There is probably about 95 percent of God’s will for our personal lives in revelation God gives us in Scripture of His general will for His people.

Obedience to the general will of God is the only legitimate context for the discovery of the specific will of God. Paul passed on this concern of his friend, Epaphras – “that you stand firm in all the will of God.” This is a key ingredient if we are going to experience God’s personal will for us. What we are is far more important to God than what we do, and our being provides the root and reason for our doing. For example, God is more concerned with how we drive our cars than which car we drive, and how we live at home than which house we live in. These are secondary to God’s primary purpose of expressing the life of His Son in us.

Paul writes, “Do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit” (Ephesians 5:17-18). The will of God begins with the fullness of the Spirit. The fullness of the Spirit is not the mountain peak of Christian experience, or the top rung of the ladder. It

is, in fact, a bottom rung, the position from which a life lived in the will of God begins and develops. There will almost certainly be a mountain to climb, but the fullness of the Holy Spirit is an indispensable ingredient in climbing that mountain and in fulfilling the will of God.

The command to be “filled with the Spirit” may equally be read in the present continuous sense – “be being filled with the Spirit”; in other words, a perpetual condition of life to be enjoyed afresh every day. We cannot have more or less of the Spirit of God. We either have Him or we don’t, but the fullness of the Spirit will be expressed in our day to day living; our attitudes, behaviours and how we treat others.

It is to the immense poverty of the church that we see the fullness of the Holy Spirit as an ‘extra’ to salvation rather than as the prime objective. We are reconciled to God so that He may fill our lives with Himself, and lay down the only legitimate foundation for a life of fulfillment and purpose. The ongoing fullness of the Spirit is not an option, but an essential ingredient for enjoying God’s personal will for us.

PRAYER: Dear Lord, I pray that your Holy Spirit takes over my life so that I may experience your personal will for me. Thank You, Lord.

TO REFLECT UPON: Am I living in the fullness of the Spirit, bringing Christ into my everyday life?