

Day 4: Our Submission Mission

The Passage: Colossians 1:3–14

The Focus: *“For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience.”*
(Col. 1:9–11 NIV)

The Meditation: *“Fill you with the knowledge of his will . . . so that you may . . . [bear] fruit.”*

Empowering Truths: Discipleship has sometimes been defined as “hearing and obeying God.” That definition captures much of the essence of discipleship. We choose which voice in life we are going to listen to, and then we follow where it leads.

Everyone has a voice in their head telling them what “success” looks like. That voice is usually a toxic combination of our upbringing, our culture, our flesh, the devil, our education, and even unhealthy American church culture. Can you hear the Spirit through the cacophony of voices?

In today’s scripture Paul prays for the believers at Colossae (and for us) to be filled with “knowledge of God’s will” by the power of the Spirit, so that we might “please him in every way,” so that we might “bear fruit.” This is God’s definition of success.

Success is submission to God’s mission. It is carefully hearing and faithfully obeying. We need to fear God to hear God. When the early Christians were walking in the fear of the Lord (Acts 9:31), they were listening for his voice and were submitted to its authority. They were on mission with God, making disciples and multiplying the church.

They were following Jesus’ example—his posture of “submission to the mission” led him to the garden where he prayed, “Father, if it’s possible may this cup of suffering be taken away; nevertheless, I want your will more than my will” (my paraphrase). In the eyes of the world, he was a failure. In the eyes of his Father, he had completed his mission.

The Spirit reveals the will of God to those willing to do his will . . . to those who live in submission to his mission. His mission is usually not the popular or applauded path. Instead it calls us to die to our own will, to pursue God’s will instead.

For the last forty years the church has primarily used the scoreboard of size to measure success. Could it be that we have missed the mission of multiplication that the Lord was actually calling us to—the mission to make disciples who make disciples and plant churches that plant churches? Have we been listening to the wrong applause?

As disciples of Jesus we must long to truly “hear and obey” so we live with a daily submission to his multiplication mission.

Power Truth: I am empowered by the Spirit as I live willing to do God’s will regardless of what it looks like to others.

Our Prayer: *Lord, I receive Paul’s prayer for me. Fill me with the knowledge of your will. Empower me to please you in every way. Bear much kingdom fruit through my life. Strengthen me with your power so that I might stay on mission with you regardless of the sacrifice it involves. I want to live every day in “submission to your mission.”*