



A Study of Colossians

Wednesday, July 11 - Tuesday, July 17

Week #4 | Colossians 2:24-29

¹For I want you to know how great a struggle I have on your behalf and for those who are at Laodicea, and for all those who have not personally seen my face, ²that their hearts may be encouraged, having been knit together in love, and attaining to all the wealth that comes from the full assurance of understanding, resulting in a true knowledge of God's mystery, that is, Christ Himself, ³in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. ⁴I say this so that no one will delude you with persuasive argument. ⁵For even though I am absent in body, nevertheless I am with you in Spirit, rejoicing to see you good discipline and the stability of your faith in Christ. ⁶Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, ⁷having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude. ⁸See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ. ⁹For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, ¹⁰and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority; and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; ¹²having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. ¹³When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, ¹⁴having cancelled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. ¹⁵When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him. ¹⁶Therefore no one is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day—¹⁷things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ. ¹⁸Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self-abasement and the worship of the angels, taking his stand on visions he has seen, inflated without cause by fleshly mind, ¹⁹and not holding fast to the head, from whom the entire body, being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments, grows with a growth which is from God. ²⁰If you have died with Christ to the elementary principles of the world, why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourself to decrees, such as, ²¹"Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch!" ²²(Which all refer to things destined to perish with use)—in accordance with the commandments and teaching of men? ²³These are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom in self-made religion and self-abasement and severe treatment of the body, but are of no value against fleshly indulgence.

TEACHING COMMENTARY

v2:1 For I want you to know how great a struggle I have on your behalf and for those who are at Laodicea, and for all those who have not personally seen my face

Key Word | "Struggle"—Paul's "love" was not relegated to those he knew personally, he was concerned for all who "followed Christ." This demonstrates Paul's commitment to all the churches, not just the ones he started personally.

QUESTION | What does it mean for Paul to have been "struggling" on someone else's behalf? TIE THIS TO "Rejoice in my sufferings for you." BEST TRANSLATION: "How strenuous are my exertions for you."

IMPORTANT | Also note the effort demanded of those in ministry—the is Paul's emphasis often Phil 1:30 1 Thes. 2:2; 1 Tim 6:12; 2 Tim 4:7

v2 that their hearts may be encouraged, having been knit together in love, and attaining to all the wealth that comes from the full assurance of understanding, resulting in a true knowledge of God's mystery, that is, Christ Himself

Key Phrase | "That their hearts may be encouraged" One of Paul's most frequent objectives in writing is that his readers be "encouraged" or "Comforted" (Rom. 15:4-5; 2 Cor. 1:4, 6; 13:11; 1 Thes. 3:2; 4:18)

NOTE EMPHASIS | "Encouraged" Paul's idea of "hearts" being "encouraged" is common vocab with Paul and most notable is the idea of "spiritual effects" would reach to the depth of their experience, where not only emotions were rooted, but also thought and decision (see Rom. 1:21, 24; 8:27; 9:2; 2Cor. 9:7).

Key Phrase | "having been knit together in love" Paul's prayer in 1:9-14 is really focused on the individual but the hope here is their well-being as a community. The cornerstone of this concept is that "encouragement" is rooted in their "community" together in Colossae.

ALSO | the notion of "UNITY"—Paul had a certain type of unity in mind. One that was encouraging, filled with wisdom and perspective (others centered). This whole idea is founded on a certain type of love. A love which penetrates to the heart and flows out of the heart. . . .that's the unity Paul was looking for (1:4).

Key Phrase | "All riches of full assurance" assurance is not simply a matter of cerebral conviction but something deeply felt (Rom. 8:15-16; 1Cor 2: 1-4; 1 Thes 1:5; Heb 10:22).

NOTE | Paul is consistently dealing with how we integrate the issue of mind and heart (how mind and heart work together). "God's mystery" (1:26) continues the idea of mind and heart and is answered in "Christ in You" both a cognitive and emotional relationship.

DON'T FORGET | "Christ" sits at the end of this verse to pull our attention back to the main point (remember over eight (8) "in Him(s)")

v3 in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

POSSIBLE POINT | There may be a hint of the traditional Jewish viewpoint that hidden wisdom had already been fully revealed in the Torah.

v4 | *I say this so that no one will delude you with persuasive argument.*

TRANSITION | Main theme of the letter: Paul and Timothy have concerns regarding the Colossians. This is NOT a strong warning (for an example of strong warnings see 1Cor.1:10; Gal 1:6; 1Thes 2:1). Nevertheless, there was concern regarding what the Colossians believed. That they were not “deluded” or “deceived” is the crux of the issue.

EMPHASIS OF v4 | the possibility of being “persuaded” by popular speakers. Bottom line is NOT a prevailing theology spreading through the masses but rather a trend or a mindset that was permeating the community.

v5 | *For even though I am absent in body, nevertheless I am with you in Spirit, rejoicing to see your good discipline and the stability of your faith in Christ.*

Paul’s concern, while subtle, is real. His emphasis is, “while I’m not there in body, I’m there in spirit” however, being there in body, due to this issue, would be best—but he’s unable to be there due to his imprisonment.

Key phrase | “Good discipline”

Key Phrase/word | “Stability”

Key phrase | “faith in Christ” focus is the object of our faith. The adjectives are “discipline” and “stability.”

EMPHASIS | The whole of Christianity falls with faith in Christ. ANYTHING THAT MAY APPEAR OR CLAIMS TO BE AN ADVANCE UPON THAT FAITH IS IN FACT A RETREAT FROM IT.” Conzelman

TRANSITION TO THE THEME OF THE LETTER 2:6-7 (4:6)

v6 *Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him,*

v7 *having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude.*

Think about this...

How often do I consider “laboring” or “Striving” for someone else? In other words, has the thought ever crossed my mind that “suffering” on behalf of someone else is an act of holiness? Have you considered how much your pastor has suffered on your behalf or for the church as a whole? Paul clearly saw it has an “honor” to bear the burden of others as they wrestled with following Christ. As you consider the role of our pastor(s), don’t forget that this is part of his (their) commitment to leading us. A reality that many of us may have never considered.