

Title: Colossians: Union to Christ and His Church, Pt 3 - "Struggle for the Stewardship of Christ" - Colossians 1:24-2:5

Big Idea: Share and Suffer for the Stewardship of Christ by His Strength.

What in the message stood out to you?

What questions do you have?

Colossians 1:24-29

Read verse 24. What was your initial reaction to the idea that Paul's suffering was somehow filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions? How does this concept challenge or deepen your understanding of Christ's work on the cross?

- Read Philippians 2:27–30 and the story of Epaphroditus. How does his risking his life to complete what was lacking in their service to Paul shed light on Paul's statement in Colossians 1:24?
- In what ways do you think Paul's suffering and the suffering of other believers throughout history have served to present Christ's afflictions to those who have not heard or seen them?

Read verses 25-27. God's "mystery" is revealed, and He could have chosen any method to spread His Gospel. Why do you think He uses weak, suffering people for this work?

How does understanding the mystery of "Christ in you, the hope of glory," guard us from discouragement? Why is this mystery, despite potential suffering, precious and worth proclaiming?

- How often do you think about the reality that the Spirit of Christ lives in you?

Reflecting on Paul's goal in presenting everyone mature in Christ, how can our growth groups collaborate more effectively towards this? How can prayer help us depend on Christ's strength in our ministry and sharing of the Gospel?

- How do you personally experience the tension between the call to proclaim Christ and the challenges or distractions of daily life?

Colossians 2:1-5

Read Colossians 2:1-2. Is the statement "Encouraged in heart and united in love," a good description of our church or your growth group? What kind of things threaten your unity? How can those things be combatted, both in our church and in your own heart?

Dietrich Bonhoeffer's statement, "When Jesus bids a man follow him, he bids him come and die," was referenced in the sermon. How does this challenge our modern understanding of discipleship and the cost of following Christ?

Read Colossians 2:3-5. Do you think that you can know God without Christ? How does the truth of our passage combat this kind of thinking?

“Next Steps” Takeaways – Discuss and pray through the following:

With God:

Seek the Lord in prayer asking for the strength and remembrance that “Christ is in you, the hope of glory.”

- What’s something that you do every day that could help you remember that the Spirit of Christ dwells in you?

With Others:

Evaluate your role in the body of Christ here at Good Shepherd, and how you can actively contribute to the maturity, unity, and understanding of fellow believers.

- Is there a particular person or group you’re being called to warn or teach? Share and pray for one another.

On Mission:

Consider together: how does the message of suffering and filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions impact our motivation and commitment to sharing the gospel with others, even in challenging or hostile environments?

- Pray for one another to boldly share the gospel with the commitment and motivation that’s consistent with this passage.