



A Study of Colossians, Lesson#6

Gerald Cumby, Teacher

Colossians 1:24-29, "I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church, of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God which was given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God, **the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints.** To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. **Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.** To this end I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily.

The mystery Paul is referring is Christ Jesus Himself...as it deals with God's plan for the church...in making one body out of Jew and Gentile converts (Gentiles grafted into the trunk of Israel; the root is God Himself); See Romans, chapters 9-11.

NOTE: "This is the crowning wonder to Paul that God had included the Gentiles in his redemptive grace." (Robertson)

- The Christian's **hope of glory** isn't our own hard work and devotion to God, or the power of our own spirituality; it is the abiding presence of Jesus: It is "**Christ in you.**"
- The focus of Paul's preaching. He didn't preach himself, his opinions, or lots of entertaining stories. He preached *Jesus*. Grace...Grace...Grace!

Warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom:

- **Warning** – or helping to impart understanding of the riches of following Christ's teaching...while also teaching that there are consequences for not using wisdom in their decisions as to how to achieve true success in their business practices and their spiritual activities.

- **The most important point being the warning of sinful practices by church members and their desires for immediate success in their endeavors to make their mark on society.**
- Church leaders should be the overseers, the angels (messengers) in calling out sinful practices by members and city leaders.

Leaving the reprimanding and rebuking to God is a “cop-out” and a lazy way of getting sinful practices addressed. God will hold us accountable for not being the mouthpiece and spokesperson (ambassadors) in holding sinners who continue to sin and “do-gooders” accountable for unwise and ungodly actions.

Paul’s Message to the Colossian Church was a word of warning to the church in general. The “atta boys” had been presented. Now Paul must be the preacher, the teacher, and the one who steps-on-toes for God’s sake and His sustaining authority.

Throughout the Word of God, there were Godly servants of God who “warned or reprimanded” someone/group/team firmly when they were off-base in their thinking and actions.

- *God did it with firmness of spirit; Jesus did it with fervor and unwavering truth.*
- **We should do it only when we have been prompted by the Holy Spirit. This is “true wisdom.”**

Our responsibility to ourselves and other brothers in Christ is to help present every believer perfect in Christ Jesus!

Colossians 2-1-3, “For I want you to know what a great conflict I have for you and those in Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh, ² that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, and attaining to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ, ³ in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Conflict = inner-concern/strife within/struggle

Since the church members at Laodicea and Colossae had not met Paul face to face, they probably did not understand Paul’s methods of teaching. Only Epaphras has been mentioned as teaching and preaching in Colossae.

Therefore, the Colossian church attendees probably were as concerned about Paul as he was about them. No face-to-face meeting had taken place—only what they heard from the go-between.

- Paul was trying to reassure the church that he wanted to encourage them in love and understanding as to who they were in Christ Jesus.
- Paul longed for them to be unified, not just in word, but in a deep-rooted love anchored by the full assurance that comes from understanding the mystery of God in Christ. This mystery, once hidden, was now being revealed—treasures of wisdom and knowledge found in Christ alone.
- Paul knew that distance could foster misunderstanding, yet he urged them to take heart.

Paul's heart for these believers was not only pastoral but deeply personal—he shared in their struggles...feeling their uncertainty and earnest yearning for spiritual truth.

- This heartfelt concern reminds us that spiritual growth is cultivated within the fabric of a loving community, where encouragement, unity, and shared understanding are essential.
- Paul's words, though written centuries ago, echo across time: the path to maturity in Christ is when each member uplifts the other toward the fullness found in Christ alone.

As we reflect on Paul's message, we are challenged to examine our own relationships within the body of believers. Do we strive to be the kind of community that not only proclaims unity, but lives it out with patience, humility, and grace—ever seeking the hidden treasures of wisdom and knowledge revealed in Christ Jesus?

Colossians 2:4-10, "Now this I say lest anyone should deceive you with persuasive words. ⁵ For though I am absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good order and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ.⁶ As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, ⁷ rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving. ⁸ Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. ⁹ For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; ¹⁰ and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power."

- Those who told the Colossians to find wisdom and knowledge apart from the simplicity of Jesus were very **persuasive**.
- The lure of "hidden" and "deep" wisdom and knowledge can be both strong and deceptive. Paul did not say that they had *already* been deceived, but he clearly saw the danger and warned them about it.

- *Hey, church...deceivers are deceivers. Deceivers won't announce their false doctrine as false doctrine. In fact, the doctrine will often be similar enough to the truth to be dangerous.*
- **I am absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in spirit:** Paul genuinely felt he was among the Colossian Christians **in spirit**, even though he was **absent in the flesh**.

How many times have we written our letters to friends and family and have said the same thing?

As Christians, we walk, but we are also rooted, and we are also built up. The metaphors are somewhat mixed, but the message is clear: be established on the solid rock...and keep growing.

The WARNING from Paul:

- *The false teaching among the Colossians was marked by an emphasis on philosophy and empty deceit.*
- *Most of all, it was according to the tradition of men. It had the stamp of man on it, not God.*
- *Paul here warned that the tradition of men has no equal authority to the word of God.*
- *Most people live under the idea that "we get what we deserve; when we are good, we deserve to receive good; when we are bad, we deserve to receive bad." This is heresy and against the Word of God!*
- *Paul warned the Colossians to not subject themselves to this grace-eliminating kind of thinking, and to consider themselves dead to the vain philosophies and empty deceitful teachings.*

To wrap up the lesson for today, we have to understand the grace afforded us when we found Jesus on our journey from the cradle to the grave.

SUMMARY: JESUS IS THE ANSWER...MAKE SURE WE ASK THE RIGHT QUESTION AND RECEIVE THE ANSWER WITH JOY AND FAITH!