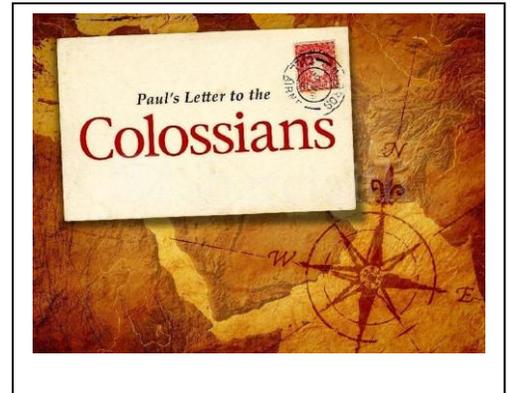


Sunday July 26th, 2020

Sermon Series- "Lord, I Want to Know You More!"

Outline and Bible Study on the Introduction of the Book of Colossians

***"That I May Know Him
More as the Mystery and
Marvel of the Ages!"
(Colossians 1:24-2:5)***



Introduction: When was the last time you put yourself in someone else's shoes?

Christ in us...

I. Our Ministry! (Col. 1:24-25, 28-29)

II. His Mystery! (Col. 1:26-27)

III. And More! (Col. 2:1-5)

A. An encouragement (vs. 1-3)

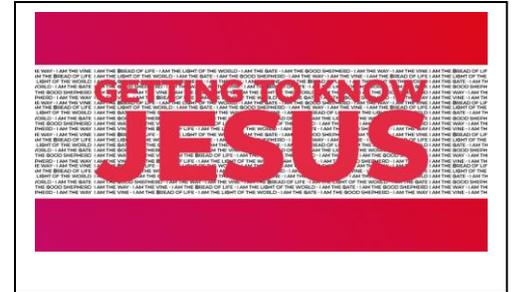
B. A warning (vs. 4)

C. A strengthening (vs. 5)

Conclusion: "How has following Christ been like uncovering buried treasure for you?"

Bible Study Guide #4 and Question and Answer Sheet for Colossians 1:24-2:5.

1. How does “walking” or being in your best friend’s “shoes” help us to know a person more? Can you pull an example from your past about how you learned to walk in someone’s shoes and how it helped you understand him or her?



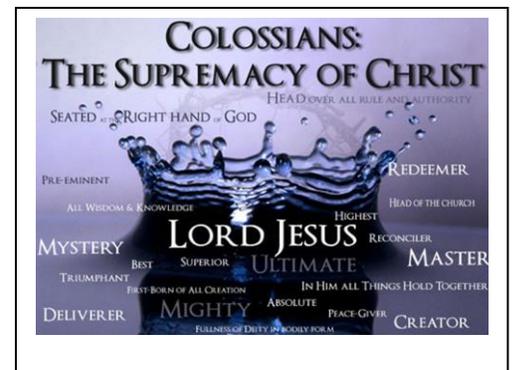
2. The key verse to the whole book of Colossians is 1:27- “Christ in you, the hope of glory.” Take some time and write down some of the other translations and versions of the Bible on this verse in the space below:

i.e. The Amplified Bible: “To whom God was pleased to make known how great for the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ within and among you, the hope of [realizing the] glory.”

The Phillips: “They are those to whom God has planned to give a vision of the full wonder and splendour of His secret plan for the sons of men. And the secret is simply this: Christ in you! Yes, Christ in you bringing with Him the hope of all glorious things to come.”

The New Living Translation: “God wants these great riches of the hidden truth to be made known to the people who are not Jews. The secret is this: Christ in you brings hope of all the great things to come.”

**Would you memorize this verse this week?
(Colossians 1:27)**



What does it mean to live Christ before others? A pastoral friend of mine was spending a night in the emergency room of an area hospital. When a woman was brought in who had tried unsuccessfully to take her own life, he spent time listening and trying to get into “her situation” to see it from her perspective because he had never experienced the despair of trying to take his own life. He then comforted her. Suddenly she looked up and asked: “Hey, are you Jesus?” That simple incident has reminded me that if we are going to represent Christ in this world so that others will know Him, we have to be people who walk in trying to listen

and understand others more. And truly, isn't that what Jesus has done for us? He left the riches and glories of heaven, and became a man who walked in life in our sandals with us and then died for us on the cross. We need to be people of love, faith, and hope like the believers of Colosse (Colossians 1:3-4). Our mission in life is to live such Christ-like lives that others will desire to know and follow Him as well. Do people see Jesus in us?

3. What do you learn about the passion and heart of the apostle Paul when you read verses 25-26 and then verses 28-29?

One of the comments is suffering. Why would we want to understand or know the sufferings of Jesus? Where was Paul currently writing from? (4:3) If you cross reference to Philippians 3:10 Paul said, "I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of His resurrection and participation in His sufferings." Paul wanted to suffer or at least expected to suffer for Jesus. Go back and read Colossians 1:3, 9. Notice the pronoun "we". Who were the "people" whom he prayed and thanked God? So don't let that simple plural pronoun go by you without stopping and asking who is the 'we'? Yes, it could be the friend Paul mentioned, but Paul was under arrest in Rome, where he was awaiting trial. He was chained to a Roman praetorian guard day and night. They would have been trading shifts. How would you like to be that guy? What did these guards think about it? There was no escape from Paul. Paul wasn't chained to them- they were chained to him, and he knew that before God. So like it or not they found themselves in a prayer meeting. Most unsaved people do not like prayer meetings. For that matter, some saved people don't like them very much either. Why do we manage to make them so dull and boring? Some resounding prayer meetings must have happened being chained next to Paul.

What are the circumstances right now that cause you to feel that we as believers are suffering for Christ? Name three:

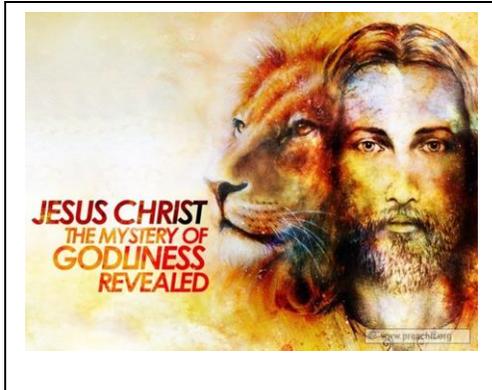
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

4. What does it mean to live for Jesus and rejoice in His sufferings? (vs. 24)

In *Extreme Devotion- Stories from Foxes Book of Martyrs*, there is a true story of a Russian man named Paulus who was captured and held prisoner by Soviet officers and beaten and tortured for many hours. "We are not going to torture you anymore," said the interrogator to Paulus, "We will send you instead to

Siberia, where the snow never melts. It is a place of great suffering. You and your family will fit in well.” Paulus, instead of being depressed, smiled and said, “The whole earth belongs to my Father, Captain. Wherever you send me I will be on my Father’s earth.” The captain, surprised by Paulus’ answer, looked at him sharply. “We will take away all you own!” “You will need a high ladder, Captain,” said Paulus. “For my treasures are stored up in heaven.” “We will then put a bullet between your eyes,” shouted the captain, now angry. “If you take away my life in this world, my real life of joy and beauty will begin”, answered Paulus. “I’m not afraid of being killed.” The captain grabbed Paulus by his tattered prison shirt and screamed into his face, “We will not kill you! We will keep you locked alone in a cell and allow no one to come see you!” “You cannot do that, Captain,” said Paulus, still smiling. “I have a Friend who can pass through locked doors and iron bars. No one can separate me from the love of Christ!” Despite an uncertain future, we can be sure of one thing: Christ our hope will face it with us. Whether we are going through a private trial or a public grieving, we are never going alone. Only Jesus has the ability to pass through the “iron bars” on our suffering hearts and share these difficult times. Although, in His wisdom, He may not choose to deliver us from our circumstances, His sure presence will see us through them. Smile, knowing you have a Friend from whom you can never be separated!

5. Read Ephesians 1:26-27. What does “mystery” mean? It doesn’t mean finding “clues” to solve a puzzle. The word in Greek “mysterion” means



something we can’t know or even understand unless God reveals it to us. There are some things God reveals to no one (Deut. 29:29). The mystery that Paul spoke of is “the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations; but has now been manifested to us.” There are several times when Paul used this idea of “mystery.” Look them up and try to find out what the mysteries are pertained to:

Colossians 2:2-3, 9- Mystery of Incarnate Christ

Romans 11:25- Mystery of Israel’s unbelief

2 Thess. 3:3-6; Rev. 17:5, 7- Mystery of man of lawlessness

Ephesians 3:3-6- Mystery of unity of Jews and Gentiles as a church

1 Cor. 15:51- Mystery of the rapture

Of all the themes of mystery that God has revealed in the New Testament, the most profound is “Christ in you, the hope of glory.” What reality does it give our lives to know Christ lives in us? How is it that we have this unprecedented hope in unprecedented times such as ours? We are a people of great hope, understanding that our hope is not wishful thinking.

New Testament "Mysteries" (previously unknown, but now-revealed truths)

Matthew 13:11—"the secrets [mysteries] of the kingdom of heaven"

Luke 8:10—"the secrets [mysteries] of the kingdom of God"

Romans 11:25—"this mystery . . . Israel has experienced a hardening in part"

Romans 16:25-26—"the mystery hidden for long ages past, but now revealed"

1 Corinthians 4:1—"servants of Christ . . . entrusted with the secret things [mysteries] of God"

Ephesians 1:9—"the mystery of His will"

Ephesians 3:2-3—"the administration of God's grace . . . the mystery made known to me by revelation"

Ephesians 3:4—"the mystery of Christ"

Ephesians 3:9—"this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God"

Ephesians 5:32—"a profound mystery . . . Christ and the church"

Colossians 1:26—"the mystery . . . kept hidden for ages and generations, but . . . now disclosed"

Colossians 1:27—"this mystery, which is Christ in you"

Colossians 2:2—"the mystery of God, namely, Christ"

Colossians 4:3—"the mystery of Christ"

2 Thessalonians 2:7—"the secret power [mystery] of lawlessness is already at work"

1 Timothy 3:9—"keep hold of the deep truths [mysteries] of the faith"

1 Timothy 3:16—"the mystery of godliness is great"

Revelation 1:20—"the mystery of the seven stars . . . is this: [they] are the angels"

Revelation 10:7—"the mystery of God will be accomplished"

Revelation 17:5—"Mystery, Babylon the Great"

I was smiling and enjoyed reading from an article *Upside-down world*, by Tim Lovelace. "There is one word that seems to be used most often to describe the days in which we are living ... the adjective of the moment is 'unprecedented.' You hear and read this word everywhere. We are people of great hope, understanding that our hope is not wishful thinking. The meaning of hope in Hebrew and Greek is different than the way most think of hope today. The root meaning of hope is expecting and knowing. Many people during this pandemic are isolated and experiencing loneliness like never before. Some are extremely fearful or sad, and when they look to the Internet, trust science, or government, they are given many different kinds of advice to help them in their loneliness. Here is some exciting news: we can be people of hope! The Bible gives us a wonderful directive to comfort others, and in so doing, we are comforted, too. Not only can we pray, but we can also send texts or emails of encouragement. Better yet, we can give someone a call. We are more than members of a church. We are His Church! We have an enormous opportunity right now, like never before in our lifetime. These are unprecedented times, and we have unprecedented hope!" (Tim Loveless, *Upside-down world*, Singingnew.com pg. 27).

6. If the gospel is the greatest secret or mystery, why do we keep it hidden? (vs. 27)

I love this quote from Charles Spurgeon about the mystery of Jesus:

“The gospel is the grand secret, the mystery of mysteries. It was hidden from ages and from generations, but is now made manifest to the saints. To the mass of mankind it was utterly unknown, and the chosen people, who saw something of it, only perceived it dimly through the smoke of sacrifices and the veil of types. It remained a mystery which wit could not guess nor invention unravel, and it would have forever continued a secret had not God in His infinite mercy, been pleased to reveal it by the Holy Spirit. In a still deeper sense it is even yet a hidden thing unless the Spirit of God has revealed it to us individually, for the revelation of the gospel in the Word of God does not of itself instruct men unto eternal life. The light is clear enough, but it avails nothing till the eyes are opened. Each separate individual must have Christ revealed to him and in him by the work of the Holy Spirit, or else he will remain in darkness even in the midst of the gospel day. Blessed and happy are they to whom the Lord has laid open the divine secret which prophets and kings could not discover, which even angels desired to look into. Brethren, we live in a time when the gospel is clearly revealed in the Word of God, and when that word has its faithful preachers lovingly to press home its teachings, let us take care that we do not despise the mystery which has now become a household word. Be not content with Christian people talking to you, or preachers preaching to you, or the Bible being read to you, or prayers being offered for you. Anything short of Jesus will leave you short of salvation. You have to reach Christ, and touch Christ, and nothing short of this will serve your turn. The mystery is having Christ Himself!” (Christ in You, #1720, pg. 1).

7. Paul’s commission and commitment is to “Preach Him!” (vs. 28) What is a preacher’s job like? What responsibilities do we have for preaching Christ?

Years ago, I had a man named Tom come and watch me digging a ditch to lay new water pipes to our parsonage in our first ministry of Vintondale. Tom was not a worker, and was known as a “professional supervisor and expert” on every project that would happen around town. So he said as he was critiquing my shoveling, “You know, I could do your job, Pastor. All I have to do is stand in front of others and say a lot of words, and pretend.” I don’t think he understood the seriousness of the commission to preach the Word. **Let me share the answer that I’ve learned about ‘What is preaching?’ through the years.** Preaching is declaring God’s truth in Jesus, to the praise of His Name. It is the explanation and application of the Word in the assembled congregation of Christ. J. I. Packer says that it is “the event of God Himself bringing to an audience a Bible-based, Christ-related, life impacting message of instruction and direction through the words of a spokesperson.” (*Some Perspectives On Preaching*, pg. 28). The importance is that we share clearly and untarnished the truth of the beauty, riches, and power of what Jesus has done for us.

John Newton wrote to a friend to encourage him in his Christian walk. Of Jesus Christ he said: “To view him by faith, as living, dying, reigning, interceding and governing for us, will furnish us with such views, prospects, motives, and encouragements, as will enable us to endure any cross, to overcome all opposition, to withstand temptation, and to run in the way of his commandments with an enlarged heart.” (Newton on Christian Life, *To Live is Christ*, pg. 270).

8. Paul wanted to encourage these believers. Read Colossians 2:1-5. What are the three things he wanted for them?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

9. Notice that Paul was worried about “deceptive philosophies” entering the church (vs. 4, 8). What are the deceptive things that people are not watching for in today’s news and world during this Covid-19? What lies beneath the surface of spiritual undercurrents right now that believers need to “watch” and be aware?

We may not be absolutely certain about what “philosophy” Paul was attacking in the letter to the Colossians, but the text does provide warnings against any “religious” or secular phenomena with similar features that may resurface in our setting... we should be on guard against any religious practice or worldview that promotes any or all of the following things:

- Anything that judges and disqualifies others according to arbitrary human measures.
- Anything that substitutes sham battles with asceticism for the real battle with sin, which Christ has already won for us.
- Anything that makes subjective feelings or mystic states the norm over the historical event of Christ’s crucifixion and resurrection.
- Anything that places more importance on divine intermediaries, such as angels, than on the divine reality of Christ.
- Anything that cuts people off from Christ, the head, or Christ’s people, the body.

(David E. Garland, NIV Application Commentary, Colossians, 1998).

10. Paul was clear that the only lasting and stable foundation for life is Jesus Christ. What do you learn about Jesus Christ as the foundation for your life from this passage (2:2-7)?

For whom will you regularly pray to grow strong in his or her faith? (vs. 5)

Call this person and let him or her know you are praying for him or her. Also, give this person verbal affirmation of his or her faith and tell of the joy you have experienced as a Christian follower.

Look for opportunities to connect new believers with mature followers of Christ. You might even want to invite them to a social gathering or dinner.

