

"Paul's Burden for the Colossians"

Part 1

Colossians 2:1-5

Introduction: In our study last week, we looked at how Paul identified himself to the saints at Colossae because they had never met him in person. Tonight, as we go into chapter 2 Paul will express his burden for these people and in so doing, he unloads an abundance of Truth for us to consider.

I. The Conflict

Notice Colossians 2:1

Paul had never met these people but when he heard of the heresy that had made its way into the church Paul's heart was in great conflict. The idea is that he had an internal struggle going on for these people. Most likely Paul was laboring in prayer for this church. Not only for the church at Colossae but also the church at Laodicea. The heresy had not only made it to Colossae but it had also made it to Laodicea. Paul knew what false doctrine could do within the church.

Application:

Have you ever labored in prayer for someone? Have you ever labored in prayer for someone you never met? We all know what it is like to cry to God on behalf of a person who is in need of God's touch, or His grace, or His strength, or for conviction. Prayer for a situation can be a labor because we are in this spiritual battle and the demonic world will do everything possible to pull us away from reaching the throne of God. You see, the enemy knows that when God's people pray that it is then that the wheels of heaven begin to move.

James 5:13-16

¹³ Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.

¹⁴ Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:

¹⁵ And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

¹⁶ Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

Let us remember what Jesus experienced before He was arrested.

Luke 22:41-44

⁴¹ *And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed,*

⁴² *Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.*

⁴³ *And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.*

⁴⁴ *And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.*

Jesus was in a spiritual battle as He faced the cross and He labored in prayer. There are times in life when we do not even know how to pray for the situation we face but praise God the Holy Spirit does know and He intercedes for us.

Romans 8:26-27

²⁶ *Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.*

²⁷ *And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.*

II. The Desire

Notice Colossians 2:2

We need to look at this verse in parts because there is much spiritual Truth for us here. First of all, Paul prays for unity within the church. He fully understood that false teaching would cause division as it came into the church. So, Paul knows that unity is vitally important in the church. He prays for them to be comforted which means "encouraged" while at the same time they are knit together in love. Paul also desires them to have courage so that they can cope with any situation that would arise within the church. Strong hearts knit together in love result in a powerful Christian life. These believers are strengthened as the spirit Christ will dwell in their hearts and they will be rooted and grounded in his love and at the same time they will be filled with all the fullness of God. This means that they will be controlled in all areas of their lives by the spirit of God. This is exactly what was needed within this church. Spirit filled/controlled believers that would

be able to stand against this heresy that had crept into the church. Notice what Paul prayed for the believers at Ephesus.

Ephesians 3:14-19

¹⁴ For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

¹⁵ Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,

¹⁶ That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;

¹⁷ That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,

¹⁸ May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;

¹⁹ And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.

Now let me show you the end result of the fullness of God working in the church and each individual believer.

Ephesians 3:20

²⁰ Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,

Notice Colossians 2:2 again.

The phrase, "**unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding,**" reveals Paul's desire for these believers that they would be 100% sure of their salvation. He desired that they would have hearts full of assurance because in that knowledge there are riches.

Notice the words of Wiersbe.

"The mature believer has assurance in his heart that he is a child of God. The spiritual knowledge that he has in Christ constantly enlightens him and directs him daily. I have often counseled believers who told me they lacked assurance of their salvation. Invariably, they have been neglecting God's Word and living in ignorance."

Why was this important to combat the heresy that had come in the church? Because this heresy came in and would say, "You are not really saved because you are not observing this, or you are not worshipping on this day, or your faith is not enough because you must live according to the Law."

Someone who is not grounded in their salvation would entertain what these teachers were saying and the next thing that would happen would be this would be a church of "grace plus works." Might I add that there are so many churches that have adopted this doctrine today! There are churches that teach we must worship on the Sabbath, some teach that we are saved by faith plus works, others teach that we are saved by keeping the Law.

Now when a believer grasps on to the Truth that he or she is saved by grace through faith plus nothing else then this false teaching does not move them. Do you see now why Paul desired that they would be sure of their salvation?

James 1:8

⁸ *A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.*

Notice Colossians 2:2 again.

I want us to see the next phrase in this verse.

"unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ;"

The result of knowing that you are saved is you will then understand that you are part of the "mystery," this is the church, which means that you will understand that you are IN Christ and you are part of His body. Do you see how the knowledge takes us deeper into understanding more of the riches that we have in Christ?

Notice Colossians 2:3

In Jesus Christ are hid all the riches of wisdom and knowledge. Let me pull some thoughts together here. The deeper we grow in our knowledge of Jesus Christ the greater the riches that we uncover and the stronger we become.

2 Peter 1:3-10

³ *According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:*

⁴ *Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*

⁵ *And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue [moral excellence/purity]; and to virtue knowledge;*

⁶ *And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness;*

⁷ *And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.*

⁸ *For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

⁹ **But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.**

¹⁰ *Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, **ye shall never fall:***

We can see in these verses the need for a deeper knowledge of the Word of God. The deeper we grow the more stable we stand.

Psalm 1:1-3

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

² *But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.*

³ *And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.*

It takes effort to grow in knowledge but we must strive to gain knowledge to stand in this world that is so full of deception.

Proverbs 3:3-8

³ *Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding;*

⁴ *If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures;*

⁵ *Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.*

⁶ *For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.*

⁷ *He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly.*

⁸ *He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints.*

Conclusion:

If we desire something enough, we will do all we can to attain it. How is your desire for knowledge?