

**TO BRING ALL TO COMPLETENESS****Colossians 1:24-2:5****(Read Colossians 1:24-2:5)**

**Intro:** Has anyone been through Akron lately or driven on the Pennsylvania Turnpike? Are they done the road construction in either place? Yes, I know. That's a silly question. Of course they are not done! I've decided that I will never see the end of detour signs in Akron, and I'm 65 years old and I've finally realized that the construction on the PA turnpike will continue on in perpetuity. It will never be completed.

In Jesus Christ, the completeness of the Gospel message was brought into reality. Our text for today points this out as Paul shares how his sufferings were assisting in bringing all to completeness and he revels in the thought. There is much we can learn from this and apply it in own journey as we share Jesus with a lost world. Let's look at it see. First . . .

**It's all worth it (vv. 1:24, 2:1)**

- Here is Peterson's paraphrase those opening verses, *I want you to know how glad I am that it's me sitting here in this jail and not you. There's a lot of suffering to be entered into in this world—the kind of suffering Christ takes on. I welcome the chance to take my share in the church's part of that suffering. When I became a servant in this church, I experienced this suffering as a sheer gift, God's way of helping me serve you, laying out the whole truth.* Colossians 1:24-25 (The Message)
- Paul is in prison because of his preaching of the Good News. According to Colossians 2:1, he had never even met the ones who were reading his letter, but he loved the privilege because of the privilege it was to be able to serve God in this way. It was all worth it for the furthering of the Good News.
- When you have good news to tell you don't hold back and you spare no expense and if it brings some pain or heartache in the process then so be it. It's worth it. Let's not forget that. Following Jesus is not always an easy road – in fact there is absolutely no promise of that. In James' thinking we should rejoice. Listen, *Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness.* James 1:2-3. And that's just the beginning of the blessing.
- The next thing Paul confidently points out is . . .

**The Good News is for EVERYONE! (vv. 1:25, 28)**

- It's not restricted. Over the past two weeks we've seen that the Apostle was addressing the newly hatched heresy, known as Gnosticism, that was making inroads in the Church. A nutshell review of this false teaching was that one had to have special knowledge to know God and to be able to attain salvation. This reveals an arrogance and exclusivity the cult perpetuated that has no place in the people of God because the Good News is for whoever comes to Christ. This Good News even predated Paul, Joel prophesied . . . *everyone who calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.* Joel 2:32a. Paul told the Romans, *if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead,*

*you will be saved.* Romans 10:8. The only way a person is excluded from salvation is when they choose to exclude themselves. The Gospel is for everyone and this is the hope of Glory!

- Paul nails his point down in verse 28 by repeating the word “everyone” three times. Listen, *Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ.* (v. 28) Like Paul we need to be evangelists of the Good News of Jesus Christ and that the message is for EVERYONE!
- It’s like this, it’s not rocket science – the message is simple because . . .

### **The Good News is NOT Complex (vv. 26, 27)**

- As I pointed out a bit ago, it’s the Hope of Glory - Christ in US is the hope of glory. I’m going to look at this in a bit, but it’s not a mysterious formula and it’s not a special way to dress or a special book you need to read or a particular version of the Bible or what car you drive or how much money you give or what you do say or don’t say. All you need to do is make Jesus the boss of your life. It’s not complex.
- So, let’s get to work. And as we do, notice . . .

### **God gives the energy we need to the work of the Word (v. 29)**

- This week when I needed a lot of energy for a lot of things going on in our lives, the word “energy” in verse 29 caught my eye. Listen to it again, *For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.* Colossians 1:29. I literally never noticed it before. Listen to Peterson, *That’s what I’m working so hard at day after day, year after year, doing my best with the energy God so generously gives me.* Colossians 1:29 (The Message).
- Whenever you don’t think you’ve got what it takes or you are just too beaten down – remember it’s not your steam you’re operating on. You have the most limitless, mind-boggling, eternity shaking power available to energize you for whatever God is calling you to do. Whenever you think you don’t have the words to share with a struggling soul or to bring the peace of Christ to a situation, THAT’S GOOD! Because it’s not what you have, it’s what the Holy Spirit gives when you call on him for the energy you need. It’s a promise.
- And in the process . . .

### **Don’t be sucked in by fancy arguments (vv. 2:2-4)**

- I said I’d get back to this and here it is because Paul continues with it here in the opening verses of chapter 2. Dealing again with the false message of the Gnostics, Paul, in so many words says, *“If you know Christ, you can lay your hand on the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. You know them, not by the intellect but by the heart.”* His point here is to put the impressionable new Christ Followers in Colossae on their guard against those who might distract them from their simple faith in Jesus and the sufficiency in him.

- The problem newcomers often experience is they might have too little confidence in their abilities. When you are in a new situation you don't know the customs or the lingo or the way things are done and thereby feel disadvantaged.
- My little brothers and I were almost cruel to our sisters in law. It was all in good fun, of course, but looking back it was rascally. One particular time was when our brother Phil was working on restoring his 1959 Bug. (this is not the car but it's a 1959 in the Clementine orange that was popular in about 1970). We told his wife-to-be, Judy, Phil needed a left-handed screw driver, and Judy, without a thought, went into the house to retrieve said mythological tool. We proceeded to forget we had sent her on the snipe hunt and it wasn't until quite a while later when Judy returned having been unsuccessful in her search and also, having been laughingly informed by our dad that she had been duped. She was not happy! The Gnostics were hoping for a similar dupe as they exploited the possible lack of confidence on the part of the young believers in the Lycus Valley. Paul knew the danger this presented and he was giving fair warning. He was assuring them they could think for themselves and they should not fall for seemingly convincing arguments or teaching.
- Also watch out for the seemingly convincing arguments by those who are hostile to God or won't give consideration that there is a God at all. Don't allow this to shake your faith. You have accepted Jesus through faith so don't permit those who are not able to see through their hostility to the reality of God and his love and his redemption to destroy your faith. Hang on to your faith and allow God to speak into your spirit with the truth.
- And as you do that, let's continue . . .

### **Conclusion: Standing with one another (v. 2:5)**

- Paul wrote to the Philippians, *So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.* Philippians 2:1-2. Part of completeness is being complete as a Body.
- This means we stand up for others when we see them falling for convincing arguments or simply not having enough confidence to know the truth when they see it. Let's stand together.
- To be continued . . . Amen.

Remember: Try to read through Colossians at least once a week

### **THE PRAYER CORNER IS AVAILABLE**

Keith A. Tyson M. Div.

ABC August 21, 2022

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