

For the Sake of the Body

Colossians 1:24-2:5

“There is a force at work in the world today that is more powerful and more significant than any other in the history of the world. It is not the spread of the democracy, nor is it any of the anti-democratic movements that are currently active and threatening. It is not capitalism, nor socialism. It is not civil rights, gay rights or feminism. It is certainly not atheistic secularism. The force that is more powerful and more significant than any other in the history of the world is *the gospel of Jesus Christ*, the gospel you who have come to faith in Jesus Christ have heard, understood and believed, which we have been learning from the apostle Paul is bearing fruit and growing in the whole world (1:6). Indeed it is reverberating in all creation under heaven (1:23).” Woodhouse

- I. The reason Paul writes about the difficulties of living the gospel, is to point out that knowing Jesus is worth every bit of what he is going through. His sufferings are secondary to serving Jesus, knowing Jesus, loving Jesus and obeying Jesus.

Col. 1:24

1 Peter 4:7-11

1 John 5:1-5 *Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves his child as well. This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands. This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, for everyone born of God overcomes the world, even our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.*

- II. The gospel reveals the mystery of the church that was kept hidden up to the time of Jesus' death, burial and resurrection. When believers proclaim the gospel, they are presenting an opportunity for gentiles to become *heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.*

Col. 1:25-29

Eph. 3:2-6 Surely you have heard about the administration of God's grace that was given to me for you, that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation, as I have already written briefly. In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to men in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit of God's holy apostles and prophets. This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.

- III. The gospel has the power to present everyone who takes to heart its message perfect in Christ. Every time we proclaim the gospel, we pour out the glorious riches of the mystery of Christ to a people in desperate need of salvation. Every time the truth is brought forth, we provide an opportunity for the Holy Spirit to enable us to grow in the depth and knowledge of the Lord Jesus (**2 Peter 3:18**).

Col. 1:28-29

- IV. Our responsibility as the body of Christ, which is the church, is to encourage one another, stay united in love, grow in our relationship with Jesus and stay Word centered to keep ourselves from being deceived by the evil one. To be diligent in all of those very important aspects of a healthy church, not only brings high honor to our Lord, it also provides a firm foundation for people to become firmly rooted in their faith.

Col. 2:1-5