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**Much Love!**

Pastor Ed

**Title:** Up Close and Personal

**Text:** Colossians 1:14-2:5

**Target:** When you see the success of someone, do not overlook the adversity that was required to get them where they are.

- I. **The Secret in Suffering:** *“Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church,”* (Vs. 1:24)
  - A. **Fellowship in Persecution:** *“that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death.”* (Phil. 3:10)
  - B. **Fruit Produced:** *“for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.”* (James 1:3-4)
  - C. **Future Promise:** *“In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”* (John 16:33)
    1. **People Saved:** *“I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel”* (Phil 1:12)
    2. **Special Reward:** *“For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison,”* (2 Cor. 4:17)
- II. **The Motivation for Ministry:** *“of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known,”* (Vs. 1:25)
  - A. **A Clear Calling:** *“to make the word of God fully known,”* (Vs. 25)
    1. **Make it Plain:** *“the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints.”* (Vs. 26)
    2. **Make it Personal:** *“To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”* (Vs. 27)
    3. **Make it Pertinent:** *“Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ.”* (Vs. 28)
  - B. **A Consuming Passion:** *“For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.”* (Vs. 29)
- III. **The Hope for The Hearers:** *“For I want you to know how great a struggle I have for you and for those at Laodicea and for all who have not seen me face to face,”* (Vs. 2:1)
  - A. **Revelation to Receive:** *“I want you to know”* (Vs. 2:1)
    1. **Receive Encouragement:** *“that their hearts may be encouraged”* (Vs. 2a)
    2. **Embrace Unity:** *“being knit together in love”* (Vs. 2:2b)

3. **Awaken Enlightenment:** *“to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God’s mystery, which is Christ,”* (Vs. 2:2c)

**B. Expectation to Believe:** *“reach all the the riches”* (Vs. 2:2c)

1. **Pursue Treasure:** *“in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.”* (Vs. 2:3)
2. **Defend for Truth:** *“I say this in order that no one may delude you with plausible arguments.”* (Vs.2:4)
3. **Firm in the Faith:** *“rejoicing to see your good order and the firmness of your faith in Christ.”* (Vs. 2:5)

**Takeaway:** *“Do not judge me by my successes, judge me by how many times I fell down and got back up again.”* Nelson Mandela