

SERMON NOTES:

Series: Colossians – Christ Above All | Part 3: Rooted and Ready

Theme of Colossians: The absolute supremacy and sufficiency of Jesus Christ as the Head of all creation and of the Church.

Colossians 1:24-29 (NLT) Paul's Work for the Church

²⁴I am glad when I suffer for you in my body, for I am participating in the sufferings of Christ that continue for his body, the church. ²⁵God has given me the responsibility of serving his church by proclaiming his entire message to you.

R. Kent Hughes *"Paul now gives us a supremely magnificent perspective on his resulting ministry. It is a remarkably balanced view that delineates four aspects of his own ministry; his ministerial **attitude**, his ministerial **charge**, his ministerial **purpose**, and his ministerial **devotion**. It will be especially profitable for those who are in the professional ministry, but it ought to prove equally helpful for every serious believer, because we are all called to the "ministry," whatever our stated vocation."*

We must be devoted to...

- 1. Suffering as Ministers of the Church (1:24-25)**
 - a. We must embrace suffering for Christ (1:24)**
 - b. We must endure suffering for Christ (1:25a)**

²⁶This message was kept secret for centuries and generations past, but now it has been revealed to God's people. ²⁷For God wanted them to know that the riches and glory of Christ are for you Gentiles, too. And this is the secret: Christ lives in you. This gives you assurance of sharing his glory. ²⁸So we tell others about Christ, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all the wisdom God has given us. We want to present them to God, perfect in their relationship to Christ. ²⁹That's why I work and struggle so hard, depending on Christ's mighty power that works within me.

We must be devoted to...

- 2. Striving for the Mission of the Church (1:25-29)**

Max Lucado: "If Christ were merely *with* us, that would be fantastic. But even more amazing is the declaration that he is *in* us. Think of it – the Prince of Peace, the Good Shepherd, the great I AM – is living in our hearts. The implications are positively staggering! The possibilities are infinite! What did Paul do with such mind-boggling truth? Simple. He served. He poured out his life for others. And why not? After all, the one who filled him (the same one who lives in us) described himself as one who "did not come to be served, but to serve" (see Matthew 20:28). The more we realize the truth of Christ *in us*, the more we are willing to use our gifts and energy to bless others, no matter what hardships come."

- a. Labor for them to know the mystery of Christ (1:25b-27)**
- b. Labor for them to grow in maturity in Christ (1:28-29)**

R. Kent Hughes “The truth is, no one can hope to have a Biblically authentic ministry without hard work. Paul’s language in this verse is brutally compelling. The Greek word translated “toil” was used for work that left one so weary it was as if the person had taken a beating. It denotes labor to exhaustion. “Struggling,” a stronger term than “toil,” was the Greek word from which we derive the English word *agony* and was used for agonizing in an athletic event or in a fight. The words together describe the tremendous energy of Paul’s apostolic ministry. He strained every physical and moral sinew to present every man complete in Christ.”

We must be devoted to...

3. Strengthening the Members of the Church (2:1-5)

Colossians 2:1-5 (NLT)

¹ I want you to know how much I have agonized for you and for the church at Laodicea, and for many other believers who have never met me personally. ² I want them to be encouraged and knit together by strong ties of love. I want them to have complete confidence that they understand God’s mysterious plan, which is Christ himself. ³ In him lie hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

⁴ I am telling you this so no one will deceive you with well-crafted arguments. ⁵ For though I am far away from you, my heart is with you. And I rejoice that you are living as you should and that your faith in Christ is strong.

- a. **We must affirm God’s people with our love (2:1-2a)**
- b. **We must anchor God’s people in the truth (2:2b-3)**
- c. **We must alert God’s people to the risk (2:4)**
- d. **We must assure God’s people in the faith (2:5)**

Colossians 2:6-15 Freedom from Rules and New Life in Christ

⁶ And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow him. ⁷ Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness.

⁸ Don’t let anyone capture you with empty philosophies and high-sounding nonsense that come from human thinking and from the spiritual powers of this world, rather than from Christ. ⁹ For in Christ lives all the fullness of God in a human body. ¹⁰ So you also are complete through your union with Christ, who is the head over every ruler and authority.

¹¹ When you came to Christ, you were “circumcised,” but not by a physical procedure. Christ performed a spiritual circumcision—the cutting away of your sinful nature. ¹² For you were buried with Christ when you were baptized. And with him you were raised to new life because you trusted the mighty power of God, who raised Christ from the dead.

¹³ You were dead because of your sins and because your sinful nature was not yet cut away. Then God made you alive with Christ, for he forgave all our sins. ¹⁴ He canceled the record of the charges against us and took it away by nailing it to the cross. ¹⁵ In this way, he disarmed the spiritual rulers and authorities. He shamed them publicly by his victory over them on the cross.

God is calling us to grow in our walks with Christ in order to strengthen our faith and, ultimately, find our fulfillment in him.

1. We must deepen our intimacy with Christ (2:6).
 - a. We are called to be grounded (2:6-7)
 - b. We are called to be growing (2:7)
 - c. We are called to be grateful (2:7)

2. We must denounce the insufficiency of Christ (2:8-10)
 - a. False teaching deceives us and denies Christ (2:8)

R. Kent Hughes wrote that, *“Their sophisticated language, their stringent rationality within the system, and their self-conscious morality made a huge, religious Venus flytrap. These are the hallmarks of the great cults today: seductive, deadly deceit, and as vacuous as a hot air balloon.”*

- b. Faithful teaching edifies us and exalts Christ (2:9-10)

3. We must define our identify in Christ (2:11-15)
 - a. He circumcised our hearts (2:11)
 - b. He conquered over death (2:12-13)
 - c. He canceled our debt (2:13-14)
 - d. He condemned the enemy (2:15)
 - e. He confirmed our victory (2:15)