

Welcome everyone // newbies / onliner's

In Colossians a book that is expounding the excellencies of Jesus.

Really cool stuff ...

I can't wait to get into this passage so without further delay.

Colossians 1:24-29

24 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, 25 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, 26 the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints. 27 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. 28 Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. 29 For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.

- Probably what you and I picked up on right away was Paul talking about his suffering, toil, struggling.

DON'T GO QUIET

- Unfortunately, he doesn't go the direction we want him to.
- It's not, "I used to suffer, but now that I found Jesus ... I rise above it. I'm an overcomer!!!"
-
- No he says he has suffered, is suffering, and will continue to...
-
- And you would think the tone of the passage would be melancholy, depressing ... (minor key playing in background) (ee-ore reading)
- But it really doesn't.
-
- In fact Paul not only recognizes he is suffering ... "He is rejoicing in it."

Colossians 1:24

24 Now I rejoice in my sufferings

We can live with joy even when we suffer.

- You might be thinking, "Jesse, you and Paul have a screw loose."
- how can you rejoice in suffering.
- His contention is all about what you are suffering for ...

DON'T GO QUIET

DON'T GO QUIET

24 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,

- for the sake of others (selfless suffering)
- when life is about me ... suffering is pointless and stands in the way of my happiness.
-
- but ... when I live to be a blessing ... to see others flourish ... then when suffering comes, for the sake of others, I can endure it... can even endure it with joy.
-
- Plenty of historic examples of how this works.
-
- Middlekauf on American Revolution “Glorious Cause” ... men volunteered knowing they would suffer / embrace the suffering ... greater purpose ... they weren’t the most important person in the whole world.
 - There was a hope / a brighter future that was worth it.
- Another example, Civil Rights Movement -- MLK and many others ... sacrificed, put themselves in danger, even to death, why?
 - Saw a better future, a glorious cause ... where all men were seen as created in the image of God ... not just white men ... all men. All had dignity, all had equal intrinsic value.

DON'T GO QUIET

DON'T GO QUIET

**In the same way Paul is saying he is living for a
“Glorious Cause”.**

Something worth suffering and even dying for.

Colossians 1:25-26

**25 “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, 26 the mystery
hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his
saints.”**

What Paul getting at is this ...

**We are called to live all for the sake of the gospel at
all costs.**

Before Paul, or you or anyone could make known the
mystery it had to first be revealed in Jesus.

Jesus came in the flesh preaching and demonstrating the
power of the gospel.

... And he was hated and mistreated for it.

Sure he had some faithful followers, but make no mistake
the world at large didn't love him.

DON'T GO QUIET

John 15:18-20

18 “If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. 19 If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. 20 Remember the word that I said to you: ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours.

If you aren't a Christian, I get that this isn't the greatest sale's pitch.

But, that is the thing about following Jesus.

You don't get into it just for the perks.

Too many preachers are out there peddling a false version of Christianity that is all about you.

Your health, your wealth, claim your miracle, believe and receive your perfect life now.

DON'T GO QUIET

That is their glorious cause! And it sounds really nice...
great sales pitch/brochure ... but its like getting sucked
into a time-share.

Nothing works out how you were promised it would.

And in the end all you want is out of this deal.

But Jesus is giving it to us honest.

A servant isn't greater than his master.

They are going to do to you what they did to me.

Now, we should be asking ourselves ... how is sharing
the story of Jesus worth all that suffering?

Mary Had a Little Lamb is a fun story to share ... but I'm
not going to prison for it.

No one suffers w/o good reason.

An athlete suffers excruciating workouts, strict dieting
so that he can win a prize. → (circle back -- see notes
at end)

DON'T GO QUIET

DON'T GO QUIET

A mom suffers through childbirth for the reward of a newborn.

(why you would do that more than once !!! beyond me)

[can we figure out how to make the stork option work]

So Paul what is it?

Colossians 1:25b-27

“to make the word of God fully known, 26 the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints. 27 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.”

The Gospel is the pathway to experiencing Jesus' glory.

The gospel is the mystery revealed. It is a truth to proclaim.

And the saints, the people, his body, the church ... we embody the message of the Gospel ...

We don't just proclaim Christ is alive / we are in the flesh testimony that he is alive.

DON'T GO QUIET

DON'T GO QUIET

The hope of Jesus' glory isn't just a future promise ...

That future promise is living in us now.

Christ in us, the hope of glory.

We are the manifest truth of Jesus' cross.

And there is plenty of historical evidence to help defend the cross and resurrection.

But there is no better apologetic for the truth of the gospel than God's saints (us!).

We bring the power of Jesus' cross into the present and put flesh on it and walk around with it and talk about it.

There is no better apologetic than your transformed life ...

There is no argument that can convince me that Jesus isn't real.

That is why Christianity isn't just another religion.

Other religions are limited to principles and ethics.

You must believe certain tenants, and act out certain rituals.

But it stops there.

Whereas, Christianity may have all those things ... that isn't the centerpiece.

It's goes beyond principles to apply.

It's ultimately about a person to abide in.

DON'T GO QUIET

DON'T GO QUIET

It is relationship.

Values, principles, rituals are meaningless without the relationship.

The relationship is the center ... all those things wrap around / revolve around that relationship ... like planets to the sun.

They get their light and life from the sun shining on them and through them.

They are simply doorways into experiencing the person of Jesus.

If prayer were not a way to abide in Jesus it would be a worthless practice.

If the Bible were not a way to connect with Jesus it wouldn't be worth our time.

If Jesus didn't show up at our gatherings we'd be another social club. (a really weird one at that).

But these are ways to behold his glory.

Christ in us the hope of glory.

Jesus' glory...

Now it is worth unpacking that word glory a little bit.

DON'T GO QUIET

DON'T GO QUIET

B/C we can get used to using words without understanding them.

I didn't think to ask what "Hallelujah" meant until I was 18. And I grew up in church in the days where you could get away with a one word song.

Seriously! there was a song that all you sang was the word Hallelujah.

I probably sang that in church 100 times before I thought to ask ... what does that mean?

"Glory", I think can be one of those assumed words.

We read it in the Bible ... we might have a guess at it.

But let's just make sure ... 'cuz we are talking about Jesus in us the hope of glory ... something central to our faith.

So, I think it is worth investigating.

For me, John Piper might have explained what God's glory is most clearly...

"It is the going public of his holiness. It is the way he puts his holiness on display for people to apprehend. So the glory of God is the holiness of God made manifest." - Piper on God's Glory

God's glory is how he reveals himself to us.

DON'T GO QUIET

DON'T GO QUIET

It is how he takes is infinite power, wisdom, perfect love, goodness, mercy, justice ... and says ... look at this ... behold it ... see it, hear it, feel it.

And you know how he did it most perfectly?

Through Jesus.

Colossians 1:15a,19

He [Jesus] is the image of the invisible God ... 19 For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell,

Up until Jesus showed up God's glory would break out in moments. Here are 2 of many examples...

1. Mt Sinai ... cloud and earthquake as God revealed his glory to Israel. (they saw and experienced it / fear and trembling).
2. 2 Chron 7:1-3 The temple in Jerusalem ... the glory of God appeared, his fire consumed the sacrifice and his glory filled the temple. (his glory was so tangible that the priests couldn't enter the temple ... and all the people could see the glory and responded with worship).

DON'T GO QUIET

DON'T GO QUIET

So we see God making himself public in ways we could experience ... cloud, fire, earthquake.

These are awesome displays of his power.

We can't read these things and end up with a small idea of God.

What you and I begin to realize is that God is in a category all by himself.

Nothing is His equal!

There are some things we can behold that begin to steer us in the right direction.

- We can look at a majestic mountain but it only points to the beginning of understanding God's majesty.
- We can look at the complexity and information encoded into DNA but that only hints at the completeness of God's wisdom and knowledge.

But these things don't compare with Jesus.

He is the fullness of God.

He is God's manifest glory that we can behold.

DON'T GO QUIET

DON'T GO QUIET

When we read the Jesus stories in M,M,L,J ... we are seeing God's glory made public.

[PAUSE]

Imagine being one of Jesus' disciples that got to see it firsthand ...

That would have been amazing ...

Listen how John, one of Jesus' 12 disciples tries to describe it.

John 1:1-4,14

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. 4 In him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

If only we could have been there!!!

Walking beside Jesus ... listening, learning, seeing all the miracles.

DON'T GO QUIET

DON'T GO QUIET

That would have been cool.

We think those guys had it better than us.

But actually, Jesus tells us we aren't worse off.

In fact, he kind of hints that we are better off.

John 16:5-7

5 But now I am going to him who sent me, and none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?' 6 But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. 7 Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.

Jesus says this while warning his disciples he would be leaving them soon.

And the disciples are getting super depressed (like watching an ugly break up).

But Jesus had to tell them he wasn't dumping them.

He was saying it was to their advantage.

DON'T GO QUIET

DON'T GO QUIET

He might not physically be there next to them.

But the relationship would continue on through the Helper,
the Holy Spirit he was going to send.

as one pastor cleverly summarized this,

“The Spirit inside you is better than Jesus beside you.”

Really? Oh yeah... Jesus said so and Jesus' disciples
confirmed it to be true.

1 John 4:13

**13 By this we know that we abide in him and he in us,
because he has given us of his Spirit.**

So ... let's play this out logically.

Jesus is God's glory made public.

Jesus dwells in us by the Holy Spirit.

We have God's glory dwelling in us.

**So in one sense our faith is trusting in God's promises
... trusting they are true.**

**But they are also confirmed by the Spirit ... which makes
public the hope of glory.**

DON'T GO QUIET

DON'T GO QUIET

Jesus / His glory is beheld, experienced, felt and that is possible b/c the Holy Spirit dwells in those who believe.

Like I said, you can't argue against that experience.

Our faith, our worship, is based on Spirit and Truth.

It is a Truth believed and a Glory experienced.

That is Paul's Glorious Cause ... this is our Glorious Cause.

And that is why Paul can suffer joyfully, and not live for himself.

When we abide in the reality of the Glory of Christ we begin to come into the understanding of what the fullness of life really is.

Philippians 1:21-25

21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. 22 If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. 23 I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. 24 But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account. 25 Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and

DON'T GO QUIET

DON'T GO QUIET

continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith,

Jesus' glory is the pathway to living in fearless freedom for the sake of the gospel and the church.

Let me ponder death ... some pain ... but through it I get to be with Jesus and behold His glory!

Let me ponder life ...

Paul says, I'm happy to put off the reward of being with Jesus, for one main thing...

YOU ... Jesus' church ...

Will I suffer for it ... most likely ...

Will it be hard work ... you bet ...

Will it be a struggle that brings weariness at times ... count on it ...

But that doesn't stop Paul ...

Colossians 1:28-29

28 Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. 29 For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.

DON'T GO QUIET

[BAND COME UP]

We can excuse ourselves and say, “Well that was just for Paul ... not me.”

Nope! That is for all of us.

Holy Spirit is speaking to us through this passage // asking, “What are you living for?”

To live this way makes no sense without knowing Jesus’ glory.

Maybe you are here today and Jesus has only ever been a truth claim, but you’ve never experienced him.

I’m praying right now that Jesus makes his glory known to you during the rest of our time together.

Maybe you are asking, “How will I know? Trust me, you will know it when it happens.”

When that does ... this is how you respond. “Jesus I need you ... thank you for dying for my sins and showing me you are real. I believe in you.”

It seems the most appropriate response to this sermon about God’s glory is giving Him praise.

We are going to do that in a moment.

DON'T GO QUIET

But first, let's be reminded why we get to experience His glory ...

Typically, we come to get communion and take it by ourselves.

Today, we are going to do it a little different.

If you are a Christian, come and grab a piece of the bread and a cup and take it back to your seat.

I will lead us in taking it together.

There is a picture on the screen of where to go to get communion.

WHEN EVERYONE READY

This is a reminder that Jesus made a way for His glory to dwell in us now and forever.

He suffered and died for the forgiveness of our sins and bring us into a new relationship with God.

In Christ we are given great mercy, and amazing grace.

The act of communion is reminding us that He is in us and we are in him.

Let's take the bread and the cup together right now with faith and thankfulness.

PRAY

DON'T GO QUIET