



Lesson 3

1:21-23a ²¹ Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. ²² But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation — ²³ if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.

Notes:

- “his physical body” (v. 22) = lit. ‘the body of his flesh’

1.) Paul had already hit on this fact in verse 13 (“For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness...”). Why bring a similar thought to the surface all over again in verse 21?

2.) In the context of Colossians, why make such ado about Christ's physical/bodily death? (v. 22)

3.) Why insert such a conditional warning (“If you continue in faith...”) after such a powerful statement of God's saving grace?

1:23b-25 This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant. ²⁴ Now I rejoice in what was suffered for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church. ²⁵ I have become its servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness — ²⁶ the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the saints.

Note:

- “I fill up” (v. 24) = “I fill up in place of”

1.) If taken out of context, verse 24 can be open to misinterpretation. Based on what we’ve already studied what CAN'T these words mean?

Colossians 1:14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Colossians 1:20 through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

Colossians 1:22 now he has reconciled you by Christ’s physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation

Colossians 1:24 ...for the sake of his body, which is the church.

2.) What IS Paul saying about his sufferings?

Acts 9:15-16 But the Lord said to Ananias, “Go! This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel. ¹⁶ I will show him how much he must suffer for my name.”

John 15:20 “Remember the words I spoke to you: ‘No servant is greater than his master.’ If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also.”

1:26-2:5 ²⁶ *the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the saints.*

²⁷ To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. ²⁸ We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. ²⁹ To this end I labor, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me. ^{2:1} I want you to know how much I am struggling for you and for those at Laodicea, and for all who have not met me personally. ² My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, ³ in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. ⁴ I tell you this so that no one may deceive you by fine-sounding arguments. ⁵ For though I am absent from you in body, I am present with you in spirit and delight to see how orderly you are and how firm your faith in Christ is.

Note:

- Laodicea with Hierapolis (4:13) were sister cities of Colossae and within a dozen miles of each other in the same valley.
- “fine-sounding arguments” (v. 4): convincing/persuasive logic that is wrong and misleading

1.) What is the biblical definition of a “mystery”?

2.) What mystery was Paul tasked with revealing? (v. 1:27, 2:2-3)

John 14:23 “If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.”

Romans 8:10-11 ¹⁰ But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness. ¹¹ And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you.

3.) Explain how all wisdom and knowledge are hidden in Christ.

4.) Give some examples of compelling, fine-sounding arguments that are contrary to Christ and Scripture.