

PAUL'S MESSAGE 1:26-27, 2:3B

²⁶ ...the mystery that has been hidden throughout the ages and generations but has now been 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. ... ^{2b} and have the knowledge of God's mystery, that is, Christ himself, ³ in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

What two summaries of the mystery does Paul give in these verses?

How would you put this in your own words?

How can we explain what's so unique about Jesus to those who don't yet know him?

THE CONTEXT OF THE PASSAGE: GOING ON AS YOU STARTED 2:4-7

⁴ I am saying this so that no one may deceive you with plausible arguments. ⁵ For though I am absent in body, yet I am with you in spirit, and I rejoice to see your morale and the firmness of your faith in Christ. ⁶ As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue to live your lives in him, ⁷ rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

Why is Paul concerned and his desire for the Colossians?

How do these verses challenge our own situation?

Review the summary of this section we considered above

How practically can we follow Paul's example?

Who can we pray for and share with before the next study?

Preparation for next study:

- Read Colossians 1:1-2:23 and reread 2:6-23 twice
- What does Paul see as the danger and the solution in 2:6-23?
- How does 2:6-23 build on what Paul has already said in the letter?
- Spend some time in prayer responding to Jesus about what you see
- in these verses

COLOSSIANS FOUNDATIONS

STUDY 3: COLOSSIANS 1:23 – 2:7 TELLING THE WORLD

Start by praying for your study

Feedback from Preparation:

What did you identify as the repeated words, phrases and ideas in 1:23-2:7?

How did you summarise what today's passage is all about?

Read the following passage in the group:

Colossians 1:23 – 2:7 ...provided that you continue securely established and steadfast in the faith, without shifting from the hope promised by the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven. I, Paul, became a servant of this gospel. ²⁴ I am now rejoicing in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am completing what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church. ²⁵ I became its servant according to God's commission that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known, ²⁶ the mystery that has been hidden throughout the ages and generations but has now been 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 It is he whom we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone in all wisdom, so that we may present everyone mature in Christ. ²⁹ For this I toil and struggle with all the energy that he powerfully inspires within me ^{2:1} For I want you to know how much I am struggling for you, and for those in Laodicea, and for all who have not seen me face to face...

² I want their hearts to be encouraged and united in love, so that they may have all the riches of assured understanding and have the knowledge of God's mystery, that is, Christ himself, ³ in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. ⁴ I am saying this so that no one may deceive you with plausible arguments. ⁵ For though I am absent in body, yet I am with you in spirit, and I rejoice to see your morale and the firmness of your faith in Christ. ⁶ As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue to live your lives in him, ⁷ rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

What stands out to you from these verses?

In this passage Paul talks about his ministry. In the first half of the passage he talks about what was involved in bringing the gospel message to the Colossians. In the second half he goes on to talk about how he wants to help people go on following Jesus. The second half of the passage repeats the same structure as the first half. We could summarise the passage as follows:

1:23a ...continue securely established and steadfast ... without shifting from the hope...	
1:23b ...the gospel ...which has been proclaimed to every creature	1:28 It is he whom we <i>proclaim</i> , warn- ing everyone and teaching everyone...
1:24 I am now rejoicing in my sufferings for your sake ...	2:1 I want you to know how much I am <i>struggling</i> for you...
1:25-27a ... to make the word of God <i>fully</i> known, the <i>mystery</i> ...now... revealed	2:2a ...that they may have the knowledge of God's <i>mystery</i>
1:27b <i>Christ in you,</i> the hope of glory	2:2b-3 <i>Christ himself, in whom</i> are hidden all the treasures
2:4-7 As you ... received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue to live your lives in him...	

THE CONTEXT OF THE PASSAGE: GOING ON AS YOU STARTED 1:23

²³ ...provided that you continue securely established and steadfast in the faith, without shifting from the hope promised by the gospel that you heard...

What's Paul's concern for the Colossians?

PAUL'S WORK 1:23B, 28

^{23b} ... the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven. I, Paul, became a servant of this gospel... ²⁸ It is he whom we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone in all wisdom, so that we may present everyone mature in Christ.

What does Paul want to see? What is he doing about it?
How can we be involved in these things?

PAUL'S SACRIFICE 1:24, 1:29-2:1

²⁴ I am now rejoicing in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am completing what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church... ²⁹ For this I toil and struggle with all the energy that he powerfully inspires within me. ^{2:1} For I want you to know how much I am struggling for you, and for those in Laodicea, and for all who have not seen me face to face.

What's Paul's experience in these verses and how does it reflect Jesus' life?
What do we learn about Paul's motivation and power?
How might we struggle and suffer in serving Christ and how can we keep going?

PAUL'S COMMISSION 1:25, 2:2

²⁵ I became its servant according to God's commission that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known... ^{2:1} want their hearts to be encouraged and united in love, so that they may have all the riches of assured understanding...

What was Paul's job description?
What's needed to move from hearing to assured understanding?
Why do you think this is the case?
What will this require of us if we are (i) to understand and (ii) to share the word of God?