

## Colossians, Chapter One, Lesson Six

COMPLETE IN CHRIST Colossians 1:24-29

### STIMULATE

\*\* In our study together last week, we were exposed to the desire of the Lord toward those of us who belong to Him through faith. What does Jesus desire to see in our daily conduct, what does He want us to be?

Both "**Holy and Blameless**" cf. Colossians 1:22

As we strive to put into practice all that we learn from the Word of God, this one reality carries the most impact on our character and conduct if we will submit our hearts to the Lord's will for our lives.

### MOTIVATE

\*\* Living in the pursuit of being both "**Holy and Blameless**" is what prepares our hearts for Christian ministry. But what does Christian ministry look like and what is its ultimate goal? For the answers, please join me now in Colossians 1:24-29 as Paul shows us the need for all Christians to be "**Complete in Christ**".

Read passage (V.24-27) (V.28-29)

Opening Prayer

### *Complete in Christ*

### INVESTIGATE

**V.24** \*\* The passage before us is very unique in that it will give us the goal of all Christian ministry, while at the same time show us the very heart of the apostle Paul and his high view of ministry in the name of the Lord. As we study it together we are going to learn eight elements of ministry and hopefully try to apply them to our lives.

They are:

1. The Source 2. The Spirit 3. The Suffering 4. The Scope  
5. The Subject 6. The Style 7. The Sum 8. The Strength

\*\* Beginning with the first one, for Paul and every Christian, what is the source of the ministry?

**1. Source** - Even before we can get into our passage, Paul has answered that question in the previous verse from our study last week. At the end of verse 23 he says, "I, Paul, was made a minister (diakonos)." He will say it again in verse 25 of our passage for today.  
cf. Acts 26:15-16

\*\* Well, that explains Paul, but what about the rest of us believers?

Our ability to become servants comes from the very same source.  
cf. 2Thessalonians 2:13-14, Ephesians 1:4, 2:10

**V.24 \*\* 2. Spirit** - As we get into verse 24, understanding that Christ is the source of our ministry, how far do we have to go to learn the spirit with which we are to minister in His name?

Just three words! No matter what our circumstances, we are to minister with joy. Paul was able to say "I rejoice" while writing this epistle from prison!

\*\* Can you think of any other time that Paul expressed his passion for rejoicing in ministry?

Yes, in writing to the Philippians - V.1:18, 3:1, 4:4

\*\* Do you let the challenges of your daily life rob you of the joy of using your spiritual gift for the benefit of your brothers and sisters in Christ?

Paul would have us learn from his example to rejoice . . . again he says rejoice!

\*\* **3. Suffering** - We have seen the source of ministry and the spirit with which we are to serve, now what does it mean when the Bible talks about the suffering of the ministry?

It is going to cost us! cf. 2Timothy 1:8, 2:3, 3:12, 4:5, 1Peter 2:21 and Philippians 2:17

\*\* For whose sake was Paul suffering? (verse 24)

The Colossians (and us by default)!

\*\* How would you explain that Paul was suffering for their sakes?

He was in prison for proclaiming Christ and making converts - which included the Colossians indirectly through Epaphras.

\*\* What two things does Paul say in verse 24 that tells you he is not reluctant to suffer while sharing the gospel?

A. I rejoice B. I do my share (He was willing!)

\*\* Does that statement by Paul say anything about the rest of us believers?

Absolutely, we all should count it a privilege to do our share and rejoice if obeying Christ brings about any suffering on our part. cf. Acts 5:40-41

**V.25 \*\* 4. Scope** - For others to benefit from our servanthood, what does verse 25 say we must do to accomplish the scope of the ministry?

We must "fully carry out" the ministry we have been given, even in the proclamation of the word of God by the means of our lifestyle. cf. Titus 2:9-10

\*\* Did Paul do that in his life?

Yes, 2Timothy 4:7 And he encouraged others to do the same! Archippus Colossians 4:17 and Timothy 2Timothy .4:5

## V.26-27

**\*\* 5. Subject** - What word, used twice in these next two verses gives us a veiled title to the subject of our ministry?

"mystery"

**\*\*** How does verse 26 define for us this Biblical term?

It is something "which has been hidden from the past ages and generations; but has now been manifested to His saints..."

**\*\*** What does verse 27 say is the content of the mystery?

"...which is Christ in you, the hope of glory".

That is why Paul wanted so desperately to live for Christ, having received such a rich blessing.  
cf. Galatians 2:20

**\*\*** Did you notice Who's will it was that we Gentiles would come to understand the richness of the gospel?

It was God who willed us into His kingdom, is it any wonder that we would be driven to serve Him!

**V.28 \*\* 6. Style** - Having seen our glorious Lord and His salvation as the subject of our ministry, let's move on to the style. What two words characterize the style of our Christian ministry, if it is to be a Biblical one?

A. Admonish - to warn (Romans 15:14, Colossians 3:16)

B. Teaching - to instruct (2Timothy 3:16-17)

(with all wisdom, to apply the Biblical truth cf. Colossians 2:2-3)

**\*\* 7. Sum** - As we exercise our spiritual gift in serving one another - to what end are we doing that? What is the goal or "**sum**" of Christian ministry?

To "...present every man **Complete in Christ**". cf. Ephesians 4:12-13, 15 and 2Peter 3:18

**V.29 \*\* 8. Strength** - This brings us to the final element in Christian ministry. With such a huge job before us, how do we do it? From where does the strength come?

It is "strength" according to His power! Unlimited!

**\*\*** Since the strength for Christian ministry comes from God (who called us to serve Him in the first place), do we just lay back and say "I don't have to work at this, God will do whatever He wants with me?"

Absolutely not! Paul said he labored and strived.

The word translated "striving" here is agonizomai and refers to someone competing as an athlete. Our English word agonize is derived from this word.

**\*\*** As we strive to serve our wonderful Lord, where does His power reside?

Amazingly, in us! cf. Philippians 4:13

## EXTRICATE

\*\* Let's review what we have learned today about the eight elements of ministry.

The:

Source - Christ, Spirit - Joy, Suffering - Privilege, Scope - Fulfill, Subject - Christ in you,  
Style - Admonish/Teach, Sum - Complete in Christ, Strength - God's power in me

### **DELINEATE**

\*\* Of these eight, which one do you find yourself to be least familiar with as you try to live your life as a servant for Jesus Christ?

### **EVALUATE**

\*\* In Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians, he told them that they had "turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God (1Thessalonians 1:9)." Understanding that like the Thessalonians we are called to serve our God as He uses us to make men "**Complete in Christ**", what can you do to strengthen yourself in that area of which you were least aware?

### **ACTIVATE**

\*\* I would like to give you an opportunity to commit to the Lord your desire to use your spiritual gift in serving Him here at your local church. Please go before Him now in a moment of silent prayer and thank Him for the privilege of ministry in His name.

Closing prayer