

The Coming of The Mystery

Colossians 1:23

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23

if indeed you

1 continue in the faith

2 firmly established and

3 steadfast,

4 and not moved away from the hope/confidence of the gospel

(confidence that the gospel gives, that encourages the believer to live his life in light of eternity.)

Let's note the presence of the two particles translated **and**, and the absence of one between **continue in the faith, firmly established**

first the reason for the absence of **and** is because of the close relationship of continuing in the faith and being firmly established.

The function of the next two '**ands**' adds these two virtues to the conditional clause...**if**

that you have heard, which was proclaimed
better translated **having been proclaimed**

Aorist Passive Participle Of course the Aorist Participle precedes the action of the main verb **which you heard**.

This presents the great issue of **hearing**;

This is something you learned from the beginning of your spiritual journey. You heard the good news of the gospel and you believed, now you should continue to hear the teaching of the WORD OF GOD, the teaching about JESUS CHRIST, about GOD THE FATHER about the Spirit Filled Life.

Which was proclaimed.

We have many words to express communication and each has its own emphasis: Preach, Teach, Tell, Evangelized, Announce, Prophecy; We even have words with bad connotation: gossip, blab, tattle, babble, spill, etc.

Well, the Greek also has many words indicating communication. ***Kataggellow***, which emphasizes the manner in which the PASTOR-TEACHER is to perform his function, his gift, ***peitho*** to win an argument by words, to pacify or to appease.

Diamarturomai proclamation of good news or of the peace of the cross.

Parakaleo which emphasizes an exhortation; appealing to one's volition.

Elegcho emphasizes the responsibility of the PASTOR-TEACHER to brace someone with stern words.

Then, one that I like is ***didaskalia*** which emphasizes the part of the hearers—"to concentrate on what is being said."

Euaggelizo to evangelize, or to proclaim good news.

Then there is the word we have here in Colossians 1:23, *kerusso* which emphasizes the office of PASTOR-TEACHER, his function is to proclaim an event—like the Death Burial Resurrection Ascension Session of JESUS CHRIST.

This Greek word emphasizes the message so this word is the proclamation of the message. In the Gospels this word dominated the proclamation of the Kingdom, while from Acts-on the terminology changed but the content was the same; here the LIFE, DEATH and RESURRECTION of Jesus is the emphasis of the proclamations.

This word is used in Paul's first writing of the book of Galatians to proclaim the foundation of his teaching. Galatians 2:2

2 **It was because of a revelation that I went up; and I submitted to them** (the disciples) **the gospel which I preach** (this is the same Greek word we are studying) **among the Gentiles, but I did so in private to those who were of reputation,** (this does not refer to his proclaiming the gospel, but to going up to meet the disciples) **for fear that I might be running, or had run, in vain.** (This means talking with them would have been useless if he confronted them in public. He did not want the vote on the gospel to be a popularity contest.)

If the disciples had a different gospel, a gospel that was not truth, people of course would follow the disciples before they would follow this man who once persecuted Christians.

What is beautiful is the Passive Voice... the Gospel receives being proclaimed!! This is one of the reasons we are left here on earth after salvation... to tell others of the saving work of JESUS CHRIST.

gospel that you have heard which was proclaimed Right here are the two foundations of Church Age—proclaim the truth—TEACHING the truth and HEARING the truth... hearing so as to believe.

in all creation The gospel is to be proclaimed to every nation in every generation. I am so thankful for the WISEs and the DAGUEs, who open their homes every week to teenagers to come over and hear the teaching of truth. And I encourage everyone of you to be in prayer for them, their homes and for every young person who makes his/hers way to their house.

under heaven, This is very important to Paul. Note that we are just in the 23 verse of chapter 1. Note how often he refers to the location of Angelic Conflict and the proclamation of the truth of the gospel.

Colossians 1:3-7, 16, 23

- 3 **We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you,**
- 4 **since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love which you have for all the saints; (Spiritual Love)**
- 5 **because of the hope laid up for you in heaven, (This is the hope of the gospel we have just studied) of which you previously heard in the word of truth, the gospel (hearing truth)**

6 **which has come to you, just as in all the world also it is constantly bearing fruit and increasing, even as *it has been doing* in you also since the day you heard *of it* and understood the **grace of God in truth;** (Hearing the truth of the grace of the gospel should characterize your life.)**

7 **just as you learned *it* from Epaphras, our beloved fellow bond-servant, who is a faithful servant of Christ on our behalf,**

A PASTOR-TEACHER should be faithful...
even if the People are not!

16 **For by Him all things were created, *both* in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him.**

If it were even possible to grasp all that is out there in space, all the galaxies, etc., God has chosen this one place, PLANET EARTH, to be the center of the Angelic Conflict.

23 **...hope of the gospel that you have heard which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven and of which I, Paul, was made a minister.**

There is one pitiful translation here we have to look at... Paul was not *made* a minister, (NASV and KJ) but as NIV has it: **became he became a minister** Aorist Middle Indicative of the verb ***ginomai***.

Paul was not made a minister; he became a minister in a very special and dramatic way. But today a young boy starts out as an unbeliever, enemy of God (just as Paul was) then at some point he believes in JESUS CHRIST as Savior and one of the 34 things given to him at Salvation was the Spiritual Gift of PASTOR-TEACHER. At that point he is no different than any other boy in church. But at some point, he becomes aware of this calling and starts his journey in becoming a PASTOR-TEACHER.

Hopefully he will learn the original languages of Greek and Hebrew and Aramaic but this certainly is not mandatory. Then he learns basic theology, and how to study and teach the WORD OF GOD.

We now move to the next section of the letter to Colossae. Colossians 1:24 thru 2:5. The theme of this section is that Paul is laboring under extreme difficulties in order that you might know the mystery about JESUS CHRIST “in order that no one might delude you away from the truth.”

Colossians 1:24-29

24 **Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body, which is the church, in filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions.**

25 **Of *this church* I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, so that I might fully carry out the *preaching of the word of God*,**

26 ***that is, the mystery* which has been hidden from the *past ages and generations*, but has now been manifested to His saints,**

27 **to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.**

28 **We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ.**

29 **For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me.**

Colossians 2:1-5

1 **For I want you to know how great a struggle I have on your behalf and for those who are at Laodicea, and for all those who have not personally seen my face,**

2 **that their hearts may be encouraged, having been knit together in love, and *attaining* to all the wealth that comes from the full assurance of understanding, *resulting* in a true knowledge of God's mystery, that is, Christ Himself,**

3 **in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.**

4 **I say this so that no one will delude you with persuasive argument.**

5 **For even though I am absent in body, nevertheless I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good discipline and the stability of your faith in Christ.**

The primary characters in this section GOD the FATHER, GOD the HOLY SPIRIT (1:29), Paul, (representing all those gifted with the Spiritual Gift of PASTOR-TEACHER) and then of course the Body of Christ... all born again.

The primary teaching is on the mystery hidden in time past, which is JESUS CHRIST.

The primary reason: that believers not be deluded you away from JESUS CHRIST. You might be surprised all the movements in Christianity today to move away from JESUS CHRIST.

First Paul continues from verse 23 on his being a minister of the gospel, what it means to be a PASTOR-TEACHER and first of all he addresses the correct attitude of the ministry. What kind of an attitude should a PASTOR-TEACHER have?

24 Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake,

The only way he or anyone else for that matter can rejoice in suffering is by the ministry of the Holy Spirit

Now There is so much wrapped up this adverb. Now that he is in prison and now when the gospel is being proclaimed and many are being reconciled to God.

You can tell a lot about yourself when you examine your Mental Attitude.

Paul is in prison but there is so much going on in the areas he has been to and the areas where his writings are taken. God is reconciling many to Himself. Many are coming to JESUS CHRIST. and that brings joy to Paul.

Now I rejoice now before we go any further, look at Galatians 5:22

22 **But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,** See that word *joy*, it is the noun of the verb we have in Colossians 1:24, So we know Paul is Filled with the Holy Spirit.

I keep on rejoicing this is INNER HAPPINESS, not based on things outward in his own life... he is physically suffering but there is INNER HAPPINESS in his soul INNER HAPPINESS. And people, everyone of you can experience this same INNER HAPPINESS, regardless of what is going on in your life: if you know how to be Filled with the Holy Spirit and then stay in the Power of the Holy Spirit.

Let me tell you something, yes it true that we have but a few here and even fewer on Wednesday night. But there is a happiness in my soul when Lari and Bryan and Laura and Chris tell of the wonderful things going on in their homes with young people. I receive joy when I hear of the plans for SLAM and summer camp. I find INNER HAPPINESS when I hear about how God is blessing the Risleys and Fasal and when I hear how God is blessing various ministries where I know the truth of the gospel is being proclaimed: John Hintz in Tucson, Jody Brown in Atlanta Indiana and others like Robby Dean, Dick Olson.

Let us not look where we disagree but where we agree and then be in prayer for One Another, be in prayer for those who are in the battle, those growing in WORD OF GOD.

Now I rejoice in my sufferings First Roman Imprisonment—not for wrongs for his own benefit but for proclaiming that Jesus is the God-man and only He should be worshipped as God, not Caesar of Rome.

“Here I take my stand, I can do no other, God help me”
(Martin Luther)

and oh, how I pray this characterizes every one of you
in regards to the Truth of Scripture.

Now I rejoice in my sufferings for you—(for your benefit.)

So, the question arises, how does his suffering in prison benefit these believers in Colossae?

This gets a little complicated, but I will try to make it brief and clear. It must be remembered that Paul suffered the first Roman imprisonment because he was out of the Plan of God. He went to the wrong place. Paul loved Jerusalem.

To him Jerusalem was the greatest place on the earth, and he just had to be there and teach. So, he came up with a ‘special calling’ to Jerusalem. He was warned by Spirit Filled Believers **NOT TO GO TO JERUSALEM.**

Ok, once he got there, he was out of the geographical will of God, which is dangerous for any believer.

Paul got so caught up in the religion of Jerusalem and went into the Temple and made a vow in order that he might gain a hearing, not trusting God to give him a hearing as God had done up to this point.

To God this was serious disobedience on the part of Paul and he was disciplined by God with 4 years in prison, 2 years in Casarea and 2 years in Rome.

To some of you this may sound severe, but Paul chose to be out of the geographical will of God and while there got out of the operational will of God.

Be warned:

When you are out of the geographical will of God for you, you are most susceptible to getting out of the operational will of God, (what God would have you do.)

Most 'big sins' in a believer's life come when they are out of the geographical will of God.

Being somewhere you do not belong!

Now what is really interesting is that instead of being accepted in Jerusalem which is why he went into the temple and made a vow, he was permanently rejected in Jerusalem. And instead of teaching the truth of Scripture to the Jerusalem saints, there were forty young Jews who also taken a vow, only their vow was to assassinate Paul and they were not going to eat until they did.

Paul suffered from the Jews beating him, and then the Romans kept on beating him. Paul suffered, but out of his suffering some wonderful things happened. While in prison in Rome, Paul had recovered spiritually and wrote four epistles.

They are the most concentrated doctrinal epistles in all the WORD OF GOD. Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon.

But historically this was also the period of the greatest attacks against the Local Church in the first century. The attack of the Judaizers (Judaizers is a term for Christians who insist that their co-religionists should follow the Law of Moses.), which was relentless, they followed Paul and Peter and other apostles wherever they went. The insipient Gnosticism was used by Satan to confuse the truth of WORD OF GOD, just like Calvinism will be used by Satan in the 16th century right up to today. These doctrinal attacks were more severe than physical attacks.

And then, of course, the attacks by the Romans. And here the apostle writing these powerful epistles which are part of the Inspired WORD OF GOD, came down to us out of suffering!

**Therefore, it is no surprise that we find Paul rejoicing!
Do you rejoice in the midst of your suffering?**

You can:

**In the power and leading of the Holy Spirit and
in knowing that you are now in the PLAN OF GOD,
no matter what brought on the initial suffering.**

Paul's suffering started with his own decision to be out of the PLAN OF GOD, but as soon as Paul made grace recovery into the Filling of the Holy Spirit, JESUS CHRIST Himself came to Paul and encouraged him and his discipline was turned to blessing, his suffering to joy.

Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your benefit Again, how were they benefited?

First by receiving this epistle written while Paul was in prison.
And in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body which is the Church.

Now as much as I like the point here: **and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body** This is not what we have in Greek.

The KJ is much closer to what the Greek says.
and fill up that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ.

WOW!

What does this mean?

And Paul continues to refer to his own ministry **fill up** to fill with a certain quality **that which is lacking in the afflictions of Christ.** To properly understand this, let us go backwards. First, the plural of the afflictions of Christ does not refer to the sufferings of the cross. This refers to the multi-afflictions suffered by JESUS CHRIST in His three years of public ministry.

in my flesh Many Christians desire to be out of this world; but have you ever given thanks to God that you are still in the flesh, **able to serve Him? Able to advance the Church?**

Paul was not removed because of his failure. He is still in his human body serving the Lord.

on behalf of For the benefit of **his body which is The Church**

**This sets up,
the coming of
The Mystery.**

AMEN

Now, for further comfort:

While the heavens and the earth will be destroyed

**the Bible is unchangeable,
His Word abideth forever.**

*You have more comfort, more stability in the Word of God
than you do in the universe.*

*You can rest in His Faithfulness
of your Eternal existence with Him.*

You have to make up your mind:

Is Christ sufficient for all your needs?

Or do you have to have other things or something else?

**This book is about the Sufficiency of JESUS CHRIST:
to God the Father;
and to you?**

Is the Word of God sufficient for you?

Sufficient to bring you to JESUS CHRIST?

Sufficient to bring you to God the Father?

Is the Word of God sufficient for **SAD** (*Stress, Anxiety, Depression*) in your life or do you need outside help?

So we learn so much from the true understanding of the Gospel.

