

MESSAGE

JESUS: GOD'S SECRET REVEALED

JESUS AT THE CENTER | COLOSSIANS 1:24-2:5 | APRIL 16/17, 2016 | PASTOR MATT ERICKSON

"God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." (Colossians 1:27)

The Secret worth Suffering For (Colossians 1:24-25)

Paul the suffering apostle

Filling in what's lacking in Christ's afflictions

The Secret of God's Glory in Christ (Colossians 1:26-27)

Hidden for generations and ages

What's the big deal about Gentiles?

The hope of glory

The Secret of Wholeness in Christ (Colossians 1:28-29)

Presentable before God

Fully Mature

The Secret of Unity in Christ (Colossians 2:1-5)

Hearts and minds bound together

The undiminished treasures of God's wisdom in Christ

STUDY GUIDE

1. Answer one of these:
 - What has been one the biggest surprises you have ever experienced in your life? What happened and how did you respond?
 - Have you ever carried a secret with you that you were finally able to share with someone? What did it feel like to share the secret?
2. As we carry forward with our series from Colossians, "Jesus at the Center," we are looking at Colossians 1:24-2:5. Whether you are on your own or with a small group, begin your study in prayer, asking God to speak to you through His word, and then read that portion aloud.
3. In verses 24-25, Paul begins this section by highlighting his own work for the church, including his suffering for the sake of Christ and the church. Why do you think Paul emphasizes his own role here? What does this communicate to the believers in Colossae? (You may want to read 2 Corinthians 11:23-28 for a sense of some of Paul's sufferings.)
4. Paul takes it a step further, saying: "I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions." It's likely that the second half of verse 25 helps us understand how Paul's ministry fills in the as of yet incomplete reach of God's message around the nations that is tied in with the sufferings before the end of the age. What do you think this phrase means?
5. The word 'mystery' appears three times in this passage (1:26, 27; 2:2). What is this mystery, according to these three references?
6. Why do you think it is a big deal that the 'Gentiles' (literally 'nations'; that is, non-Jews) are involved in God's work in Christ?
7. What does it mean to you that the hope of glory is a part of your life because of Jesus? How does this change the way you think about your daily life and your eternal destiny?
8. According to verses 28-29, what is Paul's goal in his teaching of the believers? Why is this important?
9. It's likely that 2:1-5 connects with the difficulties in the midst of the Colossian church, which is talked about later in chapter 2:16-23. Because of Paul's emphasis on Jesus as the full revelation of God's treasures of wisdom (vs 3), what do you think he might be combating in the minds and hearts of the believers?
10. What is one significant thing that God is speaking to you through this study? If you are on your own, you may want to write it down, pray about it, and then share it with someone later. If you are with a small group, share these things with one another and then pray for one another about these things.

Memorize: This week we continue our memorization of Colossians 1:15-20 by focusing on Colossians 1:15. Read the verse through multiple times a day this week. Consider some of our other recommended helps for Bible memorization here: eastbrook.org/memorize.

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