

The Purpose and Heart of a Minister (Colossians 1:24-2:5)

Have you ever been given a task, a stewardship that reframed everything in your life? Maybe it was becoming a husband or wife, maybe it was becoming a parent, maybe it was a time when you were entrusted to lead others. For Paul, it was when God called him to minister and help steward His church. This call to minister, to selflessly serve for the benefit of others, reframed everything in his life: how and why he suffered, how he approached the Scripture, what he gave his time and energy to, what inspired and motivated him...as followers of Christ we all are given a unique ability to serve and care for others around us. How will God's call to selfless service for the benefit of others change your life? Will you join him in His call?

1. Selfless Steward (Colossians 1:24-29)

STEWARDSHIP

Paul's CALL reframed everything for him

How he suffered (Colossians 1:24)

Able to Rejoice in His Suffering (Purpose)

Shows the beauty and value of Jesus - 2 Corinthians 4:11; 2 Corinthians 6; Philippians 3

He has the treasure...suffering helps him to see, appreciate, and relate to His Savior more dearly!

1 Corinthians 16:67, Philippians 2:30- Lacking in service...what was lacking was their personal presence

Has the hope of glory, Christ in Him - Romans 8:18

Paul's sufferings aren't worth comparing with the hope of glory. We worship a resurrected KING who heals ALL.

Proclaim Christ warning EVERYONE and teaching with wisdom FOR maturity

He worked, toiled, struggled but he knew Christ was working in and through Him.

2. Encouraging Guidance (Colossians 2:1-5)

- Encouragement: They are loved and thought of, Paul's struggling for them.
- Guidance: Riches are found in having assurance and knowledge of Christ
- Guidance: Christ is the source and foundation of all wisdom and knowledge
- Guidance: Be careful, some want to lead you to look elsewhere besides Christ
- Encouragement: I'm with you. I stand with you. I'm rejoicing to see your unity and firm faith.

Questions for discussion

1. What does it mean to be a steward? What are areas that God has/is calling you to care for and intentionally look after to help flourish?
2. When you think of "ministry" what comes to your mind? What do we learn about ministry through reading this passage? (Ex. Selfless service to others. Focused upon Christ (proclaiming him verbally and through our actions). It's focused on the word of God. It is intended to help people mature and grow up. It's hard work, toil, but God is in there with us.)
3. Why can Paul rejoice in his sufferings? What are areas of suffering in your life? How can the truths in this passage help empower you to rejoice and use your suffering for help others?
 - How does suffering uniquely help us see and relate to Jesus?
 - How does the hope of glory help put our suffering into perspective?
4. Why was making God's word fully known so important to Paul? Why is knowing and making known God's word so important for our lives?
5. What is the goal of proclaiming Christ for Paul? What does it mean to present each person mature in Christ? How do we help each other grow into maturity?
6. How does Paul give encouragement and guidance to this young church? Which areas of Paul's encouragement and guidance/warning resound for you?
7. Why is it so important to see Christ as our wealth and source of wisdom and knowledge? What happens when we try to add or move away from Christ alone?