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God's Good News Story: The Church Alive & Growing

Colossians: Christ: Our Lord, Our Life, Our Love

Part 3: S.T.R.O.N.G. Faith

Today we continue our series in the Book of Colossians. Paul writes Colossians, probably around 60-62 AD. While he was under house arrest in Rome. Colossians is labeled one of Paul's 'Prison Epistles', along with Philemon, Ephesians and Philippians. Colossians is described as a spiritual "chart and compass," reminding believers that Christ alone is our true North—our Supreme Lord and sufficient Savior

Part 3: S.T.R.O.N.G. Faith

Colossians 2:2-5... *² I want them to be encouraged and knit together by strong ties of love. I want them to have complete confidence that they understand God's mysterious plan, which is Christ Himself. ³ In Him lie hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. ⁴ I am telling you this so no one will deceive you with well-crafted arguments. ⁵ For though I am far away from you, my heart is with you. And I rejoice that you are living as you should and that your FAITH in Christ is STRONG.*

S – Suffering for Christ and His Church

Colossian 1:24-29... *²⁴ I am glad when I suffer for you in my body, for I am participating in the sufferings of Christ that continue for His body, the church. ²⁵ God has given me the responsibility of serving His church by proclaiming His entire message to you. ²⁶ This message was kept secret for centuries and generations past, but now it has been revealed to God's people. ²⁷ For God wanted them to know that the riches and glory of Christ are for you Gentiles, too. ²⁸ So we tell others about Christ, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all the wisdom God has given us. We want to present them to God, perfect in their relationship to Christ. ²⁹ That's why I work and struggle so hard, depending on Christ's mighty power that works within me.*

Paul's ministry was marked by a willingness to endure hardship for the sake of Christ's body, the church. True Christian service often involves suffering, not as a punishment, but as a privilege—participating in the ongoing work of Christ in the world. Wiersbe reminds us that "it is not talent or training that guarantees victory: it is faithful perseverance," and that perseverance in suffering is a mark of strong faith. When we face trials for the sake of the gospel, we are not alone; we are sharing in Christ's mission and relying on His strength. As Wiersbe says, "It is always too soon to quit."

Strong faith is willing to suffer, serve, and keep going, knowing that God is using even our difficulties to build up His church and reveal His glory.

T – Treasures of Wisdom in Christ

Colossians 2:1-4... ¹ *I want you to know how much I have agonized for you and for the church at Laodicea, and for many other believers who have never met me personally. ² I want them to be encouraged and knit together by strong ties of love. I want them to have complete confidence that they understand God’s mysterious plan, which is Christ Himself. ³ In Him lie hidden all the TREASURES of wisdom and knowledge. ⁴ I am telling you this so no one will deceive you with well-crafted arguments.*

Paul reminds the church that all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are found in Christ alone. Wiersbe points out that the false teachers in Colossae offered “deeper truths” and secret knowledge, but Paul insists that believers already possess everything they need in Jesus. There’s no hidden code or mystical experience required—Christ Himself is the treasure, and in Him, God’s plan is fully revealed. Wiersbe warns that chasing after so-called “deeper life” teachings can actually detour us from practical Christian living, filling us with pride rather than devotion. Instead, strong faith is anchored in the riches of Christ, growing in wisdom by staying rooted

in Him. When we seek Christ above all, we discover that true wisdom is not about new revelations but about knowing and following the One in whom all God’s treasures are found.

R – Roots Growing Deep in Christ

Colossians 2:5-7... ⁵ *For though I am far away from you, my heart is with you. And I rejoice that you are living as you should and that your **FAITH** in Christ is **STRONG**. ⁶ And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow Him. ⁷ Let your **ROOTS GROW** down into Him and let your lives be built on Him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness.*

Strong faith is not shallow or surface-level—it is rooted deeply in Christ. Wiersbe reminds us that just as a tree draws life and stability from its roots, so believers must let their lives be anchored in Jesus. He warns that “*unless doctrine leads to duty, it is of no use to us,*” and that the Colossians were being tempted to look elsewhere for spiritual growth, but true strength comes from being firmly planted in Christ alone. When our roots go deep, we are not easily swayed by new ideas or spiritual trends; instead, we grow strong in the truth and overflow with gratitude. This rootedness is not just about personal growth—it’s about being connected to the source of life, drawing daily nourishment from

Christ's finished work. In a few minutes when we come to the Lord's Table, we remember that our faith is rooted in what Christ has done for us—His body given, His blood shed. The Lord's Supper is a vivid reminder that our spiritual life does not come from our own efforts or achievements, but from being united with Christ in His death and resurrection. Just as roots draw life from the soil, we draw our life from the sacrifice of Jesus, and we are called to remain rooted in Him, growing stronger together as His body.

O – On Guard Against Deception

Colossians 2:4, 8-11... *⁴ I am telling you this so no one will deceive you with well-crafted arguments. ⁵ For though I am far away from you, my heart is with you. And I rejoice that you are living as you should and that your **FAITH** in Christ is **STRONG**. . ⁸ Don't let anyone capture you with empty philosophies and high-sounding nonsense that come from human thinking and from the spiritual powers of this world, rather than from Christ. ⁹ For in Christ lives all the fullness of God in a human body. ¹⁰ So you also are complete through your union with Christ, Who is the head over every ruler and authority. ¹¹ When you came to Christ, you were "circumcised," but not by a physical procedure. Christ performed a spiritual circumcision—the cutting away of your sinful nature.*

A strong faith is a discerning faith—one that stays alert to the subtle dangers that threaten to undermine our walk with Christ. Wiersbe warns that, just as in Paul's day, believers today face a mix of philosophies, spiritual trends, and even "deeper life" teachings that sound appealing but ultimately dethrone Christ from His rightful place. The Colossian church was being tempted by teachings that promised fullness and freedom apart from simple devotion to Jesus. When we make Christ only part of a religious system, or chase after formulas and rituals for spiritual perfection, we actually move backward, not forward. Strong faith means being on guard—testing every teaching, every trend, and every spiritual shortcut against the truth of Christ's supremacy. As we prepare for the Lord's Table, it's a moment to examine our hearts and renew our commitment to Christ alone, remembering that true spiritual nourishment and protection are found in Him, not in anything added or substituted.

N – Nailing Sin to the Cross

Colossians 2:12-14... *¹² For you were buried with Christ when you were baptized. And with Him you were raised to new life because you trusted the mighty power of God, who raised Christ from the dead. ¹³ You were dead because of your sins and because your sinful nature was not yet cut away. Then God made you alive with Christ, for He forgave all our sins. ¹⁴ He canceled the record of the charges against us and took it away by **NAILING IT TO THE CROSS**.*

A strong faith never forgets where our victory was won—at the cross, where Jesus took the full weight of our sin and nailed it there once and for all. Wiersbe beautifully illustrates that before Christ, we were at war with God, separated and unable to bridge the gap ourselves. But God, in His mercy, didn't lower His standards or ignore our sin; instead, He dealt with it completely through Christ's sacrifice. Our "record of debt"—every failure, every shame, every accusation—was canceled, not by our efforts, but by Jesus' finished work. What we all need with God: not just a fresh start, but a total cancellation of sin's power and penalty.

As we anticipate the Lord's Table, we remember that reconciliation and peace with God are not achieved by rituals or religious striving, but by trusting in the One who nailed our sin to the cross and declared, "It is finished." This is the heart of our faith and the hope we celebrate together.

G – Glory Assured

Colossians 2:14,15... ¹⁴ *He canceled the record of the charges against us and took it away by nailing it to the cross.* ¹⁵ *In this way, He disarmed the spiritual rulers and authorities. He shamed them publicly by His victory over them on the cross. And this is the secret: **CHRIST LIVES IN YOU.** This gives you assurance of sharing His glory.*

Strong faith stands on the unshakable promise that our future is secure because Christ lives in us.

Paul reveals the "secret" that was hidden for generations: not only has Jesus won victory over every spiritual power—disarming and shaming them by His triumph on the cross—but He now dwells within every believer, guaranteeing that we will share in His glory. Wiersbe reminds us that this "hope of glory" is not a vague wish, but a confident assurance, reserved and guarded for us in heaven. Our present struggles and imperfections do not threaten this promise; instead, they point us back to the sufficiency and preeminence of Christ. We are not striving for glory by our own efforts, nor do we need to add anything to what Christ has done. All that we need is found in Him, and our future is as secure as His finished work. As we proclaim Christ and grow in maturity, we do so with the joyful certainty that one day, we will enter into the fullness of His presence—welcomed, perfected, and glorified with Him forever.

INVITATION: Today, we've seen what STRONG faith looks like—faith that endures suffering for Christ and His church, that treasures the wisdom found only in Him, that sends its roots deep into the soil of His love, that stays on guard against every deception, that remembers our sin has been nailed to the cross, and that stands assured of glory because Christ lives in us. This is not just a message for the already convinced—this is an open door for anyone who needs hope, forgiveness, and a new beginning. If you've never trusted Jesus, today He invites you to step out of darkness and into His marvelous light, to let Him be your Savior and Lord. And for all who believe, we come now to the Lord's Table—not because we are strong in ourselves, but because of the strength, the sacrifice, and the victory of Jesus. Let's remember, let's receive, and let's rejoice in Him together.

Colossian 1:24-27...²⁴ I am glad when I suffer for you in my body, for I am participating in the sufferings of Christ that continue for His body, the church. ²⁵ God has given me the responsibility of serving His church by proclaiming His entire message to you. ²⁶ This message was kept secret for centuries and generations past, but now it has been revealed to God's people. ²⁷ For God wanted them to know that the riches and glory of Christ are for you Gentiles, too. ²⁸ So we tell others about Christ, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all the wisdom God has given us. We want to present them to God, perfect in their relationship to Christ. ²⁹ That's why I work and struggle so hard, depending on Christ's mighty power that works within me.

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Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow Him. ⁷ Let your roots grow down into Him and let your lives be built on Him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness. ⁸ Don't let anyone capture you with empty philosophies and high-sounding nonsense that come from human thinking and from the spiritual powers of this world, rather than from Christ. ⁹ For in Christ lives all the fullness of God in a human body. ¹⁰ So you also are complete through your union with Christ, Who is the head over every ruler and authority. ¹¹ When you came to Christ, you were "circumcised," but not by a physical procedure. Christ performed a spiritual circumcision—the cutting away of your sinful nature. ¹² For you were buried with Christ when you were baptized. And with Him you were raised to new life because you trusted the mighty power of God, who raised Christ from the dead. ¹³ You were dead because of your sins and because your sinful nature was not yet cut away. Then God made you alive with Christ, for He forgave all our sins. ¹⁴ He canceled the record of the charges against us and took it away by nailing it to the cross. ¹⁵ In this way, He disarmed the spiritual rulers and authorities. He shamed them publicly by His victory over them on the cross. And this is the secret: **CHRIST LIVES IN YOU**. This gives you assurance of sharing His glory.