

Ministry of The Holy Spirit
Prison Letters
Colossians 1:23-29

Last time...Jesus is, declared in Scripture to be

- God
- Creator
- Perfect Sacrifice, God's Substitute for all fallen and flawed mankind
- Savior
- Redeemer
- Peace Maker
- Reconciler/Re-Maker
- Resurrection of Eternal Life
- Preeminent
- Shepherd
- Security

Because Jesus is, wise and secure is the person who continues/remains/abides in the faith and does not move away from the hope of the gospel (resurrection unto eternal life in Jesus) regardless of what comes our way in our pilgrimage in this world

This time...the joy and focus of the Apostle Paul, the minister of the mystery of the Gospel to the Gentiles.

With joy and focus like Paul's, we can continue in the faith and abide in Jesus so as to cling to and not stray from Jesus Christ when the going gets rough.

v21-23 We were once enemies of God (Eph 2:1-3, James 4:4)

Then by grace thru faith and not our works we were reconciled to God by Jesus Christ

Now we are enemies of the world that hates Jesus and all who follow Him

And the attacks of the world never stop and the world does not fight fair

Followers of Jesus Christ are hated by the world, persecuted by the world, imprisoned by the world, killed by the world

Our faith in Jesus Christ is relentlessly and mercilessly attacked on physical, emotional, and spiritual levels

Following Jesus is not a carefree walk in the park, it is war!

Ex 13:17-18

God led His people/nation out of bondage in Egypt;

He saved them

Jesus leads His people/nation out of bondage to eternal death in this world:
the hope of the Gospel, resurrection from the dead unto eternal life;

He saved them

God did not lead His people on the near/closer/easier way to the Promised Land, their inheritance

Life in this world does not get easier for a follower of Jesus on our way to our inheritance, eternal life

God's people would see war in their pilgrimage

Followers of Jesus do see war (spiritual) in their pilgrimage

The "easy way" would not prepare God's people for war; they would be discouraged when war came (giants in the land) so they needed to learn faith over fear along the "hard way"

A "walk in the park" would not equip the followers of Jesus for what we face in this world (giants in the land); we learn faith over fear along the narrow, difficult path that leads to eternal life

God's people left Egypt "harnessed", able-bodied soldiers

Followers of Jesus are able-bodied soldiers

2 Tim 2:3-4 Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of *this* life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.

Rom 5:3-5 we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

The Holy Spirit exhorts/instructs us to continue in the faith, grounded and settled, not moved away from the hope of the gospel

Continue/endure/abide is not us performing the rescue of salvation of our eternal souls from the 2nd death because that is God's work alone...

His action

v21-22

Gal 1:4

Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father

our reaction

Acts 2:38

Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Continue/endure/abide is how we get from rescue/salvation to our inheritance with eyes focused on Jesus, joyfully following Jesus

The children of Israel were rescued from bondage in Egypt by God...
secured by the death of the firstborn son
the power of the enemy broken in the “baptism” of the Red Sea
none of them returned to Egypt

Those who continued/endured/abided unto the end did well,
trusted in the God who rescued them to fight their enemies for them...
faith in God over fear of giants in the land
and received a reward

Those who did not continue/endure/abide unto the end did not well,
did not trust the God who rescued them but feared their enemies...
fear of giants in the land over faith in God
and suffered loss (but were still rescued by God, salvation was still theirs)

So it is with the believers in Jesus Christ

1 Cor 3:13-15 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work **abide** which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

How many of those given to Jesus by the Father does Jesus lose?
None

But, will the follower of Jesus receive a reward or suffer loss?

Will we wander on our pilgrimage, losing sight of Jesus and having the joy of our salvation ripped off by

- something sparkly and shiny
- some pretty little thing
- some big gorgeous hunk
- anything else the world has to offer?

Or will we finish well our course with joy and have a crown worthy of Jesus to throw at His feet (Rev 4:10)?

Facing merciless hostility in the world, we must continue unto the end in the Way by

- keeping our eyes on Jesus, the captain of our salvation that was made perfect thru sufferings and Who walks before us
- having the mind of Christ Who endured the disobedience of sinners against Himself lest we be wearied and faint in our minds
- denying our Selves/the flesh, picking up our cross and following Jesus Who for the joy set before Him endured the Cross, despising the shame
- abiding in Christ and bearing fruit pleasing to the Father...
love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance (self-control)

To “harness” us for the war that comes with following Jesus, Paul was made by God to be a servant/minister of the Gospel

Paul was chosen by God to be an Apostle of Jesus Christ

Acts 9:15-16 *Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.*

For which he has in fact “paid the price” exacted by the Jesus-Christ-hating world

2 Cor 11:23-28

And all of this has already happened to Paul in his ministry!

Colossians was recorded after 2 Corinthians

The Lord is not done with him...and neither is the world

Thru all his suffering Paul has continued in the faith grounded and settled,
unmoved from the hope of the Gospel

He is a credible encourager to us to do the same

1 Cor 11:1 Be ye followers of me, even as I also *am* of Christ.

The Holy Spirit thru Paul is pointing us to Jesus, Who suffered more than any person ever yet continued in the faith grounded and settled, not moved away from the hope of the gospel

v24 And now, in prison in Rome recording a letter to the church at Colosse, Paul rejoices in his God-given ministry

his sufferings for them and for all the Church/Body of Christ, including us

Gal 6:17b I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus. (2 Cor 11)

2 Cor 4:16 For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward *man* is renewed day by day.

knowing there is more to come in his ministry

2 Cor 4:17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory;

Phil 1:20-29 ending with his beheading

Phil 3:7-11 (recorded after Colossians)

continuing in the faith grounded and settled, following Jesus

Gal 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Rom 8:18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

v25-26 For the sake of the Body of Christ, the Church, Paul was made a minister/servant

- following Jesus, ministering in the “mold” of Jesus

Matt 20:27-28 *And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.*

- according to the dispensation
 - purpose of God
 - I repeat: God is not there for my purpose,
I am here for His purpose
 - stewardship assignment in God’s house
- for you...that church and all the Church
- that Scripture would be fulfilled (Mark 14:49)
- of the mystery
 - hidden from ages (times past) and generations (peoples past)
 - now made evident to His saints, the believers/followers of Jesus Christ

1 Cor 2:1-13 hidden wisdom of God ordained before the foundation of the world, revealed by the Holy Spirit and fulfilled by Jesus Christ in His death and resurrection

1 Peter 1:10-12 Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently (yet understanding and clear revelation was hidden from them), who prophesied of the grace *that should come* unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ (of which Paul is a participant, as do saints unto this day), and the glory that should follow (of which Paul and all saints hope). Unto whom it was revealed (in part), that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven (John 14:26, John 15:26, John 16:13); which things the angels desire to look into.

v27 To whom...His saints, to whom was written 1 Cor 2 and 1 Peter 1 and all the Greek Scriptures revealing the Hebrew Scriptures
God would make known...clear revelation, the “fog lifted”, of the prophecies regarding

- the mystery of God’s Christ, His Person, work, suffering, and glory
- the mystery of God’s wisdom...the revelation of His mind and plan
- the mystery of the Church/Bride/Body, God’s saints;
the salvation of the Gentiles too

Rom 1:16-17 ...the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

Rom 11:25 blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.

Acts 26:17-20

The riches of God’s glory to the Gentiles, now clearly revealed:

Christ in you...indwelling of the Spirit of Christ the Risen Lord, Who died for our sins and rose again on the 3rd day to conquer the 2nd death, would come live within us and

- empower us to follow Him
- guide us on the narrow, difficult path that leads to life eternal
- teach us the heart of the Father and the mind of Christ
- remind us of what Jesus said when we are being bombarded by the lies and deception of the world
- “harness” us for battle, making us able-bodied soldiers for Truth

...all at our invitation!!

the hope...confident assurance in the promise of God Who cannot lie
(with hope comes strong faith, staggering not at the promise of God but being fully persuaded that God is able to do as He has promised)

of glory...raised from the dead/darkness unto eternal life/light in a glorified body

1 Cor 6:14 God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power.

2 Cor 4:14 Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus

2 Cor 5:1 For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

Col 1:13

Christ in you, the hope of glory...

When I (this is personal to me and each and every one of us)
look at what God has required of me (be holy, perfectly keep His statutes
and commandments, the Law),

I realize that I can't do what God requires of me...and I have more than
proven that I cannot do it.

Even now, as a new creature in Christ, my spirit is willing but my flesh is
too weak.

It is more than I (in my nature only) can do to perfectly obey God;

Besides, it is already too late because I have not

Even on my very best day I cannot live a holy life before the holy God.

So what does God do?

He comes to me (meets me where I am rather than demanding I meet Him
where He is) and He dwells in me (the beauty of holiness moves
into an ugly house!) and He gives me the power to be what I
cannot be in my own performance – holy unto Him.

Christ in you, the hope of glory!

Self-righteousness is repugnant to the holy God

(e.g. incident at Life More Abundantly on Wed)

Christ is our righteousness!

v28 Paul is unwaveringly focused on the task at hand as God's minister/servant to the Church

Whom...Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ alone

we...the Apostle Paul, Timothy, Epaphras, and now each of us

- preach...warning every man who is dead in sin and not alive to God
Rev 10:11 Apostle John after eating the little book after 6th Trumpet
2 Tim 3:16 reproof
Acts 26:20b repent, turn to God, living a life as evidence of the change
Phil 2:10-11 every knee, every tongue
- teach...instruct every man in the wisdom of God
Word of God, the entire counsel of God, verse-by-verse
Matt 28:19-20 **Teaching them** (the nations) **to observe all things**
whatsoever I have commanded you
Acts 5:42 daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to
teach and preach Jesus Christ

may present...stand beside to aid and to exhibit before the holy God

"May I present unto You Your child, fruit of Your work!"

every man...whosoever will believe/trust/lean on

perfect...complete, whole

Eccl 12:13 Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this *is* the whole ~~duty~~ of man.

Gen 15:6

John 6:28-29

Acts 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

in Christ Jesus...the righteousness of God, only way to stand before the holy God

He in us and us in Him

1 Cor 1:30 of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption

Paul's single-minded focus should be ours as well

The "chain" of discipleship: every saint having

1. someone pouring the Word of God into them
2. others into whom they pour the Word of God

v29 Paul labored, worked hard unto weariness, in his calling/ministry

We all have a ministry, even several, so we should as Paul strive, contend and fight

- the world
- the god of this world
- the flesh, his and all others

empowered by the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8...upon, the baptism of Jesus Christ)

In building the temple of the Holy Spirit, the Church/Body of Christ, Paul knew

Zech 4:6

Matt 16:18

But that is not a formula for doing nothing and laziness

Paul was an Energizer Bunny!

Jesus works thru His saints, which means the saints work!

Who wants to hear, "Well done, *thou* good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord."?

Those words come after...faithful laboring and striving empowered by the Holy Spirit in the continuing work of Jesus Christ

- seeking and saving the lost...preaching the Gospel
- making disciples...long, hard work
- v23
- v27
- v28

Please stand if you are weary

Weary of trying to be pleasing to God based on your own performance and strength

Weary of the spirit being willing but the flesh being weak

Weary of doing well (obedience)

Weary of not doing well (disobedience)

Weary of continuing in the war that comes with being a disciple of Jesus, following Jesus

Weary of fear over faith

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit to energize and empower is at your invitation

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is but for the asking

Invite or ask... 1:1 with the Father in heaven

Corporate closing prayer

Matt 11:28-30 *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.*

Is 40:28-31 *Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.*

Is 55:12 *go out with joy, and be led forth with peace*