

Ministry of The Holy Spirit
Prison Letters
Colossians 2:1-7

Last time...the joy and focus of the Apostle Paul for his calling that is a very credible example to us of following Jesus in difficult/trying times

This time...Paul's desire and agony, part 1

Col 2:1-7

v1 Paul's great desire for

- the church at Colosse
- the church at Laodicea
- the entire Body of Christ throughout time

is that they would understand his great

- conflict
- concern
- "agon"...agony

for them

The agony is caused by the conflict between
his great desire for the Church
and
the voices in the world that could disrupt or even destroy the Church realizing his
great desire for them/us

Note: the Greek word translated "great" appears only one other time in NT
James 3:5 Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth **great**
things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!

Giving us an indication of the intensity of Paul's desire

This agony accompanies the Apostle Paul's sufferings for the Church
2 Cor 11:28 Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me
daily, the care of all the churches (most of whom have not ever
seen his face)

And since all Scripture is God-breathed (inspired by the Holy Spirit and recorded by
holy men of God), these words come from the very heart of God to us today

v2-3 God's desire and Paul's desire for us:

That our hearts might be **comforted**, called near to the heart of the God of all comfort who comforts us in all our tribulations and troubles (2 Cor 1:3-4) rather than being anxious and agitated and irritated by the madness of the world, which is clearly seen all around us

How are our hearts comforted as strangers in this world during troublesome times?

By, as a Body, a congregation of people

being knit together (working together) in love

John 13:34-35

Rom 13:10

James 2:8

united, in one accord with the mind of Christ

Eph 4:16 the whole body fitly joined together (organized close together) and compacted (knit together, working together) by that which every joint supplieth (every part is important and has a role to play), according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying (strengthening, building up) of itself in love.

vs

being splintered with divisions, working against each other, when confusion reigns, grace fails, and bitterness takes root

1st order of business with the church at Corinth

1 Cor 1:10-13

1 Cor 3:1-8

Also a concern with the churches of Galatia

Gal 5:14-15

And it is why Eph 4:11-16

How agonized would the Apostle Paul be if he saw the Church today?!

Is the Church knit together, working together, in love?

Is the Body of Christ a good witness of Jesus in the world, or is the Church much like the world?

Our hearts are comforted as strangers in this world during troublesome times by,
as a Body, a congregation of people,

being knit together (working together) in love,
continually moving in and ever-towards the wealth of

- the full assurance (no-doubt-confidence) of
- understanding to the acknowledgement (knowing that we know what we know) of

the mystery of God (revelation received by faith)

- the Father (a depth of a loving relationship that takes my breath away!)
- Christ (Who loves us and gave Himself for our sins and delivered us from this present evil world)
 - John 14:7, 9 *If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him...he that hath seen me hath seen the Father*
 - Who has the preeminence over ALL things (Ch 1:18b)
 - in whom (Ch 1:19) are hid all the treasures of
 - wisdom...the mind of the holy God, God's Word
God's ways, all things that are right and true,
1 Cor 1:30
 - knowledge...all-knowing/omniscience, all that can be known is known by Jesus, the Living Word of God

Our hearts are comforted in knowing and drawing near Jesus Christ

2 John 9 Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.

This is a primary reason for our gathering together (Acts 2:42)

1 Cor 14:31 For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be **comforted**.

1 Cor 2:1-2 And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

and therefore drawing near and knowing personally and experientially the heart of God and His unfathomable love

There is comfort of love in the unity of the Spirit when the Church works together as one for the building up and strengthening of each other in Jesus Christ

There is no comfort in the confusion of the world and the flesh that infects the Body of Christ such that the parts of the Church work against each other and strive for self-righteousness

Our hearts are comforted in all circumstances when we

- are working together, loving each other
- know Jesus Christ, and know that we know Jesus Christ!

So when we are facing any circumstance in which we are uncertain as to what to do,
we find comfort in

- following after righteousness (that which is pleasing to God, 1 Cor 1:30)
1 Tim 6:11 But thou, O man of God, flee these things (worldly things);
and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love,
patience, meekness.
- following Jesus
Ps 119:105 Thy word *is* a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.
Rom 12:1-2 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God,
that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy,
acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service.
And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed
by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is*
that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.
- following after the heart of the Father and the mind of Christ
Rom 14:19 Let us therefore follow after the things which make for
peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.

Such is Paul's desire, burden, heart for the Body of Christ
A heart after God's own heart

Knowing and following Jesus, having a heart after God's own heart, also comes with
agony

- for lost loved ones and friends
of whom this can be said
2 John 7 For many deceivers are entered into the world, who
confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh.
This is a deceiver and an antichrist.
- and because of whom this cannot be said of us
2 John 4 I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children
walking in truth, as we have received a
commandment from the Father.
- 3 John 4 I have no greater joy than to hear that my children
walk in truth.

- for the lost
in whom the Lord has no pleasure
and in the death of whom the Lord has no pleasure
for whom a battle rages, in the battleground of their minds

But remember Jesus said

Matt 5:4 **Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.**

Thus far: Paul's agony is caused by the conflict between
his great desire for the Church (v1-3)
and
the voices in the world that could disrupt or even destroy the Church realizing his
great desire for them/us and even bring upon them/us even more agony

Next: Therefore, we are warned about those voices:

- worldly deception (v4-7)
- religious deception (v8-17)
- spiritual deception (v18-23)

v4 Paul shares the great conflict/agony he has for

- the church at Colosse
- the church at Laodicea
- the entire Body of Christ

so none of those who are Christ's will be deceived by the world's

- enticing words
- persuasive language to question/challenge the Word of God, thoughts rooted
in the wisdom of man
- seductive words contrary to the Word of God to make it of none effect

1 Cor 1:18-25

1 Cor 3:19a the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.

The world is not a	rational	place;	sound reason is found in Jesus Christ
	truthful		Truth
	stable		stability
	safe		safety
	friendly		friend-ship
			friends of the world are enemies of God (James 4:4)

And it is getting worse, generation by generation
"Higher Education" in this nation produces "wasted minds"

This verse is a clear warning to the Church today

We must diligently apply ourselves to gird up the loins of our mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1:19) in these

- Days of Noah...lawlessness and violence
- Days of Lot...rampant and militant sexual perversion
- “beginning of sorrows” defined by deception (Matt 24:4-5) when Is 5:20 is the order of the days

v5 The Apostle Paul did not plant the church at Colosse
He never visited Colosse or this church
He is not in-person with them now...he is in-prison
Yet Paul is like-minded with them, one in the Spirit with them, knit together with them, working together with them...in the love of God

The Church at Colosse is not in disarray, not afflicted with divisions and confusion
They are orderly (built upon submission and humility), following the God of order and doing all things decently and in order (1 Cor 14:40)

They are steadfast/unwavering in their faith in Christ, committed to following Him wherever He leads them

They are strong in the faith of Christ, not fearing anything in a world hostile to them

May this church be like that church!

Unwaveringly faithful to and unashamed of

- The Gospel, the power of God unto salvation to whosoever believes, that is foolishness to the world i.e. those not in their right minds
- the Holy One of Israel, not fearful of the world’s swelling hostility toward Israel

v6-7 The antidote for the deception of enticing words:

Standfast in the faith of Christ...know that you know what you know

Do not be deceived by the “ear-tickling”, seductive wisdom of the world

Be not confused about what is right and what is wrong

Be not divisive, striving amongst ourselves

Stand resolutely upon the Rock that cannot be moved, the Stone not cut with human hands that destroys all the kingdoms of man

Live our lives before God and man according to the absolute and unchanging truth received from Jesus, in which we have believed and have entrusted our immortal souls

Follow Paul’s example of following Jesus all the way to the end

2 Tim 1:12 For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

2 Tim 4:18 And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve *me* unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen.

1 Thes 5:34 Faithful *is* he that calleth you, who also will do *it*.

Be

- rooted...growing down into the depths of the richness of the Word of God

2 Tim 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth

The more we know the Word of God, the more we know God!

- built up...grow up, strengthened and encouraged in the unfailing Word of God

Heb 5:12-14 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which *be* the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk *is* unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, *even* those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

1 Thes 4:18 Wherefore **comfort** one another with these words.

1 Thes 5:11 Wherefore **comfort** yourselves together, and edify one another

- established in the faith

faith: **knowing** that the Living God Whom I cannot see

- is (Heb 11:6) and ALWAYS has been and ALWAYS will be!
- is more real than anyone and anything I can see
- will do what He promised to do

Rom 4:17-22

2 Thes 3:5 the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.

James 5:7-8 Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

- abound with thanksgiving/gratitude for Jesus Christ regardless of worldly circumstances that whipsaw our volatile emotions!

I once was lost but now I'm found
 I once was blind but now I see
 I am no longer dead in sin and dead to God,
 I am dead to sin and alive to God
 I am not of this world
 I am a child of the Living God; my Father is in heaven
 I am made new, I am made righteous/pleasing/acceptable
 I have been justified, purified, set apart from the world and unto God
 I have peace with God and the peace of God
 I am forgiven of ALL my sin
 I am purchased and sealed unto the day of redemption
 I have not been given the spirit of fear but of power, love, and a sound
 mind
 I am set free, I have liberty in Jesus Christ
 I am loved

No enticing words from the world can offset any, much less all, of these truths

I have NO reason or excuse to depart from the faith, giving heed to
 seducing spirits and doctrines of devils speaking lies in hypocrisy
 (1 Tim 4:1)

I have NO reason or excuse to be lukewarm in my relationship with
 Christ, as became the case at the church at Laodicea (Rev 3:14-21)
 about 30 years after this letter was delivered to them

I have NO reason or excuse to be impatient for the coming of the Lord and
 risking a slide like Aaron in Ex 32 (Bulletin message this week)

So I will put you in remembrance of these things to be a good minister of
 Jesus Christ, nourishing you up in the words of faith and of good
 doctrine (1 Tim 4:6) lest we lose the joy of our salvation!

If my unbelieving loved ones and friends only knew what I know and had what I have!!
 I, too, am in agony
 As are all of you

And I suffer agony for this church in the times in which we live
Matt 24:4-5

Times of great turbulence

- international
- national
- social

- lawlessness
- violence
- great spiritual darkness

- profound, unthinkable sexual perversion
- absence of a moral compass (Is 5:20)

- the fabric of the nations and societies unravelling

We, as a congregation of followers of Jesus Christ must

Heb 10:22-25 Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of *our* faith without wavering; (for he *is* faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some *is*; but exhorting *one another*: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

to keep our bearings on the Morning Star

What could possibly be more important than our gathering together?

Col 1:23

to keep our moorings on Jesus Christ in this unrelenting storm

2 Cor 7:6 God, that **comforteth** those that are cast down
to know where and in Whom is our comfort

Rom 13:11-14 knowing the time, that now *it is* high time to awake out of sleep: for now *is* our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to *fulfil* the lusts *thereof*.

to abide in the Light so our light shines in the darkness

be Family, keeping the Royal Law, working together in love!