

## Paul's Mission

**Scripture:** Colossians 1:24-29

**ETS:** Paul described his mission and vision for the world to know Jesus in light of the Last Day, and affirmed the Colossians as they faced persecution.

**ESS:** Understanding Paul's mission, which has now been passed down to the church, we should spend our lives pursuing the Great Mission of making Jesus known throughout the world.

**Purpose:** Missions

### Intro:

- Favorite Person in the Bible (Jesus, but Paul comes in second...)
- Difficulty in Expositing Paul's Mission
  - Worldwide vision
  - Sometimes he would go where Spirit commanded, sometimes he would "just go."

**T:** Nevertheless, Paul was convicted that his mission was critical.

(READ Colossians 1:24-29)

- I. Paul worked tirelessly to make Jesus known worldwide. (Colossians 1:24, 25, 29)
  - A. **EXP:** Paul's language surrounding Christ's afflictions is missional
  - B. **EXP:** Paul's language... afflictions is eschatological
  - C. **APP:** Rev. 7:9-10 - These are believers!!! If you want Jesus to come back, get serious about His mission.
  - D. **ILL:** There are still 4,761 people groups (Tribes, Tongues, Nations) that have no access to the Gospel, or no Christians. 1.8 Billion people. Consider the Mahratta: 30,399,000 people.
  - E. **APP:** If you seek God only for self-fulfillment, you will never be able to conquer your sin. If you seek God to make His glory known among the world, your passion for self-gratification will decrease, and so will your desires for sin.

**T:** The reason for Paul's self-sacrificing mission was his self-sacrificing Savior.

II. Paul's Proclamation was Christ (Colossians 26-28)

- A. **EXP:** Paul believed there was no hope for the world outside of Jesus Christ.
- B. **EXP:** The "mystery" Paul speaks of is salvation from sin in Christ.
- C. **EXP:** "Christ in you, the hope of glory," is assurance of our eternity.
- D. **APP:** Consider Romans 8:14...
- E. **ILL:** A man lost at sea, a boat comes by, throws him a life preserver, all the people rejoice, and sail away. But they leave the man. He's not going to drown now, but he'll certainly still die at sea. It's an unfinished mission.
- F. **APP:** Our mission is not justice. Our mission is saving people from their eternal fate.
- G. **APP:** People without Christ will die and go to Hell. If people suffer this fate, it isn't because God is unloving. It's because **we** are unloving.

**T:** Because Paul knew His God was loving enough to die for him, he gave up his life for God's mission to love the world.

III. Paul suffered loss because of his devotion to Jesus (Col. 1:24)

- A. **EXP:** Paul likens his sufferings to Jesus' sufferings. For Paul, suffering is a normal part of the Christian life.
- B. **APP:** It's not exactly en vogue to talk about suffering or Christian persecution...
- C. **ILL:** BBC's Article Friday: # of Christians in Iraq pre-2003: 1.5 million; Today? Less than 120,000. Christianity is facing a global persecution crisis.
- D. **APP:** Your brothers and sisters in Christ are filling up what's lacking in Christ's afflictions. They are likely more mature than we are, because they know what it means to rejoice in suffering.
- E. **APP:** The mission of Paul is the mission of the Church. We're all in this together.
- F. **APP:** In our church tradition, we focus very keenly on individual salvation, and individual relationship with God. Good thing, but don't miss God's call for you to love and serve alongside your community of believers!

G. **APP:** Your faith has yet to take flight if you are not engaged in God's Mission. "Every Christian is either a missionary or an impostor." - C.H. Spurgeon.

**T:** So, what is your place in reaching the nations?

**Conclusion:** Today's sermon is a call for repentance, and a call to action. Repentance, that we would trust that Jesus Christ is alive... Do you know Him? If you do not know Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, you are without an answer for your sin. God loves you dearly and does not want you to suffer this fate. He's calling you to choose life and trust Jesus today.

If you are a believer, but have not not cared enough for the unreached of the world, would you repent of not having God's heart for the world, and ask Him how He would have you participate in His redemptive mission of the world today?