

Christ in you, 'The Hope of Glory.'

Colossians 1:21 - 29

Overview: Maturity the ability to navigate all of life with its highs and lows with wisdom, spiritual insight and holiness. This journey begins with a solid understanding of our salvation, and this understanding provides us as individuals and collectively as a church a firm foundation – Jesus Christ - on which our faith is built.

Outline:

Our position because we are reconciled – Colossians 1: 21 – 23.

Paul's current state – Colossians 1:24 – 26.

Paul's goal – Colossians 1:27 – 29.

This study uses the WISDOM acronym:

W – What is the main point, or key thought, and we work the issue

I – Investigate the scriptures. Study God's word.

S – Seek counsel from other sources, voices and articles.

D – Develop a response. The best response is a written one because there is many a slip from the mind to the pen.

O - Openly discuss your study with others; this is especially valuable in a small group or learning community setting.

M - Move to action. This is where we apply what we have learned to our lives. It is in application that we find that God's word is indeed living and active. And transformation occurs as the heart is impacted.

Please note: *This is a study guide, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. We need to walk in the truth therefore: It's you, the Holy Spirit and the Scripture in the interpretation process. Try not to relinquish your personal study to reading and repeating commentaries, check in with them as resource to make sure that your interpretation is not way off.*

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W [What is the issue] In reading the scripture the objective here is to determine the main point or points that Paul is trying to make.

Read *Colossians 1:21 - 29*

Ask yourself questions while discovering the main points in this text:

Ask the Who What Why When Where and the So what [what difference does this make – or it's the application question] questions to discover the main issue or issues that are in this text. Command to obey; doctrine to understand; life in the church to live out; and application (to myself) to apply.

Write down your questions...as you write, clarity regarding the text of scripture will emerge.

In reading the overview, develop your own questions to discuss:

Some suggested questions:

Take the five words used to describe salvation and discuss how they firm up your personal foundation in Jesus.

- Reconciliation; Justification; Redemption; Adoption; and Forgiveness.
- What is the hope of the gospel?

What does Paul mean when he says in Col 1:23c, "I, Paul, have become its servant?"

- Col 1:25 – as you interact with this verse: What is your stewardship from God? And how am I serving the Lord in the church?

- Discuss the reality of the hope of Glory in your life.
- What real maturity look like? What would our church look like if all of us were on the pathway to maturity.

I Investigating Scripture: Read Colossians 1: 21 – 29

Our position because we are reconciled – Colossians 1: 21 – 23.

Col 1:21,22 – “were formerly alienated” This is a Perfect passive participle of a compound word which describes the lost’ relationship to God. The theology of this alienation is found in Eph. 2:1, 3, 11-22. The morality of the lost is found in Eph. 4:18-19. Col 1:13 provides context to this thought.

“yet He has now reconciled you” - Reconciled is the main verb of Col. 1:21-23. The change is because of God's actions in Christ towards fallen and alienated people (Col. 1:20).

The term ‘reconcile’ (Col. 1:22) means “to change from hostility to peace” especially between people. Sin has caused a separation between the creator and the created. God acted in Christ to restore the fellowship (Rom. 5:18-19). This is a double compound word (apokatallasso) for theological emphasis (Col. 1:22). Paul used the same word in Eph. 2:16 and the same root in 2 Cor. 5:18-20.

There are five key words used in the New Testament to describe salvation and they are: Justification, Redemption, Forgiveness, Adoption, and Reconciliation.

Justification: The sinner is guilty before God and stands condemned, But is declared righteous – Romans 8:33

Redemption: The sinner stands before God as slave but is granted freedom Romans 6:18-22; Mark 10:45

Forgiveness: The sinner stands before God as debtor with a debt that he can repay but God in Christ paid the debt and the sinner stands completely forgiven before God. Ephesians 1;7; Luke 7:36-50.

Adoption: The sinner stands before God as one not in the family but is made a son or daughter with full heirship.

Reconciliation: The sinner stands before God as an hostile but because of Christ has peace with God and now is considered a friend of God. 2 Corinthians 5:17-20.

1:23 “if indeed you continue in faith” This is a first class conditional sentence which was to be true by Paul.

Paul's current state – Colossians 1:24 – 26.

1:24 "I rejoice in my sufferings for you" Paul viewed his life and imprisonment as serving the church and participating in the fellowship of suffering with Jesus (Phil. 2:17; 3:10 and 2 Cor. 1:5). Paul knows that suffering is part of the journey

As Jesus suffered on behalf of others, so will His followers (2 Cor. 5:14-15; Gal. 2:20; 1 John 3:16). Only the Spirit can turn persecution into joy; because joy is not the absence of sorrow but the presence of Jesus.

In Romans 5:3-5 – Paul writes that character is the end product desired in our lives by the Holy Spirit. His sequencing: suffering produces endurance; endurance character and then character hope! Character and maturity is how believers navigate life with joy and look like Jesus.

Col 1:25 "according to the stewardship from God" Believers are all stewards and trustees of the gospel (1 Cor. 4:1-5; Eph. 3:2,9; Titus 1:7; 1 Pet. 4:10).

Paul's goal – Colossians 1:27 – 29.

Col 1:27 – The mystery explained – Christ in you the hope of glory!

Col 1:28 – The goal – To present every one mature in Christ.

By means of: proclaiming Christ – instructing and warning – teaching

With wisdom and personal labor and struggle according to the Lord's power working in us.

Maturity and Character is the actualization of our redemption in Christ in our personal and corporate life.

S Consult other sources

MYSTERY

I. In the OT

This Aramaic word (BDB 1112, KB 1980), *raz*, means "to hide," "to keep a secret." It is used several times in Daniel (cf. Dan. 2:18,19,27,28,29,30,47; 4:9). It becomes a central theme in apocalyptic literature and is mentioned often in the Dead Sea Scrolls. God reveals His hidden counsel to His prophets (cf. Gen. 18:17; Jer. 23:18; Dan. 9:22; Amos 3:7).

In the Dead Sea Scroll community God's revelation was mediated through (1) the OT prophets' message (*raz*), but also (2) the interpretation (*pesher*) of "the teacher of righteousness." This two-fold pattern of revelation and interpretation characterizes apocalyptic literature.

II. In the Synoptic Gospels "mystery" is used of the spiritual insights gleaned from Jesus' parables.

1. Mark 4:11

2. Matthew 13:11

3. Luke 8:10

III. Paul uses it in several different ways.

1. A partial hardening of Israel to allow Gentiles to be included. This influx of Gentiles will work as a mechanism for Jews to accept Jesus as the Christ of prophecy (cf. Rom. 11:25-32).

2. The gospel made known to the nations, telling them that they are all included in Christ and through Christ (cf. Rom. 16:25-27; Col. 2:2).

3. Believers' new bodies at the Second Coming (cf. 1 Cor. 15:5-57; 1 Thess. 4:13-18).

4. The summing up of all things in Christ (cf. Eph. 1:8-11).

5. The Gentiles and Jews as fellow-heirs (cf. Eph. 2:11-3:13).

6. Intimacy of the relationship between Christ and the Church described in marriage terms (cf. Eph. 5:22-33).

7. Gentiles included in the covenant people and indwelt by the Spirit of Christ so as to produce Christlike maturity, that is, restore the marred image of God in man (cf. Gen. 1:26-27; 5:1; 6:5,11-13; 8:21; 9:6; Col. 1:26-28).

8. The end time Anti-Christ (cf. 2 Thess. 2:1-11).

IV. An early church hymn or catechism about the mystery of the gospel is found in 1 Tim. 3:16.

V. In John's Revelation it is used of the meaning of John's apocalyptic symbols.

1. Rev. 1:20

2. Rev. 10:7

3. Rev. 17:5,6

VI. These mysteries are truths that humans cannot discover; they must be revealed by God.

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D[develop your response] This where we do our personal study and develop our personal response.

As we work the main point from scripture, look at Scripture and interact with other voices. We write down our response. Realize the value of writing – I realize that this is difficult but when we put on paper our thoughts the greatest connection between head and heart occurs.

Use the questions in work the issue and in the openly discuss section and also come up with some of your own.

Take time to write down your thoughts, questions, doubts, comments and answers. Even cryptic points that trigger conversations.

O [openly discuss] After we have our written response this is where we interact with our community or connect group and learn from one another. Share openly and honestly what our Lord has taught you from scripture. Your understanding may change as a result of your discussion with others. Let the Holy Spirit lead and be open to learn from one another. It is an amazing experience as the Spirit of the Lord shows up in our discussion and lives are touched and changed.

M [Move to action.] Apply God’s word to your life, this where transformation occurs as the Spirit of God moves in your life and you respond to His prompting. This is where the heart connects with the head and the hands. Without application we will gain knowledge and remember what the apostle Paul says, ‘Knowledge puffs up but love builds up.’

My personal application: {write it down and share it with someone who will hold you accountable}.

An application to ponder:

Col 1:28 – The goal – To present every one mature in Christ.

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With wisdom and personal labor and struggle according to the Lord’s power working in us.

Maturity and Character is the actualization of our redemption in Christ in our personal and corporate life.

Where am I in this journey? What is my next step?

A journey of a thousand miles begins with a first step.