

As the first chapter of Colossians comes to a close, Paul finishes it with a model attitude of how to endure hardship. He makes it clear that there is much suffering yet to come as he (and we) walk with Jesus in a broken world.

Colossians 1:24-2:5

Paul Ministers to the Church

I. COMPARING OUR STORIES

Too often we forget to consider all that's taken place to get us where we are today. For most of us, we're much better established, provided for, and loved than we realize. Particularly, when it comes to our faith experience, we neglect to recognize how blessed we are because of God's work through faithful people who had to suffer in some way.

MY EXPERIENCE...

YOUR EXPERIENCE...

II. CONSIDERING OUR STRUGGLES

WHAT have you been willing to suffer for in order to gain a greater reward/return?

ARE there things in this life you'd be willing to suffer for because it meant something better?

WHAT hardships have you endured for your family? **HOW** far were you willing to go?

HAVE you suffered hardships for the sake of your faith?

WHAT hardships would you be willing to endure if it meant spiritual health for you or your church community?

Colossians 1:24-2:5

Paul Ministers to the Church

Read Colossians 1:24-2:5

OBSERVATION

Describe Paul's attitude in vs. 24.

What is Paul's role according to vs. 25?

Explain the mystery Paul describes in vs. 26-27.

Why is Paul struggling, according to vs. 29, and where does he find the energy to do so?

In 2:1-3, why does Paul want those in Colossae to know of his struggle for them?

According to vs. 4, what is true about the battle the Believers were facing?

Was Paul present in Colossae (vs. 4)?

What's Paul's ultimate hope for those in Colossae (vs. 4-5)?

INTERPRETATION

What exactly did Christ complete by His work on the cross (see Col 2:15)?

If so, what could be "lacking" in verse 24? Keep in mind, what was Paul's role in vs. 25?

How does the church now "participate" in Christ's sufferings, "completing" the work yet to be "finished"? (consider 1 Peter 4:12-13)

In vs. 25, Paul refers "the stewardship from God" (ESV). What is a steward, and how does this relate to the assignment God gave to Paul for the Colossians?

How would you explain the "mystery" Paul mentions in this passage, and why do you think he refers to it as such (keep in mind his audience)?

How would you describe the source of Paul's struggling (vs. 29) and the source of his strength to fight it?

What connection can you make between what Paul is ultimately struggling for on behalf of the Colossians (vs. 1-3) and his concern for that which "deludes" in vs. 4?

APPLICATION

How do we practically maintain good order and a firmness of faith, as Paul mentions in vs. 5, today.?