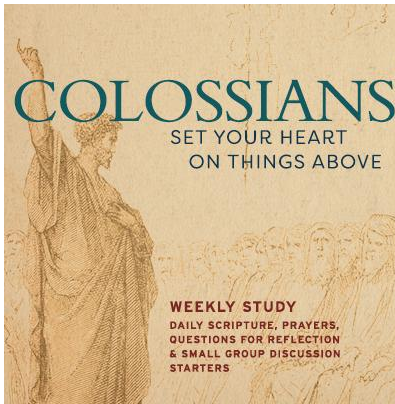




WEEKLY STUDY

Colossians - Week 5

This is our 5th week in the Colossians study. This week we are looking at Paul's words at the end of chapter 1 and the beginning of chapter 2. There he is compelling the Christians in Colossae (and surrounding communities) to hold firm in the face of false teachings. Anything that adds to Jesus Christ is untrue. As you read, study and pray, pay attention to the competing voices in the world around you. Christ is all you need. He is sufficient and high above anything else!

For those of you continuing to pray through the Psalms daily, you will read Psalms 141-147 this week.

Please note our prayer focus for the week in the box below. Join us in seeing what God will do as we unite in prayer.

Peace of Christ,
Pastor Mark Youngman

If you are studying with your Providence Small Group or Discipleship Group, you can share from your own daily reflections and consider the Group Discussion questions below. If you would like to get connected visit prov.church/smallgroups.

Prayer Focus:

- Pray for those who are confused by the mixed messages of this world when it comes to the Good News of Jesus Christ.

DAILY STUDY

MONDAY: COLOSSIANS 1.24-27 (NIV)

Now I rejoice in what I am suffering for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church. ²⁵ I have become its servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness—²⁶ the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the Lord's people. ²⁷ To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

- According to scholars, Paul was writing that the fullness of the **mystery** is found only in Jesus Christ. “By “mystery” he meant something once concealed but then revealed.” Voices outside of the church were declaring that a mystery was a secret teaching that could be known only by a certain group and unknown to the average person. Have you ever felt ill-equipped or too untrained to see the fullness of the mystery of God? Jesus is the answer to your self-doubt. Pray a prayer of letting go of doubt.
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- **Prayer Prompt: But in the days when the seventh angel is about to sound his trumpet, the mystery of God will be accomplished, just as he announced to his servants the prophets.” (Revelation 10.7)**
- *God, your ways are far beyond my ways, but I commit to set my heart and mind on things above. I let go of my insecurities and accept the mysterious gift which is Christ in me! Amen.*

TUESDAY: COLOSSIANS 1.28-29 (NIV)

He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ. ²⁹ To this end I strenuously contend with all the energy Christ so powerfully works in me.

- Paul was concerned with the maturity of Christians. He didn't want anyone to remain in spiritual infancy but to thrive and grow in Christ. As we learn about the false teachings that were threatening the church, we can begin to understand the urgency in Paul's desire to teach and admonish about what is right and true. Is there someone who is contending for you in faith?
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- **Prayer Prompt: speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. (Ephesians 4.15)**
- *O God, help me to receive the truth that is spoken in love. I desire to live as a maturing part of the body of Christ. Amen.*

WEDNESDAY: COLOSSIANS 2.1-3 (NIV)

I want you to know how hard I am contending for you and for those at Laodicea, and for all who have not met me personally.² My goal is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ,³ in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

- Paul wants Christians to be encouraged in heart and united in love. What does that look like into today's context? Have you ever experienced the full riches of complete understanding? May even moments where you see the veil lifted, even if just for a moment.

- **Prayer Prompt: For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. (Colossians 3.3)**
- *God, may my life be completely hidden in you. I want others to look at me, but to see Christ in me. Amen.*

THURSDAY: COLOSSIANS 2.4-5 (NIV)

I tell you this so that no one may deceive you by fine-sounding arguments.⁵ For though I am absent from you in body, I am present with you in spirit and delight to see how disciplined you are and how firm your faith in Christ is.

- *Clearly there was a problem with smooth-talking teachers. We must remain disciplined and cling to Christ above anything else. What teachings or beliefs are you tempted to put before Christ? Offer it all up to God as you seek a more disciplined life and faith.*

- **Prayer Prompt: But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ. (Ephesians 2.13)**
- *God, bring me closer and closer to Jesus. Through his blood I am welcomed into your story of redemption and so I cling to him. Amen.*

FRIDAY: EPHESIANS 1.7-10 (NIV)

In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace⁸ that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and understanding,⁹ he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ,¹⁰ to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.

- Again, Paul connects unity with right teaching—with wisdom and understanding. What does it mean to you that you would be entrusted with what was previously a mystery to God's people? How do you hold on to that mystery?

- **Prayer Prompt: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,²⁴ and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. (Romans 3.23-24)**
- *Almighty God, on my own, I fall short of your glory. But thank you God, I am not on my own. Thank you for the justification I receive through the grace of Christ Jesus. Amen.*

SATURDAY: 1 CORINTHIANS 15.50-51 (NIV)

I declare to you, brothers and sisters, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.⁵¹ Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed—

- We spend so much of our lives trying to show our worth. We want to earn everything we have. We find our value in what we have accomplished. But the mystery of God is that he is the One who accomplishes much in us. How do you respond to this life-altering truth?

- **Prayer Prompt: Beyond all question, the mystery from which true godliness springs is great:
He appeared in the flesh,
was vindicated by the Spirit,
was seen by angels,
was preached among the nations,
was believed on in the world,
was taken up in glory. (1 Timothy 3.16)**
- *God, Jesus is the mystery from which true godliness springs. He appeared in the flesh. He preached and taught and returned to you. In all of those things, he showed me the way to you. It's still a mystery as to why you would see and care to redeem me, but I can see it now, and I thank you. Amen.*

GROUP DISCUSSION

Use the questions below to guide your conversation.

1. Paul calls the mystery “Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Colossians 1.27). What does this reveal about the hope God has given us, and how might it change the way we think about growing in faith?
2. In Colossians 2.2–3, Paul connects being encouraged and united in love with knowing Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. How can we help one another seek wisdom in Christ when other voices offer appealing answers?
3. Paul says he works so that everyone may be presented fully mature in Christ (Colossians 1.28–29). Where have you seen Christ helping you grow, and what is one area where you want to become more like him?
4. Paul contends for people he has not met so they can know Christ (Colossians 2.1–5). Who comes to mind as someone you could encourage, welcome, or help connect with the hope found in Jesus? What might that look like this week? How can we pray for you?