Colossians 1:24-2:7

Review…

- **Colossians 1:1-14 – The introduction to the letter…**
  - Paul was thankful for the church because of their Faith / Love / and Hope of salvation…
  - Paul was also thankful for their pastor – Because Epaphras taught the Word!
  - He prayed the church would be filled with the knowledge of God's will…
  - So that they would walk worthy of the Lord – pleasing Him in all they did!
- **Colossians 1:26-23 – The Deity of Jesus Christ…**
  - Jesus is the creator of all things…
    - The visible image of the invisible God – He is God almighty!
    - Jesus is the one who made all things on earth and in heaven – and holds them together!
  - Jesus is the foundation of the church – as well as the head!
    - He was the first to be resurrected from the dead – our hope of salvation…
    - And so long as we are not moved from the hope of the Gospel – our eternal life!

The Mystery of the chruch… (*2 things*)

- **1st – The ministry of Paul… vs. 24-29**
  - 1st – Paul rejoiced because of the mystery... vs. 24-25
    - Paul rejoiced in his sufferings for the sake of Jesus Christ…
      - Paul was constantly trouble with because of the Gospel – **II Corinthians 11:23**
        - He was thrown in prison AT LEAST five different times...
        - 5 times Paul was scourged with 39 lashes / 3 times Paul was beaten with Rods...
        - Once Paul was stoned to death - **Acts 14:9**...
      - The way to find out how valuable something is - how much would you pay for it...
        - If you are only willing to pay 10P for a something - it is not worth very much...
        - If you are willing to pay 10,000p - then it is a very valuable!
        - Paul was willing to go to prison - scourged and beaten - even stoned for Jesus!
        - It is easy to 'serve the Lord' – if it costs us nothing...
        - But how many people are willing to go to prison in order to 'serve the Lord'...
        - How valuable is the Lord to us - what are we willing to give up for Jesus!
      - Suffer is part of the Christian walk – we are all going to suffer…
        - **II Timothy 3:12** – "Everyone who wants to live a godly life in Jesus will suffer..."
        - This is not one of those promises we want to hand on our wall – 'life will be hard!'
        - If life were perfect – never had any problems – we might never look for heaven…
        - God allows life to be hard – so that we remember this is not our home!
    - By suffering Paul completed the suffering of Jesus…
      - Not that there was anything lacking in the sacrifice of Jesus – the cross…
      - When the work was done Jesus said – 'It is finished' – nothing needed to be added!
      - But we were not there to see the cross – we did not see Jesus die…
      - So Paul was allowed to suffer so others could see Jesus in him!

- It is easy to worship Jesus when everything is going well – no one notices…
- But when we get sick / bad things happen – just like they do to everyone else…
- And rather than complaining about life – we rejoice in the goodness of God…
- Then people stand up and take notice – through our suffering they see Jesus in us!

▪ Paul became a minster (*deacon*) of the church…
- Paul was called by God to serve the church – sharing with them the Word of God…
  - Sad to say the church has lost sight of that today – 'Minister' has become a title...
  - Rather than working hard for God – it describes one who tells others what to do
- Paul had been entrusted with the most important of all duties...
  - They were the caretakers of the truths of God's of God's Word!
  - We have all been entrusted with God's Word - we know truth of the Gospel...
  - We were not given this honor so we could hold onto (*hide it*) for ourselves...
  - We are called to tell others - to those who do not know/understand about Jesus!

o 2nd – What was the mystery of the church… vs. 26-27

▪ A mystery not in the sense of something unknown - but something revealed…
- The mystery of God - that from the beginning He planned to die for the sins of men!
- It was a mystery because of the rulers of this world – **I Corinthians 2:7-8**
- If the rulers of this world had known - they would never have crucified Christ...
- When Jesus was on the cross satan and evil rejoiced - they thought they had won...
- They had managed to crucify Christ - they had killed God...
- What they did not understand - but would learn in 3 short days - it was their defeat!

▪ And by faith in Jesus – the Lord comes to dwell in our hearts!
- **II Corinthians 6:16** - "You are the temple of the living God... I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people."
- The great mystery of the church is that Jesus does not live in a building…
- The church is not stick and bricks – it is you and me – we are the temple of God!

o 3rd – The result of learning the mystery… vs. 28-29

▪ As a result of knowing the mystery – Paul preached / warned / an taught…
- Preaching - telling others about the good news of Jesus Christ…
- Warning – those who are not willing to repent – the consequences of sin…
- Teaching – those who believe the Word of God…
- So that we might present EVERY MAN – perfect (*mature*) in Christ Jesus!
- People need to hear the Gospel - even if they do not want to we warn them...
- If they do not receive Jesus - the other option is hell - so we need to tell them!
- But we do not stop there we also need to teach those who do believe…
- So they grow strong in their faith – and mature in their walk with Jesus!

▪ Paul worked hard – because of the power of Jesus in Him…
- **Philippians 2:13** – "God is working in you, giving you the desire to obey him..."
- We work harder – but recognize it not about our efforts – but God's Grace!
- Both the will and ability to serve comes from God and God alone!
- He does it all so that we can be effective – and have joy in serving Him!

- **2ND – MATURITY IN THE CHURCH… VS. 1-7**

- 1st - The result of knowing the mystery of the church – brings maturity to the church...
  - When we understand that Jesus has saved us – and now lives within us…
  - It changes us – and makes us desire to want to grow in our walk with Jesus…
  - When God walks around - does He find our hearts clean - pure before Him...
  - Or are there images - thoughts - that we would be ashamed to admit were ours...
  - Knowing Jesus is there in our heart – makes us want to clean up our house...
  - Making our heart a place that Jesus is proud to call His home!
- 2nd – The proof of maturity… vs. 1-3
  - We know we are mature – when we have a concern for others…
    - Paul was concerned for the church in Colossae / and the church in Laodicea…
    - Apparently Paul had never personally visited these churches…
    - But Paul had a great burden for them – wanted them to grow in Jesus!
    - If we are only concerned about ourselves – then we may not be mature in Christ…
    - It is when we are burdened by the needs of others – wanting to see them in Jesus…
    - That is when we know the Lord is in our hearts – giving us His love for others!
  - Having a concern for others – does not always mean helping others…
    - Meaning well - we rush in and try to save the day when people are in trouble…
    - But in truth all we end up doing is keep them from 'hitting rock bottom'…
    - We keep them from coming to a place where they would turn to Jesus!
    - Sometimes helping means staying out of the way so God can do a work…
  - Paul concern was to see the church be knit together in love…
    - Paul was not concerned about the church on the outside…
    - He was looking to see a transformation on the inside – a change of heart!
    - You can make someone go to church – dress up nice – say the right words…
    - But sooner or later they are going to go back to their old ways…
    - Only Jesus can bring lasting change - a transformed heart and new life...
    - As we look to Jesus - we are changed from the inside out!
  - Because in God are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge!
    - Maturity in Jesus is not what we do – it is all about who we know!
    - So many people think that if they are good enough God will accept them...
    - But it is when God gets a hold of your life - changes your heart - you become mature!
    - The rules do not make us mature - it is the relationship that changes the heart...
    - It is not that we have to read our Bible / go to church / pray…
    - It is God that changes our heart – matures us so that we want to!
- 3rd – The reason to be mature… vs. 4-5
  - We want to be mature – so that we cannot be deceived…
    - There are a lot of 'false teachers' out there – who have persuasive words…
    - Satan can and will imitate God – he looks like the real thing - **II Corinthians 11:14**
    - Satan can come in pretty packages - sin / false teachings - can look really good...
    - The only way to know the truth is by being men and women of the Word...
    - **John 17:17** – "[Jesus said to the Father] Your word is truth."
    - As we mature in His Word – no one will deceive us - **II Timothy 2:15**…
    - The way a banker learns to spot counterfeit money - is to study the real thing...
    - When a counterfeit note comes along - they can spot the imitation immediately!

        - We are to be so well versed in the Word - that when false doctrine comes along...
        - We can spot it as an imitation immediately - and completely avoid it!
    - We want to be mature – so that we are united…
        - Even though Paul was not there – he rejoiced to see their unity in Christ…
        - When people are divided over religion / denominations…
        - They show their immaturity - showed they were still babes in Christ...
        - People who argue over being Catholic / Baptist / Adventist...
        - Reveal they are either not saved - or have never grown in the Lord...
        - Because they are acting no differently than before they knew Jesus!
        - People in the world love to divide - they have their groups / barkada...
        - But it should not be the same in the church - we are to be united by love!
        - **John 13:35** - "All will know you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."
- 4th – Example of maturity… vs. 6-7
    - Just as we accepted Jesus as our Lord – so we should walk in Him…
        - Just as we were saved by faith – so we are also to walk in faith!
        - God has not called us to 'sit by faith' we are to 'walk by faith' – **II Corinthians 5:17**
        - When we are willing to take that step of faith - we will find God leading our steps...
        - **Psalms 37:23** - "The steps of the godly are directed by the LORD. He delights in every detail of their lives."
    - Just like a tree that has grown deep into the soil…
        - If you plant a tree in poor soil - it does not stand much of chance of maturing...
        - In the same way if we do not have the right 'soil' for our faith - we will not mature...
        - If we think that our salvation is 'rooted' in our efforts - bad soil...
        - If we think somehow that we can be 'rooted' in a religion - bad soil...
        - It is only as we firmly plant ourselves in the Love of Jesus - we blossom and grow!
    - Just like a building set on a firm foundation…
        - The 'Rock' that is the supporting foundation of the church - is Jesus Christ!
        - **Matthew 16:18** - "On this rock I will build My church..."
        - It is easier to live our lives our way - do what we want - not listen to God's Word...
        - We can go where we like - we can do what we want - say anything...
        - But then we are our foundation - and when trials come - we have no where to go...
        - We can not go blaming God - it is not His fault - we choose not to build on the Rock...
        - The only constant in life – the only unshakable foundation we can build upon - Jesus!
        - Not matter what life throws at us - we are secure in Him!
    - Just like being taught in a classroom…
        - You can always spot a church that does not teach the Bible...
        - There is no maturity in the believers - 20 years down the road - still babes...
        - You can spot a church that teaches the Word - the people are mature in the Lord...
        - Faith comes by hearing God's Word - **Romans 10:17** - getting to know Jesus...