

**The Ministry of Paul
Col 1:24-29 (Part 8)**

I. Introduction

A. Today after service – have a quick annual meeting

1. Guess what – where we are in Colossians fits perfectly!
2. Paul challenges us to know our Ministry!
3. Listen with ACTIVE ears today and think about what you need to be doing from this day forward

B. As we study Colossians, Paul sat in PRISON

1. Teaching God's Truth had a price and Paul sits in Prison
2. With him, his dear friend Epaphras
 - a) Had come from Colossae
 - b) The man who most likely started the Colossian church
 - c) AND – had taught them the truth of the Gospel
3. What does Epaphras tell Paul?
 - a) We're being attacked
 - b) False Teachers have laid siege to our church!
 - c) Saying : Jesus Christ is NOT God / Cannot Save
 - d) Instead teaching / Asceticism / Mysticism / Legalism / Angel Worship
 - e) Epaphras and the other faithful are under attack and he's been sent on behalf of the Church for Paul's help!
4. How does Paul respond? THIS LETTER!
 - a) Possibly the greatest letter affirming WHO Jesus Christ is and WHAT He has done
 - (1) He DOES SAVE / He ALONE SAVES
 - (2) He IS GOD and LORD of ALL!
 - (3) Isn't that the message of Colossians?
5. Right here in the middle of the doctrine of Christ
 - a) Paul breaks in to give the Colossians a reason to BELIEVE in HIM – in PAUL
 - b) What is Paul's argument?
 - (1) A: I'M just PROCLAIMING CHRIST!
 - (2) Christ MADE me a MINISTER
 - (3) Christ GAVE me a STEWARDSHIP
 - (4) TO TAKE HIS WORD – to you! GENTILES!
 - c) You've been told of secret knowledge, secret ways to salvation, special for only a certain few.
 - d) I tell you it's not that way –
 - (1) Yes, there have been secrets, mysteries, BUT God has revealed ALL you need to know
 - (2) In Jesus Christ For Salvation
 - (3) God wants ALL people to know – Salvation IS CHRIST in YOU, the HOPE of GLORY

- (4) Your savior IS IN YOU – YOUR ASSURANCE of ETERNAL LIFE
 - (5) In you are all the TREASURES OF WISDOM and KNOWLEDGE (Col 2:3)
 - (6) That's your Savior – He's ALL and in all
6. That's what we've been studying as we've worked our way down from Col 1:24 to v.28 where we are today!

C. Col 1:24-29 = Paul's Ministry

- 1. It is a Ministry of Suffering
- 2. It is a Ministry of the Gospel
- 3. It is Proclaiming Jesus Christ in You, the Hope of Glory
 - a) It is the FULL Gospel message
 - b) It was a Mystery
 - c) It is now manifest / made known
 - d) It is Christ in You, the Hope of Glory!
- 4. Today: The Full Gospel Message of Jesus Christ is OUR Ministry
 - a) Our Proclamation – We proclaim HIM!
 - b) Our Practice
 - c) Our Purpose
 - d) Our Price
 - e) Our Power

D. TURN TO Col 1:28 to read...

Col 1:28 We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ. **29** For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me.

II. Our Proclamation: HIM!

Col 1:28 We proclaim Him,

A. We = Not just Paul!

- 1. In Context = Paul+ALL those teaching TRUE GOSPEL
- 2. In APPLICATION = US TOO!
- 3. Don't just sit there thinking this is 2000 year old teaching –
- 4. The Holy Spirit just dropped this in YOUR LAP – This is FOR YOU!

B. Proclaim = DECLARING a COMPLETED EVENT / COMPLETED TRUTH

- 1. Public Proclamation
- 2. GIVING INFORMATION of a completed happening
 - a) Who He is
 - b) What He did
- 3. NOT the formal preaching like I'm doing now!
 - a) NOT that word!
 - b) WIDER meaning to include ALL Christians!
- 4. Present tense = CONTINUAL activity
 - a) Simple test to see if you should STILL be Proclaiming= Are you still breathing? ☺

C. HIM! = OBJECT of ALL Proclamation! SO CRITICAL!

1. We proclaim ONE THING – Jesus Christ
2. “Him” refers back to “Christ in You”
3. We DON’T proclaim
 - a) Angels
 - b) Denominations
 - c) Methods
 - d) Lifestyles
 - e) Theological systems
4. Remember
 - a) To the unbeliever –

Ac 4:12 “And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved.”
 - b) To the Christian:
 - (1) EVERY Spiritual blessing in Him
 - (2) He is our LORD – we obey Him
 - (3) We call other Christians to Learn Him / Know Him / Obey Him

D. This is SO SIMPLE – Have you OPENED YOUR MOUTH for Jesus Christ?

1. Not just live for Him
2. SPEAK the truth about him – PROCLAIM it PUBLICALLY!
3. CONTINUALLY – until the Lord takes you home!
4. BL: CONTINUAL CHRIST-CENTERED SPEAKING

E. OUR Ministry BEGINS with OUR PROCLAMATION – HIM – Jesus Christ!

III. Our Practice

admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom.

A. What does Proclaiming look like?

B. What FORM does it take?

C. = Admonishing and teaching!

D. Again – Present Tense – CONTINUALLY admonishing and teaching!

E. And – one is NEGATIVE, the other POSITIVE

F. Admonishing

1. Literally: “setting the mind in proper order”
 - a) Put into the mind correct thinking =Correcting
2. = WARNING about PRACTICE
3. = 2 components: WARNING and TEACHING / CORRECTING the mind
4. Every hear of “Nouthetic counseling”?
 - a) Nou-the-teo is the root here!
5. Since this is the FORM of proclaiming HIM
 - a) = Christ is SUFFICIENT to CORRECT ANYONE about ANYTHING spiritually!

6. Ever had someone WARN you IN ORDER to STIMULATE you TO DO SOMETHING Positive? = admonishing
7. How did Paul DESCRIBE his 3 YEARS of Ministry in Ephesus?

[Ac 20:31](#) “Therefore be on the alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears.

 - a) 3 years of ADMONISHING!
8. Fortunately, this admonishing is just for Pastors to do, right? WRONG!

[Col 3:16](#) Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

 - a) BOTH words here – teaching and admonishing!
 - b) SO – when Paul gets to the application section HE COMMANDS ALL CHRISTIANS to ADMONISH!
 - c) BUT –what is the KEY requirement to admonishing?
 - d) A: the WORD of CHRIST is richly dwelling in you!
9. OK, so we all do it, BUT it is rare to have to WARN someone, right? NO!
10. PARENTS - one of 2 ESSENTIALS in parenting

[Eph 6:4](#) Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

 - a) Before leave this verse – want you to see HOW “tied-out” the NT is!
 - b) Col 1:28 – We Proclaim Him – Jesus Christ – right?
 - c) Eph 6:4 raising our Children – what do we do?
 - d) A: bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.
 - e) Did you hear that? “of the Lord”
 - f) What is PAUL’S SPECIFIC INSTRUCTION to Parents?
 - (1) “of the Lord” = specific reference to JESUS CHRIST!
 - g) Your ministry to your Children – IS THE PERSON of JESUS CHRIST!
 - (1) Won’t do the whole sermon here
 - (2) BUT teach them Christ!
 - (3) Children can relate!
 - (4) His birth
 - (5) He was a child
 - (6) He is fully man!
 - (7) Teach them His life through the Gospels
 - (8) Teach them His love for Children
 - (9) Children sat on His lap!
 - (10) THEN they can relate to His commands, the life He expects in the Epistles!
 - (11) Warn them (admonish) them of judgment before Him!
 - (12) PARENTING = TEACHING CHRIST
 - h) This is the CROWN JEWEL of Parenting that is missed in almost all parenting teaching!
11. Want to hear Paul do some SERIOUS ADMONISHING? Turn to 1 Cor 10!

1 Co 10: 1 For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea; **2** and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea; **3** and all ate the same spiritual food; **4** and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ. **5** Nevertheless, with most of them God was not well-pleased; for they were laid low in the wilderness. **6** Now these things happened as examples for us, so that we would not crave evil things as they also craved. **7** Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written, "THE PEOPLE SAT DOWN TO EAT AND DRINK, AND STOOD UP TO PLAY." **8** Nor let us act immorally, as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in one day. **9** Nor let us try the Lord, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the serpents. **10** Nor grumble, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. **11** Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction [OUR WORD – ADMONISHING], upon whom the ends of the ages have come. **12** Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall. **13** No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it. **14** Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry.

a) Anyone NOT understand Admonishing now? ☺

G. Teaching

1. Now the Positive Side!
2. Simple word "teach"
3. Remember the Great Commission

Mt 28:18 And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. **19** "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, **20** teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

4. Teaching = Fundamental discipling down for ALL believers
5. Remember – as I said– Paul puts teaching in Col 3:16

Col 3:16 Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms *and* hymns *and* spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

- a) Requirement for ALL BELIEVERS
- b) Based on being filled with the Word of Christ!
6. Teaching is SO important -EVEN a Position in the Church

Eph 4:11 And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, **12** for the equipping of the saints ...

- a) That's what I'm doing now!
- b) Problem is – people remember the position and FORGET their responsibility as ordinary Christians!
7. Also – REMEMBER the SUBJECT, the OBJECT of our TEACHING = Jesus Christ!

Col 1:28 We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ.

- a) Teaching is part of HOW we proclaim Christ!

H. "every man" – 3 TIMES! In one verse!

1. Talk about emphasis! No one is left
2. The FULL Gospel of Jesus Christ is FOR EVERY MAN
 - a) Every Unbeliever & Every Believer
 - b) ALL need [Proclaiming](#) THRU [admonishing](#) / [teaching](#)!
3. Don't try to separate these!
 - a) ALL need admonishing - NOT just unbelievers needing warning about the future of hell!
 - b) ALL need teaching - NOT just believers
 - (1) Unbelievers NEED teaching
 - (a) Teaching that allows A FULL conversion!
 - (b) FULL teaching about SIN
 - (c) FULL teaching about the need for a Savior
 - (d) FULL teaching about the plan of Salvation
 - (2) "watered-down" gospel = less-than fully TAUGHT gospel
 - (3) TEACHING gives FULL WEIGHT to the WARNING!
4. "[with all wisdom](#)"

[Col 1:28](#) We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man [with all wisdom](#),

 - a) = both CONTENT and CONDUCT
 - b) CONTENT = Don't leave ANYTHING OUT!

[Col 3:16](#) Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, [with all wisdom](#) teaching and admonishing one another

 - (1) Wisdom OF Christ THROUGH His WORD
 - (2) Christ is the WISDOM of GOD

[1 Co 1:30](#) But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption,
 - (3) When you proclaim to Unbelievers, you proclaim the Gospel as the wisdom of God!
 - (4) This is the Wisdom 1 Cor 1 contrasted to the wisdom of the world!

[1 Co 1: 18](#) For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. [...21](#) For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not *come to* know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. [22](#) For indeed Jews ask for signs and Greeks search for wisdom; [23](#) but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness, [24](#) but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. [...30](#) But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption,
 - (5) To Christians, this is the wisdom of 1 Cor 2
 - (a) The Wisdom of God – seen in Christ and His work on the Cross
 - (b) The Wisdom we understand ONLY through ILLUMINATION by the Holy Spirit
 - (c) This is how we grow!

2 Co 3:18 But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.

(d) Focus on the Glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the WISDOM of God and You grow from glory-to-glory!

c) CONDUCT = Wisdom of Col 4:5-6

Col 4:5 Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. **6** Let your speech always be with grace, *as though* seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.

(1) Proclaim, admonish, teach= Godly manner / Rational, appropriate, effective, practical

(a) Vs. fanatical, irrational, purely emotional, etc.

I.OK – what’s the PURPOSE then of Proclaiming Him - Admonishing / teaching Every man with all wisdom?

IV. Our Purpose

so that we may present every man complete in Christ.

A. “so that” = Purpose clause

B. We may present every man

1. Look back at v.22

Col 1:22 yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach—

a) Wow do we get to add to the work of Christ? NO!

2. V.22 is POSITIONAL

3. V.28 is PRACTICAL = present as MATURE

4. “every man”

a) “every” stresses individuality = every single man

b) Paul’s purpose is to go after EACH and EVERY PERSON with the SAME GOAL/PURPOSE

c) Heretics – only a select few, elite can be saved

d) Paul – my CONCERN and EFFORT is for EVERY MAN

C. Key is “complete in Christ” = mature, complete, whole – as Christ-like as possible

Php 3:12 Not that I have already obtained *it* or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.

D. We have to let the Holy Spirit do His work!

Ga 3:3 Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?

E. What does maturity look like?

Eph 4:12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; **13** until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature [same word] man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. **14** As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; **15** but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects

into Him who is the head, *even* Christ, **16** from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

1. That's COMPLETENESS – both INDIVIDUALLY and ACROSS all CHRISTIANS!
2. That's our PURPOSE, OUR GOAL of ALL MINISTRY!

F. This is the Lord's work through us!

[Heb 13:21](#) equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

G. This a place where we have to derive the meaning from the Context of Scripture and not against the clear teachings of other passages.

1. NKJ translates the word as “perfect” and that's not correct
2. NAS = Complete, ESV = Mature

H. Of course, if I asked anyone here if they felt they had any chance of presenting their SPOUSE PERFECT to Christ, you'd be glad we're only striving for the nearly impossible goal of MATURITY! 😊

I. We'll see later in Colossians that this is Epaphras' burden in addition to Paul's

[Col 4:12](#) Epaphras, who is one of your number, a bonds slave of Jesus Christ, sends you his greetings, always laboring earnestly for you in his prayers, that you may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God.

1. Here NAS gets it wrong too!

J. I think that the biggest application of our PURPOSE is the nature of it

1. Most of us are hit-and-run Christians
2. Admonish you and walk away
3. Give you a verse and walk away
4. To present Christians “complete” takes DISCIPLING
5. = investing in individuals FOR YEARS
6. STAYING WITH THEM UNTIL THEY ARE MATURE!
7. If you do that
 - a) You'll have to learn Scripture to TEACH
 - b) You'll EARN the RIGHT to ADMONISH along the way
8. EVEN have to do this with UNBELIEVERS – stay with them FOR YEARS of EVANGELISM

K. BUT This also teaches us CAPACITY!

1. EVERY Believer has the CAPACITY to be Mature
2. Maturity is NOT just for a select few
3. ALL can grow in Christ to ADMONISH AND TEACH

L. Finally – REMEMBER this PUTS a GOAL on ALL we DO

1. ALL DISCIPLING, ALL COUNSELING, ALL TEACHING, etc has a goal
2. GOAL/PURPOSE = Mature Christians who can be AS CHRIST-LIKE as POSSIBLE on this side of ETERNITY

[Ga 4:19](#) My children, with whom I am again in labor until Christ is formed in you—

M. Listen to Paul express this purpose!

1 Th 2:19 For who is our hope or joy or crown of exultation? Is it not even you, in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming?

N. We should approach our ministry the same way!

O. BUT at what price do we do our ministry?

V. Our Price

For this purpose also I labor, striving

A. “For this Purpose” = Presenting every man complete in Christ

B. “I Labor” = Toil to exhaustion

1. When you study Paul’s life you see this labor!
2. At Ephesus – 3 years of ministry
 - a) Taught all afternoon
 - b) Came back in the evening
 - c) Then went house-to-house until late into the night
 - d) up even later praying, crying, concerned over his people
3. Paul’s testimony to Labor

Ga 4:11 I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain.

1 Th 2:9 For you recall, brethren, our labor and hardship, *how* working night and day so as not to be a burden to any of you, we proclaimed to you the gospel of God.

1 Co 15:58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not *in vain* in the Lord.

4. When Paul lists his ministry travails in 2 Cor 11, he says he was in “FAR MORE ABUNDANT LABORS” than them...
5. I don’t see much, if any, working until exhaustion in Christianity today – People stop when Inconvenienced or tired on ANY day

C. “striving”

1. Athletic term most common to wrestling!
2. Root = agonidzo = AGONY!
3. Wrestling is great illustration
 - a) 100% effort against the 100% effort of your opponent
 - b) Completely exhausting every muscle of your body
4. Paul – ministry is 100% effort for all the years of our life!

2 Ti 4:7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith;

1 Ti 4:9 It is a trustworthy statement deserving full acceptance. **10** For it is for this we labor and strive, because we have fixed our hope on the living God...

1 Ti 6:12 Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

Col 4:12 Epaphras, who is one of your number, a bonds slave of Jesus Christ, sends you his greetings, always laboring [striving] earnestly for you in his prayers, that you may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God.

1 Co 9:25 Everyone who competes [our word] in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then *do it* to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable.

5. What do you have here? TWO words
 - a) Nearly synonyms! THEREFORE = EMPHASIS!
 - b) And VERY STRONG INTENSE WORDS
 - c) BOTH present tense = CONTINUALLY laboring and striving!

D. IF you are really doing what God has called you to do, you should feel like you have a SECOND JOB

1. Consumes all your time and energy
2. Leaves you exhausted
3. One you can never retire or withdraw from
4. THEN AND ONLY THEN can you say you fought the good fight like Paul!
5. Honestly, this doesn't describe Christians today.
6. Examine your life and see if it describes you!

E. BUT before you give up hope to ever be what God EXPECTS you to be Remember WHO is REALLY the POWER in this!

VI. Our Power

according to His power, which mightily works within me.

A. How did Paul LABOR and STRIVE?

B. Literally: according to his energizing that is energizing in me in power

C. TWO Power words here

1. "works" = energia = root for energize
 - a) Abbott-Smith = "operative power"
 - b) =Active power, power in Action
2. "power" = dunamis = root for dynamite
 - a) Focuses on HOW MUCH power
 - b) = CAPACITY, AMOUNT of POWER
 - c) Abbott-Smith = "Potential Power"
3. Paul puts different words for power together often
 - a) For emphasis – LOTS of POWER
 - b) For completeness – ALL KINDS of POWER
4. IOW – I HAVE ALL THE POWER I need to get Christ's work done – no matter how hard it feels to me!

D. Remember Paul's prayer for the Colossians in 1:9-12?

Col 1:9 For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, **10** so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; **11** strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously

1. No one is to do ministry in their OWN POWER!
2. WITHOUT God's POWER, you won't do HIS MINISTRY!

E. Ever feel TOO TIRED to minister to someone?

1. Would rather kick feet up and rest?
2. BUT commitment to the Lord drives you do it?
3. Can't imagine you'll be anything but even more dead after?
4. SO – you take the first step – based on commitment
5. THEN by the time you are done – you are revitalized and energized and feel great!
6. Happened to me this week – Thursday Bible Study
 - a) After 8.5 hours on the phone
 - b) After a very long day before
 - c) Knew I'd be late for Bible Study at 6
 - d) Left at 5:45 exhausted– arrived 6:20
 - e) Got home at 8pm feeling great and felt great on Friday morning!

F. TRUST Christ for the Power – even when you are truly exhausted – even long term exhaustion.