



# MONDAY 19 JUNE 2017

SERIES: COLOSSIANS – LIFE IN CHRIST

## Read: Colossians 1:24-25

### Plug In...

It has to be said, Paul cannot be saying he (or us) contribute to Christ's work on the cross – i.e. Christ's sufferings. This would fly in the face of Paul's other teaching (no less the argument of Colossians 2 coming up).

Most helpful to understand this verse is remembering the Old Testament timetable. First, the promise of the 'latter day' (or 'last day', or 'the Day'). That day has complete victory over evil ([Genesis 49:1-12](#) brings these 'latter day' promises; plus ties it to a king from Judah). Second, a picture builds up throughout the Old Testament that the time of this Messiah-King will be a time of 'tribulations' associated with the age. Even a final flurry of intense tribulations before finally the kingdom in all its glory is revealed. A quick track through Daniel shows: Daniel explains Nebuchadnezzar's dream by saying this will take place, literally in the "*latter days*" – [Daniel 2:28-29; 45](#). Daniel again receives visions of a future period of distress and deception for God's people by an end-time opponent – [Daniel 7:21-25; 8:17-26](#). The final chapters of Daniel (11-12) speak of a climax of final tribulation for the saints, and then a resurrection for the righteous ([Daniel 12:1-4](#)).

The literal word Paul uses here in Colossians, sometimes given as 'afflictions', is 'tribulations' (v.24). Lots of language within Daniel used about this end time for the world is picked up by Paul in these verses: "mystery", "saints", "administration" and "tribulations".

## **Chew It Over...**

Does Paul see his present persecution, i.e. in prison for taking the gospel to the Gentiles, as part of the expected period of tribulation associated with the time of the Messiah? Does he understand that the tribulations are limited – he is going through what is still lacking from the fixed timetable (e.g. [Daniel 12:5-13](#) cf. [Mark 13:19-20](#)). Paul understands his place taking the message to others evokes persecution from the end-time opponent/s, and that has to take place until God's message is fully known (v.25). Then this age will give way to the age of resurrection and glory with the Messiah.

We must align our thinking with God's. Having this end-time framework helps us place the personal suffering and rejection we get for being Christians. Knowing this framework resolves us to keep sharing the message. For tribulations are part of the entire plan, and it ends with resurrection for the righteous.

## **Prayer Suggestion**

See that sharing the gospel is a spiritual battle. Pray for resilience to keep sharing the gospel, even as active opposition will arise. Ask God to intervene on those we know are in the clutches of the Evil One being dragged down to hell. Deliver them from the evil one, Lord!



# TUESDAY 20 JUNE 2017

SERIES: COLOSSIANS – LIFE IN CHRIST

## Read: Colossians 1:25-27

### **Plug In...**

'Mystery' in the Bible doesn't mean hard to understand, but something that was told by God in the past, but remains hidden until a future time when explained.

The mystery is not that Gentiles would be included. The Old Testament spoke of this. The mystery is that all the promises of a hope of glory takes place in Christ. It was Christ's death and resurrection that is the blessing to Israel and it is now among the Gentiles at Colossians.

### **Chew It Over...**

Given this, why would Paul rejoice in sufferings (v.24)?

### **Prayer Suggestion**

May it be that we too understand the time has come. That Gentiles are being included. God, please help us to orientate our lives around this message now going out. Help us to make it fully known to those around us. May we do this, even should it cost us, cause us suffering. May we rejoice.



# WEDNESDAY 21 JUNE 2017

SERIES: COLOSSIANS – LIFE IN CHRIST

## Read: Colossians 1:28-29

### Plug In...

The goal is to present everyone mature in Christ. The goal is not ethically perfect, or morally cleaned up, but mature on the day when people are present before God.

Paul does this using energy provided by God (*cf.* [1:11](#)).

### Chew It Over...

Consider how we often use the word 'mature'. What notions do we have?

Think over the things Paul has said about Christ and what he has urged those in Colossae. What would Paul mean by 'mature'? What does mature look like on the day Christ returns?

### Prayer Suggestion

Ask the Lord to help us catch the same enthusiasm and focus Paul has for this end goal. Ask the Lord to energise you for this through His power.



The Lakes

THURSDAY 22 JUNE 2017

SERIES: COLOSSIANS – LIFE IN CHRIST

## Read: Colossians 2:1-3

### Plug In...

Paul seems to be talking about his emotional-spiritual struggle he has for the Colossians and those in Laodicea (a town down the road).

Notice what he wants. Their hearts to be encouraged. For them to be joined together. *So that*, they may have the riches of assured understating and the knowledge of God's mystery.

### Chew It Over...

Lots of people critique church. Church gatherings – the people – are not perfect. Yet, God's mechanism is that Christians join together. If we have issues with meeting regularly and participating in church, we're missing out. We miss out substantially. First, it has to be said, to not meet and care for other Christians in our church regularly means we are critiquing God's mechanism for advancement of the gospel. More than that, it is the church that God expended the most profound energy on ([Acts 20:28](#)).

Second, what does Paul say is promised for the Christian that leans into his or her church family? What reservoir can be tapped?

### Prayer Suggestion

Struggle in prayer for these things. For yourself, for your Christian brothers and sisters.



The Lakes

FRIDAY 23 JUNE 2017

SERIES: COLOSSIANS – LIFE IN CHRIST

## Read: Colossians 2:3 & Psalm 73

### Plug In...

Verse 2 spoke of the vast pool of riches of God that a Christian has access to if they press into the body of Christ. Following this statement, is one that asserts that in Christ all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are contained.

### Chew It Over...

Think of all the things one puts their energies into. Would you agree that at the deepest level, we are seeking treasure? We seek out wisdom with the purpose to find an elixir of life. Most of our efforts are tied up with getting to the centre of satisfaction. If only we could find the wisdom to unlock where that is found.

Sometimes, as a Christian, we find ourselves still asking that question, still going on that search. What is going on for us if we read verse three and find our search does not come to an end?

### Prayer Suggestion

Lord help me to read Colossians 1 again grasping these statements of reality. Help me not to slip. When I feel there is a huge gap between these statements and my reality, I ask for you to hold me fast.



## WEEKEND 24-25 JUNE 2017

SERIES: COLOSSIANS – LIFE IN CHRIST

### Read: Colossians 2:4-5

#### Plug In...

[Colossians 2:3](#) is a colossal claim: *In Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.*

Paul says this statement so that no one will deceive them with fine-sounding arguments.

#### Chew It Over...

Paul has been saying in Colossians 1 all these things to centre us on Christ alone. He's said that Christ is God manifest; that all our reality is caught up in Jesus Christ; that Christ is the end of the gospel message, the focal point of the gospel message down through Scripture; the new creation dynamic, which will involve reconciling everything (even removing evil and opposition), occurs in Christ.

Paul has said all this so that we have a high view of who Christ is, that He is God, and that He is also the supreme human. He has all the power of God and creates the world, and creates and brings in and enables the new world. He is the example of ultimate living for a human, someone with the deepest satisfaction one can have within a created universe. He is the only one that saves, He is the only way for sinful people to be included in the hope of glory and the ultimate riches and treasures of existence (physically, materially, emotionally, psychologically, spiritually).

Anything that drops lower than Christ's absolute supremacy and exclusivity is false teaching. Paul says all this so that we are attuned to even the fine-sounding arguments, even the persuasive arguments. Check what you hear and believe against what Colossians 1 says about Christ.

## **Prayer Suggestion**

Ask the Lord to work His power and energy in us so that we and those we love, our community, our neighbours, may enjoy this by staying steadfast and not shifted away from who Christ is – and the hope of the gospel we heard.