

Sermon Series: Colossians

Sermon Text: Colossians 1:24–2:5 Stewardship of the Word of God

As the body of Christ you can mature in love and wisdom under Christ's gospel-ministers.

1) Christ's gospel-ministers exercise a stewardship from God proclaiming Christ's Word.

- a) The Office of the Gospel Ministry:
 - i) 1:23 **"the gospel . . . of which I, Paul, became a minister"**
 - ii) 1:25 **"the stewardship** from God that was given to me for you, to make **the word of God** fully known"
 - iii) MINISTERIAL
- b) The Conduct of the Gospel Ministry:
 - i) 1:27 "make known"
 - ii) 1:28 "proclaim"
 - (1) "warning everyone"
 - (2) "teaching everyone with all wisdom"
 - iii) DECLARATIVE
- c) The Content of the Ministry:
 - i) 1:25 "the word of God fully known"
 - ii) 1:26 "mystery hidden . . . now revealed to His saints"
 - iii) 1:27 "Christ in you [Gentiles], the hope of glory"
 - iv) 1:28 "Him we proclaim"
 - v) 2:2-3 "God's mystery, which is Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge"
 - vi) CHRIST IN WHOLE BIBLE AS HOPE OF THE NATIONS
- d) **Application:**
 - i) "All church power, whether exercised by the body in general, or by representation, is only ministerial and declarative since the Holy Scriptures are the only rule of faith and practice. No church judicatory may make laws to bind the conscience. All courts may err through human frailty, yet it rests upon them to uphold the laws of Scripture though this obligation be lodged with fallible men." (BCO-Preface II.7)
 - ii) Christ is the revelation of God and His wisdom.

2) Christ's gospel-ministers exercise a stewardship from God maturing Christ's Church.

- a) 1:24-25 "for your sake . . . for the sake of His body, that is, the church, of which I became a minister . . . given to me for you"
- b) 1:28 "that we may present everyone mature in Christ"
 - i) 2:2a "that their hearts may be **encouraged**"
 - ii) 2:2b "being knit together in **love**"
 - iii) 2:2c "for all the wealth of full assurance of **understanding** and **knowledge** of God's mystery, which is Christ"
 - iv) 2:5 "your **good order** and the firmness of your **faith** in Christ"
- c) 2:4 "that no one may delude you with plausible arguments"

d) **Application:**

- i) Elders keep watch over your souls (Heb. 13:17) and watch out for wolves (Acts 20:28-30). So obey them and submit to them with humility before Christ.
- ii) Are you increasing in love for one another?
- iii) Are you increasing in knowledge of the Bible? Understanding/insight of the gospel? Is your confidence in Christ firm?
- iv) Are you cooperating with each other in the exercise of your gifts?

3) Christ's gospel-ministers exercise a stewardship from God enjoying Christ's afflictions.

a) 1:24 "Now I **rejoice** in my **sufferings** . . . in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in **Christ's afflictions**"

- i) No lack in the atoning suffering and death of Christ.
- ii) Lack in the Messianic woes/tribulations that accompany the rage of the passing kingdom of darkness against the enduring kingdom of light.

b) 1:29 "For this I **toil, struggling** with all His energy that He powerfully works within me."

c) 2:1 "how great a **struggle** I have"

d) **Application:**

- i) Ministry is meant to be hard work so that we learn to depend on Christ's power.
- ii) Ministry is meant to be a joy as we share in the sufferings of Christ.
- iii) The body of Christ matures through affliction/tribulation as we continue under the gospel-ministry.

Doxology: Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of His glory with great joy, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen. (Jude 24-25).