

Colossians Series

[Sun. June 14, 2015] Colossians Series, Col. 2.1-5 – Craig A. Thurman

Most agreement for paragraph divisions (cf. p.2 above) are as follows:
2.1, 6, 8, 16, 20.

Paul's instruction in the letter to the Colossians continues. Keep in mind that the things that we have been reading in this letter since verse 9, are that his prayers for them would be answered of the Lord that they ***might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding ... to walk worthy ... being fruitful and increasing in the knowledge of God ... strengthened ... to all patience and longsuffering with joy ... giving thanks unto the Father.*** (In light of this, consider the letter to the Laodiceans in the book of Revelation. They've evidently been deceived, moved from the faith of Christ, and rendered ineffectual in their Christian walk. This would seem to be the very end of which Paul warns them against. Error isn't sudden lapse, but a gradual one, but growing one.)

Again, the last main thoughts appear to be (vss.19-22):

For it pleased the Father ... to reconcile all things to himself by Jesus Christ ... to present you holy, and unblameable, and unproveable in his sight. Or, perhaps verse 21, *you (Gentiles) ... hath he reconciled.* (vs. 21) From reconciliation there are a number of sub points that we might summarize it like this:

They should *continue in the faith ... and hope of the gospel* (23)

Paul was a minister of the gospel and suffered on their behalf (24)

Paul was a minister of the church to them to fulfil the Word of God. (25)

God would make known to the saints (probably for the Jewish believers edification) that through His Word preached Christ is revealed to be in the Gentiles (27) (It is only by the preaching of the Word that the saints can know others have faith in Christ. [2Ti.1.10])

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We preach and teach Christ (therefore) to every man (meaning indiscriminately) for their maturation in Christ Jesus. (28)

I labor preaching. (29)

So the second chapter continues the thought that begins in verse 25 and continues through 29:

Chapter 2

γὰρ

1 ¶ For

Matthew Poole Commentary on the Holy Bible, vol.3, p.714, 'For; this causal particle refers to what he had said just before just in the former chapter.'

For this cause or reason, that is, for preaching the gospel and teaching the Word of God

The saints (vs. 26 *but is now made manifest to the saints; probably refers to the Jewish saints*) through the preaching of the Word know that Christ is in or among the Gentiles by their faith in Him. And,

To present those same ones perfect/mature in Christ Jesus.

There is no better way to prove whether one truly has faith in Christ but through proper gospel preaching. And there is no better way to perfect the saints in Christ than through faithful teaching of the Word of God.

An admonishment for us all:

How do we view the Word of God? How do we view the work of God? It is not another *thing* that people do, mixed in along with this party, this program, this function. The churches must be faithful, we must keep the faith. And that is the focus of this chapter. Peel off all that is unnecessary, and all that we do, especially all that we do as a church, every gather, none excepted, be directed by the love of Christ. Every meeting that

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takes place in this building must be Christ-centered. It matters not that it is a graduation ceremony, a wedding, a game night, a funeral service, every single thing that takes place in our building which is known in this community as the Lord's church's meeting place must be conducted as if it were our Sunday service. No exceptions. All profanity, all slang, music, lyrics, is out. It ought to be out in our homes, but it cannot be allowed here. Not any longer. We have had it take place. It is a shame, I'm embarrassed when it happens, and we should repent.

And what if we all meet somewhere else? Brethren it just doesn't make any difference. I do not want to sit down with you and drink a beer, smoke a cigarette, talk like a sailor, share my country/rock tunes in any gathering of the saints, no matter where we gather. It shouldn't happen whether it is on the creek bank or we sit around a camp fire at our houses. We ought to do differently when we're gathered. If we want to do such things when we're with your family (wife, son's and daughters, not extended), at your house, in your car, that's between you and the Lord. But when we entertain the saints it is in everyone's interest that we do better.

Refocus our attention on the immediate context:

For this cause or reason, that is, for preaching the gospel and teaching the Word of God

The saints (*vs. 26 but is now made manifest to the saints*; probably refers to the Jewish saints) through the preaching of the Word know that Christ is in or among the Gentiles by their faith in Him. And,

To present those same ones perfect/mature in Christ Jesus.

I would

I would, θέλω; 1st p s, pres, subj of θέλω; expresses the *will, desire*.

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that ye knew what great conflict
how great [a] race, contention, fight, agony, 1.29

knew, εἰδέναι; perf 1, infin of εἶδέω; of the 12 times this word is translated it is only this once *knew*. Otherwise it is *know* or *to know*. Perhaps that is because of the preceding subjunctive mood.

what great, ἡλίκον; acc, sing, masc of ἡλίκος;

ἡλίκην in Ja.3.5 (only other text where ἡλίκος is used in the N.T.)
Jas 3:5 Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great ἡλίκην a matter a little fire kindleth!

ἀγῶνα; acc sing of ἀγών; *Phl. 1.30; Col.2.1 conflict; 1Thes.2.2 contention; 1Ti.6.12; 2Ti.4.7 fight; He.12.1 race; see also the noun once used in Lk.22.44 ἀγωνία, agony; the verb ἀγωνίζομαι, Lk.13.24; 1Co.9.25; Col.1.29, strive; Jn.18.36; 1Ti.6.12, fight; 2Ti.4.7 fought; Col.4.12, laboring fervently; cf. 1.29, ἀγωνιζόμενος, striving.*

ἔχω περὶ ὑμῶν καὶ τῶν ἐν Λαοδικείᾳ
I have for you, and for them at Laodicea,
concerning

Which church we know the state of years later through the writings of the apostle John in the Book of Revelation. It did not fare well for this church. (Re. 3.14-20)

καὶ ὅσοι οὐχ ἑώρακασιν τὸ πρόσωπόν μου ἐν σαρκί
and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh;

have ... seen, ἐώρακασιν; 3rd p pl, perf of ὁράω; is found in two other N.T. texts (Lk.9.36 *had seen*; Jn.15.24 *have ... seen*).

The opinions among the commentators vary as to whether or not Paul had met face to face with any of these saints to whom he now writes. Obviously it is not stated as clearly as it could have been, and perhaps that

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serves a special purpose of God. It is really inconsequential to lay eyes on Paul. He has the same desire for them all. But my opinion is that Paul's reference to those who had not seen his face acknowledges those who had come to faith in Christ *since* he had been with them personally. Asia and Phrygia, depending on which maps we use, had major cities that Paul must have visited. Colossae and Laodicea were such cities. It is true that on the second missionary journey Paul, Silas, and Timothy were forbidden of the Holy Spirit to go into Asia (Acts 16.6), but there are Scriptures which would lead us to conclude that he must have visited them in person.

Ac 18:23 And after he had spent some time there, he departed, and went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples.

*Ac 20:18 And when they were come to him, he said unto them, Ye know, **from the first day that I came into Asia**, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons ...*

*1Ti 6:21 Which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace be with thee. Amen. « The first to Timothy was **written from Laodicea, which is the chiefest city of Phrygia Pacatiana**. »* (I am not claiming inspiration for these postscripted remarks, but only cite it as part of a witness that Paul likely visited these places personally at some point during his missionary travels.)

Whatever our conclusion, more important than this issue, Paul thought the Colossian saints, the Laodicean saints, and all the saints that had not seen him face to face should know how great a conflict he endured concerning them (as Gentiles).

Eph 3:13 Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory.

There is not a specific instance of suffering recorded in Scripture that Paul endured on account of these churches specifically, Colossae or Laodicea, but his remarks mean that he suffered greatly, mostly from his own countrymen, on account of his taking the gospel of God to the heathen. He

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endured this for taking it to the Gentiles as a whole; not for taking it to some of them. Remember, this is while he is in Rome. This is a reference to the things that are now past. What he went through for them/us. Early in the ministry to the Gentiles he suffered the shipwrecks, a day adrift at sea, the three beatings with rods, stoned and left for dead, five times suffered he 40 stripes save one, the perils of robbers, of his own countrymen, in the city, in the desert, exhausted from travels, anxieties, fastings, thirsts, destitute of sufficient clothing, cold and naked: this was for the Gentiles because of his love for them to come to the faith of Christ. This is the power of Jesus Christ working in others to take the Word of the gospel to the regions beyond until the day of Christ.

Why did he do this for the Gentiles? He did it because the Lord had put it in his heart to call out the people of God by the preaching of Christ regardless of their ethnicity.

Eph 3:2 If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward ...

Col 1:25 Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God ...

2Th 2:14 Whereunto (to which truth) he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Lord had laid it upon his heart to preach *to every man repentance and remission of sins* through Jesus Christ.

Θέλω γὰρ ὑμᾶς εἰδέναι ἠλίκον ἀγῶνα ἔχω περὶ ὑμῶν καὶ τῶν ἐν Λαοδικείᾳ καὶ ὅσοι οὐχ ἑώρακασιν τὸ πρόσωπόν μου ἐν σαρκί

2 That **their** hearts

This possessive pronoun, *their*, refers to each antecedent, *you*, *them*, and *many*, and not only those who had not seen his face.

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The Gregg Reference Manual, p.229, #1049, b., 'Use a plural pronoun when the antecedent consists of two nouns joined by *and*.'

might be comforted, (Comforted how?)

παρακληθῶσιν; 3rd p pl, aor 1, subj, pass of παρακαλέω; expressing the future prospect and duty to be called near ... in love.

Paul's conflict for them was so that they might be comforted. That the saints be comforted or encouraged in spiritual things is so important, and he, by the grace of God, suffered much so that they might be. There is enough comfort in the things of the world, and it is so temporal. Doubtless we could do with far less of this comfort. But what of spiritual comfort? Do we receive encouragement to spiritual things? Do we care? The Word of God alone supplies that comfort. Error leads us from spiritual things. It mystifies the truth, conceals it, confuses it. Error is like a placebo. It looks like the real thing, it is foisted as the same thing, but unlike the placebo it is a poison that would hinder or quench spiritual growth rather than promote it. Error is not innocuous. Those deceived think it is because they have been duped from the truth already. Paul taught these churches the truth, and thereby has prepared them to withstand error by the following remarks.

being knit together

being joined together, being compacted, being **proved**, **being instructed**.

συμβιβασθέντων; gen, pl, masc, part, aor 1, **pass** of συμβιβάζω; **συν** together, with + βιβάζω LXX, *Lev. 18.23; 20.16 connection* (as in intercourse; in this case bestiality); **συμβιβάζω**, Acts 9.22 **proving** that this is very Christ; 16.10 **assuredly gathering** that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel unto them; 1Co.2.16 who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may **instruct** him; Eph.4.16 **compacted**; Col.2.2 **being knit together**; 19 and **knit together**.

Isn't this something that should be working within the hearts of His people? Perhaps this is synonymous with the Greek, ἐκκλησία, church. It does

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seem to indicate a knitting together of the fellowship of the saints. But this is more a result of another cause: being knit together in the love of God.

Consider the structure of this sentence:

I have great conflict for you, that (meaning, purpose, ἵνα, hina, *in order that*, or, *so that*) your hearts might be comforted to the acknowledgment (a more extensive knowledge, ἐπίγνωσις; unto the knowledge) of the mystery of God ... (meaning, to know Him more).

Being knit together in love, and to all understanding tells them **how their hearts are comforted**.

If I might say this: our union together as a church, and the assurance that we receive for comprehending him more are the riches that are there, for us, in Christ.

Eph.3.13 Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory.

14 ¶ For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

15 Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,

*16 That he would grant you, **according to the riches of his glory**, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;*

*17 That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded **in love**,*

18 May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;

*19 And **to know the love of Christ**, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.*

But that union in the church is nothing when we lose that unity with Christ. The only way to truly manifest love for the Lord is first by obeying his Word.

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ἐν ἀγάπῃ
in love,

ἐν ἀγάπῃ is found in the N.T. thirteen times; *in love (9); by love (1); with charity (1); in charity (1); in the love (1)*

When we love God first, we shall love others. A sister here sends out her emails with this postscript: 'We love others best, when we love God most!' And the only way to manifest that we truly love God is by obeying His commandments. True Christian love cannot be detached from the Word of God; not and remain true:

Joh 14:15 If ye love me, keep my commandments.

Joh 15:10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

What is a Christian life without this foundation?

1Co 16:14 Let all your things be done with charity. (I just don't know what can be excluded from that statement.)

*Ga 5:13 For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but **by love serve one another.***

1Pe 4:8 And above (πρό, before, preceding) all things have fervent charity ἀγάπην among yourselves: for charity ἀγάπη shall cover the multitude of sins. (This never said as some would teach, 'See, doctrine doesn't matter.' Doctrine does matter! But what is doctrine if we haven't love for God and others.)

*Lu 11:42 But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the **love ἀγάπην of God:** these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.*

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1Co 13:13 And now abideth faith, hope, charity ἀγάπη, these three; but the greatest of these is charity ἀγάπη.

Col 3:14 And above (ἐπι, upon, about; to cap ...) all these things put on charity ἀγάπην, which is the bond of perfectness. (Forbear and forgive putting love upon each one. [3.13])

καὶ εἰς πάντα πλοῦτον τῆς πληροφορίας τῆς συνέσεως
and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding,
still concerning comfort

all, root πᾶς; all manner, all means, whatsoever is found in Christ.

riches, πλοῦτον; acc sing of πλοῦτος; KJV always translated riches (23);
Riches of the world are deceitful and can choke out those things that ought to be increasing in the life of the saints. But oh how we like them. Be warned. When they begin to slip how are we, who are we? What do we become? (Mt.13.22; Lk.8.12)

Ro 11:33 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

Now we learn what those riches are:

full assurance, πληροφορίας; gen sing of πληροφορία; πλήρης full + φορέω to wear, bear; KJV full assurance (2), assurance (1); literally means full bearing; this is what we find in Christ; this is what He is to us ... full assurance.

understanding, συνέσεως; gen sing of σύνεσις; KJV understanding (6), knowledge (1); could be translated of the knowledge; this speaks of our comprehension of spiritual things;

Understanding speaks of comprehension. (Mt. 13.13-15, 19, 51; Lk. 8.17; Acts 7.25; How we live and what we do is undeniable proof how we comprehend spiritual things. We can say whatever we will, but

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nothing is more telling about our comprehension of spiritual things than how we order our lives. Doctors and lawyers were amazed at the understanding of our Lord when he spoke to them in the temple being a youth of 12 years of age. Understanding, or the lack of it, is a hard thing to disguise. It comes out in our dress (modest or immodest), in our speech (foul, coarse, harsh, kind, edifying), in shows in how we order our family (how we talk to our children, how our children are allowed to behave, how husbands and wives interact, choices we make for spouses, choices we make for education, careers, all tell our spiritual comprehension), where we go, and what we do, whether we have a predominately earthly, carnal understanding or a genuinely spiritual one. Spiritual understanding is blessed upon those who **desire** it. The Lord will give it to those who will walk with Him.

Pv.4.5 Get wisdom, get understanding: forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth.

6 Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee: love her, and she shall keep thee.

7 Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.

8 Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her.

9 She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace: a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee.

The Lord reveals it by His grace to His own. (Eph.3.1-7 *understanding* is the same Greek word translated *knowledge*; 2Ti. 2.7 *understanding*, meaning comprehension) Walking with the world, talking like the world, dressing like the world, ignorance of Bible doctrine, church truth is evidence enough of a lack of spiritual comprehension. Paul addressed these churches, its every member, as if each one should know these things for themselves. He addressed the churches, not preachers; the whole congregation.

As our comprehension (understanding) of spiritual things is, so is our assurance. The less our comprehension is, the less assurance we

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have. It is like preparing for a test. Students who have applied themselves to their studies are far more confident than those who do not. The one equals the other; study-confidence; no study-no confidence. Years ago I had the need to determine a level line over a distance of about 30 feet. With no transit available, I bought a kit from the market that mostly consisted of a long clear tube and clamps for the ends. It was just an elongated bubble level. Keeping both ends elevated you could mark level lines at either end. You see, the water level on the one end of the hose precisely equaled the water level on the other end. You can take that to the bank. That is assurance. So, as we grow to comprehend spiritual things our assurance grows with it.

When we want to walk with the Lord; when we really mean business; when we have a desire for Him to be honored in our lives in every circumstance, then He opens to us more of the riches that are in Him for us. Paul said this so that their hearts might be comforted to a particular end ... The following is of utmost importance and is developed more in the chapter.

εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν τοῦ μυστηρίου τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ
to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of

Χριστοῦ
Christ;

unto the acknowledgement, or, (as shown below) unto the knowledge, meaning that the result of our fuller comprehension and assurance is to know Him more intimately, intensively or extensively. (probably all three),

Again, grammatical structure:

I have great conflict for you, that your hearts might be (the potentiality) comforted ... unto the acknowledgment or, unto the knowledge ... of God.

unto the acknowledgement, ἐπίγνωσιν; acc sing of ἐπίγνωσις; ἐπί upon + γνωσις knowledge, science (1); γνωσις is the time, or not, of being

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informed and aware of the truth; cf. 1.9, 10, ἐπίγνωσις; ἐπίγνωσις, KJV knowledge (16), acknowledge (4); five times is used in the N.T. (Col.2.2 unto the acknowledgment; 3.10 in knowledge; 1Ti.2.4 unto the knowledge; 2Ti.2.25 to the acknowledging; Tit. 3.7 to the knowledge); we might use the word experiential. By that we mean that we become living witnesses of the true God. We become personally acquainted with Him who lives in us all ... whether Jew or Gentiles.

the mystery:

1Ti 3:16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

Albert Barnes, ‘...hitherto unrealed truth, related to the fact that God subsisted in more persons than one, as “Father,” and as “Christ.” ... In relation to this, they were in special danger of being corrupted by the prevalent philosophy, as it is in relation to this that, error of Christian doctrine usually commences.’

The mystery 1.27 was the mystery of God revealed, which was that Christ would, for God, dwell in the people of all nations. But here the mystery is that which is concealed from the view of others concerning Himself. You know, no one can know God apart from Jesus Christ. No one can know God, the God of the Bible but Christians. It is really that simple. God cannot be known through *knowledge, certain specialized physical and breathing exercises, martial arts, or religion*. Without Jesus Christ He remains a mystery. But by Him He is revealed. I think that the world can only know God in His general revelation, that He exists, and that he is powerful.

Ro 1:20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse ...

Ex.14.19 And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them:

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20 And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these: so that the one came not near the other all the night.

There is no doubt that Jesus Christ is manifested in the O.T.; consider the *tent in the wilderness, the bread, the vessels, or the Rock that followed them, the water from the Rock, He was that prophet that was to come.* But He was hidden from their view. Israel didn't comprehend Him then. And only they have since the Lord revealed it by His Spirit in the New Testament. Now we know. But the world still doesn't know except they be born again of the Spirit of God.

We hear Jews and Gentiles without Christ speak of God with a term like, *whoever He or she is.* That God is *everything.* He is the plant, the sky, the earth, *mother earth,* the sun. They cannot tell. But God is the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. How do we know? The Son has revealed to us the Father, and we know God as a result.

*Lu 10:22 All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and **he to whom the Son will reveal him.***

*2Co 4:6 **For God,** who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, **hath shined** in our hearts, to give **the light** of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*

ἵνα παρακληθῶσιν αἱ καρδίαι αὐτῶν συμβιβασθέντων ἐν ἀγάπῃ καὶ εἰς πάντα πλοῦτον τῆς πληροφορίας τῆς συνέσεως εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν τοῦ μυστηρίου τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ

3 In whom

That is *in Christ* ... There is no extensive, not to mention an intimate knowledge of God apart from the revelation of Him in Jesus Christ. Men but grope about in darkness to discern God, but for Christ He is unknown.

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are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

*treasures, θησαυροὶ; nom pl of θησαυρός; from this word we have the English thesaurus, a book or collection of words; the verb θησαυρίζω, is lay up, keep in **store**, and heap treasure; θησαυρός refers to those special, significant collections whether it is good or evil.*

All of the treasures, the *stores* of wisdom and knowledge for the people of God are laid up in Jesus Christ, and for no others. Everything that the people of God need for life and godliness is stored or cached for them in Him.

*2Pe.1.2 Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge (ἐπίγνωσις, extensive knowledge; not only have we been made aware of God in Christ, but we have gone on to know Him more in experience) of God, and of Jesus our Lord,
3 According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness (not independently of Him, but always depending), through the knowledge (ἐπίγνωσις) of him that hath called us to glory and virtue ...*

wisdom, σοφίας; the ability to be able to *discern*, or make sound *judgments*; it marks a pronounced, gifted intellect or intuition; not only 'smarts' or the ability to store tedious facts. Wisdom is manifest by the decisions we make. It is very closely related to understanding. Wisdom drives understanding.

1Co 6:5 I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?

Jas 3:13 Who is a wise man σοφός and endued with knowledge (ἐπίσταμαι versed) among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.

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The wisdom of this world is nothing to God. It is foolishness with God. It is naturally derived and subject to the overall schemes of the darkness of this world. (1Co.3.19, 20)

knowledge, γνώσεως; gen sing of γνώσις; it is the time, or not, of being *informed* and *aware* of the truth; cf. 1.9, 10; all that we become aware of since faith in Christ is appreciated like it never had been before Christ. All of it is in Him.

ἐν ᾧ εἰσιν πάντες οἱ θησαυροὶ τῆς σοφίας καὶ τῆς γνώσεως ἀπόκρυφοί

4 ¶ *And this I say, lest any man **should** beguile you with enticing words.*

should beguile, παραλογίζεται; 3rd ps, pres, **subj** of παραλογίζομαι; παρά near, side, before + λογίζομαι KJV *reason, number, reckon, conclude, count, impute, esteem, think, account, suppose*; παραλογίζεται being in the subjunctive mood reveals a potential danger of being led off with a reasoning that is *close* to the truth, but not the truth.

Only other place used:

*Jas 1:22 But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, **deceiving** παραλογιζομενοι your own selves.*

We need to know that some men's treatment of the Word of God is cunning, crafty, deceitful, and perverted.

*2Co 4:2 But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor **handling the word of God deceitfully**; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.*

*Eph 4:14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the **sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive**;
15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ ...*

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*2Pe 3:16 As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which **they that are unlearned and unstable wrest**, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.*

*Ga 1:7 Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and **would pervert** the gospel of Christ.*

The purpose of some who come in the name of Christ is to mislead, use, or gain somehow from the people of God; to take us away from Christ. And if successful we lose; we're in essence *robbed of our faith in Christ*. The witness of Christ is confused; the church is moved away from glorifying their Head as they should, and men get the glory.

Τοῦτο δὲ λέγω ἵνα μη τις ὑμᾶς παραλογίζεται ἐν πιθανολογία

5 For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding (seeing)

χαίρων καὶ βλέπων; both being nom, sing, masc, part, pres, act.

your order, and the stedfastness of your faith in Christ.

order, τάξις; KJV always order (10); there was the order or sequence that they priests did their duties (Lk.1.8), the same could be said for the conducting of the services of the church congregation (1Co.14.40), an order or arrangement follows another in sequence (He. 5.6; 7.11).

Paul commends them for the arrangement of their lives of their faith in Christ, which necessarily means that they were obedient to the Word of the apostle, which is the Word of God.

*stedfastness, στερέωμα; Moulton, what is solid or firm, constant; twice στερεός is used of stong meat (meaning **solid** food); the verb στερεόω, Acts 3.7, received strength, 16, hath made ... strong;*

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Whatever had been related to him by Epaphras, it was that they had remained **strong, solid** continuing in the things that they had been taught, and Paul commends them for doing so. How he loved them. He hoped for their continuance, and what he would prepare them for the onslaughts of ceaseless false doctrine. Listen, this is a constant battle. The truth of God and His people shall always be in conflict against evil doctrines and evil men.

There is no end to what some will conjure up in their evil imaginations, and say that it comes from God's Word. And the only way to stand against all of it is to keep in the faith.

*Ac 14:22 Confirming the souls of the disciples, and **exhorting them to continue in the faith**, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.*

*Ac 16:5 And so were **the churches established in the faith**, and increased in number daily.*

*1Co 16:13 **Watch ye, stand fast in the faith**, quit you like men, be strong.*

Paul wasn't with them in some fantastic way. This speaks of the same things that he mentions with the Corinthians.

*1Co 5:4 In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my **spirit**, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ,
5 To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.*

Paul rejoiced at their continuance in the faith of the gospel to this time. But they must be diligent. The maintenance of the truth takes total dependence on His person, work for us, and His Word. Do we believe His is the Son of God? Do we believe that He has provided everything that we shall ever need for life and godliness? Do we know His Word. The saints of God has a great struggle to maintain these truths, and it has not let up one iota since. There are many antichrist in the world and we know them because we know His Word.

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εἰ γὰρ καὶ τῇ σαρκὶ ἄπειμι ἀλλὰ τῷ πνεύματι σὺν ὑμῖν εἰμι χαίρων καὶ
βλέπων ὑμῶν τὴν τάξιν καὶ τὸ στερέωμα τῆς εἰς Χριστὸν πίστεως ὑμῶν