
COLOSSIANS: CHRIST PREEMINENT

Session 7 | Colossians 1:27-2:5 | Dr. Randy White

THE RICHES OF THE MYSTERY | VERSE 27

- Note that God's will was to make known **to his saints** the **riches** of the mystery. The mystery itself was made known to Paul, and had already been revealed.
- **Christ in you, the hope of glory**
 - First, be reminded that this glorious truth is NOT the mystery itself, but is the **riches of the glory** of the mystery. This is, to illustrate, the interest on the principle, not the principle itself.
 - Second, if **in you** is to be taken as specific, then "Christ in his saints" is the **hope of glory**.
 - If **his saints** are interpreted as first century Jewish believers, then there is correspondence with Paul's word to gentiles in Ephesians 1:13, where he tells gentiles that they are **sealed with that holy Spirit of promise** and the sealing of the gentiles is the down payment of the Jewish inheritance. In Col. 1:27, the opposite is true--the presence of Christ in Jews is the **hope of glory**, not glory itself. It is, in essence, a down payment for future glory.

Christ, Whom We Preach | vv. 28-29

- **Whom we preach** – v. 28
 - The grammatical order of this sentence is, "warning and teaching, we preach, to present..."
 - The action is preaching, the method is **warning** and **teaching** the goal is **to present every man perfect**.
 - This speaks to the necessity of proper preaching in the local church. Biblical preaching develops men and women toward their intended "perfection" in Christ Jesus.
 - The Greek νουθετέω [noutheteo] is built on two root words. νους [nous] (the mind) and τιθημι [tithemi] to put or place. The idea of the word is to "put things in mental order." This is what preaching should be: a logical presentation of Biblical facts.
 - The Greek διδάσκω [didasko] is to teach or instruct. We get the English *didactic* from this word.
- Verse 29
 - There are some who believe that an understanding of the mystery presented to Paul releases Christians from any obligation of labor. However, Paul's own example refutes this clearly, and such an objection would be a straw man.
 - **Labor** - The Greek root word is κοπῶ [kopto], meaning, "to mourn." This is the kind of work that is *labor* or *toil*.
 - **Striving** - The Greek ἀγων [agon] is the root of our English "agony." The root word is used again in 2:1, there translated **conflict**.
 - **Working/Worketh** - Both **working** and **worketh** are forms of the Greek ἐνέργεια [energeia], from which we get our English word *energy*.
 - **Mightily** - This uses the familiar Greek word δύναμις [dunamis], which is a "mighty" kind of power. We get *dynamite* from this word.

Paul's Prayer for the Colossians | 2:1-5

- Verse 2

- **Hearts comforted...knit together in love** - Sadly, this is the only part of the verse that the church seems to have any interest in. This part of the verse, however, is grammatically necessary to the heart-encouragement and the knitting together in love.
- **Comforted** - The Greek word παρακαλέω [parakaleo] is translated comforted in many places, but is the word also translated "beseech" and "exhort." It is the word meaning "to summon or call."
- **Knit** - The Greek συμβιβάζω [symbibazo] is literally "to embark together on a journey."
- A more literal reading of this verse: "That their hearts, being knit together in love, may be encouraged even unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, unto the knowledge of the mystery of God..."
- **Full assurance** - The Greek πληροφορία [plerophoria] is a compound word of πληρω [pleroo] (full) and φέρω [phero] (to carry).
 - We get our English word *ferry* from *phero*.
 - So, literally, the compound word is "fully carried."
- **Understanding** - As in Col 1:19, "The word denotes the ability to understand concepts and see relationships between them"¹
- **Acknowledgement** - The Greek επίγνωσις [epignosis] is *epi* (upon) and *gnosis* (knowledge). It is what you get when you stand on knowledge. There is no **acknowledgement** when there is no knowledge. While both words mean knowledge, *epignosis* focuses on the students activity and understanding related to that knowlege.
- **The mystery of God** - If this was Paul's prayer, why do so few preachers teach in a way that leads people to **the acknowledgement of the mystery of God**? Why do so few Christians even know what the mystery is?
- Verse 4
 - Without **the acknowledgement of the mystery of God** it is easy to be beguiled with **enticing words**.

¹ Zodhiates, Spiros. *The complete word study dictionary: New Testament* 2000 : n. pag. Print.