

**Colossians**  
**“A Worthy Walk”**  
**III. Main Teaching: 1:15-4:6**

1: 13-2:3 **Walking in the Work of Christ**

1:24-2:3 Through the church

**1:24-29**  
**“The Master’s Mystery Tour”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 23b-25 Realizing the reality**

**III. Vs. 26-29 Mastering the mystery**

**I. Intro.**

Think of the mystery of that promise in Isaiah chapter 40 where we read, “*They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.*” That promise wasn’t dealing with heaven as we won’t need renewed strength, we will have it forever. No, that promise is to live life today, right now in this body as we wait upon the Lord. In fact Paul says in verse 29, “*to this end I labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily.*” Thus Paul was operating in this life by Jesus’ working which was working in him mightily. Saint’s that’s what Paul is going to sharing with us this morning just how this work came into being.

**II. Vs. 23b-25 Realizing the reality**

Vs. 23b The 2<sup>nd</sup> part of this transformation happens as we start realizing the new reality of our transformation. That new reality started with hope in the “good news”. Paul would write to the Church in Rome that “*Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the world of God.*” The truth about Jesus’ work may have been heard long before a person ever

responded to it and it may have been heard multiple times but at some point in time it became a reality in your life. It never ceases to amaze me that God in His infinite wisdom would chose to use such a faulty delivery method as people to deliver such life altering and saving medicine as Jesus Christ. I can come to only two conclusions when I think of this:

- a. The medicine of Jesus must be incredibly 100% successful that it can still work despite the obviously flawed way in which He is distributed.
- b. The flawed human syringe must be part of the truth that all are in a continual need of the antidote which is Jesus.

Some way wonder about Paul's assertion that the "*gospel is preached to every creature under heaven*" when as yet in this generation this still has yet to have been accomplished.

In Roman's 10 Paul quotes Psalm 19 about the truth that the "*Heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork. Day unto day utters speech and night unto night reveals knowledge.*" God's creation is His first preacher so that all are without excuses. There has never been a single person who having heard creations message and received it, that God will not bring them into the knowledge of the Savior. Oft times it is the first preacher that leads us to a human preacher. As Paul describes three characteristics of those that have been given the privilege to proclaim the truth about Jesus:

1. Vs. 23 b **Servant**: This is what the word "minister" means. I believe that you should always be able to tell if a person is a true minister of Jesus as you will be able to see they are a humble servant. Jesus is the only one that should receive credit for the message and the transformation. I recall the story of Billy Graham that was

interrupted by a drunk on a plane flight who loudly proclaimed that he was one of Billy's converts to which Billy calmly said, "*You must be because you clearly aren't one of Jesus'.*"

2. Vs. 24 **Sacrifice**: Paul talks about what it cost him to be the syringe that places the Word about Jesus into lives and in saying this he isn't saying that something is lacking in the atoning work of Jesus, that something more needs to be added to deal with sin. The word affliction is never used to describe the death of Jesus as Jesus is able to save all on His finished work upon the cross. The sacrifice that Paul writes here is not Christ's but the sacrifice that Jesus has for Paul in his own life. A fact that was brought to Ananias at Paul's conversion when he was told that Paul would "*suffer much for Jesus' sake.*" Saint's someone always has to pay the price in order that others come to Christ. The gospel is always FREE but it is never CHEAP! Just as every parent knows of sleepless nights, tears and broken hearts that they have gone through for their children so to those who have had the blessed privilege of spreading the gospel. Our bibles are red with the blood of those who have died for the blessings of sharing this truth to the world.
  
3. Vs. 25 **Stewardship**: The word rendered "*stewardship*" is an old Greek word that means a "*house manager*". This was a person who was in charge of their Masters household. The steward was responsible to manage the resources of their master to the betterment of the master so that the master would receive all the glory of the steward's labor. As such this deals not just with the message but the way in which the message is delivered. Paul didn't ask "*What do I get out of this?*" instead he asked "**How much will God let me put into this?**"

### III. Vs. 26-29 Mastering the mystery

Reading through this “*mystery*” which Paul records in verses 26-29 it is clear that it covers two things:

- a. **Christ in you the hope of glory**: Now most folks are familiar with this mystery as it deals with their salvation and future glorification.
- b. **Every man perfect in Christ Jesus**: This 2<sup>nd</sup> part of the mystery is something that very few understand and this deals with our sanctification by which Jesus’ resurrection power is available in our life today, to overcome temptation, power over doubt and fear, making us champions over this world and life in it.

Vs. 26-27 The word “*mystery*” in the Bible doesn’t mean something that cannot be known but something that was previously incomprehensible but now is understandable!  
A “*sacred secret*” hidden in the past and now revealed by the Holy Spirit.

Vs. 28 I notice in this verse **four things about the message** that Paul was privileged to proclaim:

1. **Him we preach**: The essential aspect of Paul’s message was the person and work of Jesus.
  - False teachers, teach themselves and their achievements
  - Educator’s, teach teaching and philosophy
  - Entertainers, present a program worthy of applause

Paul didn’t teach Jesus, he **presented Jesus, introduced Jesus** and let the Holy Spirit communicate His goodness and truth.

2. **Warning every man:** Paul didn't stop at proclaiming Jesus he warned people as well. Like any parent would their child Paul saw that **the message needed to have application to guide and protect children.**
3. **Teaching every man:** The message must be **instructive** for in Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, (Col. 2:3) There is no "*new teaching*" as all we need to know is related to Jesus. Wisdom is the right use of knowledge and all wisdom will lead a person to humility and brokenness!
4. **Presenting every man perfect in Christ Jesus:** Paul's **message has an end which is to present every believer "complete and mature" in Christ.** It described an apprentice who was no longer a novice but was now a journeyman. The goal of preaching, warning and teaching is maturity!

Vs. 29 The message of the gospel had four elements to it but it also according to Paul has a balance of power as he describes **three ways in which he delivered the message:**

1. **Preparation,** "*To this end I also labored*": Labored is the word "*toils*" in the Greek and describes a person who works to the point of exhaustion but keeps on going. There are some who think teaching the Bible takes little or no time and I'm afraid with some that I've heard it shows. I remember talking to one fellow who had taught a few times who believed that for the message to be "*anointed*" you should do no preparation and just allow the Holy Spirit to teach. My response was that the Holy Spirit required a human to teach and I was very confident that He would do His best work through a vessel that "labored" at his study. Every week

I'm blessed to spend 20 plus hours in preparation in which I share about ¼th of what He gave me. Paul wrote to his young protégé in 2 Timothy 2:15 “*Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*”

2. **Perspiration**, “*Striving according to His working*”: Here Paul uses a word in the Greek where we get our English word “*agony*” from. The word describes a wrestling match and most often the word is used in conjunction with prayer. I believe that prayer is under-utilized by most in the pulpit in all three aspects: Before the study, during the study and during the delivery!
3. **Inspiration**, “*Which He works in me mightily*”: The word “*works*” is the Greek word translated “*energy*” in English and “*mightily*” in the Greek is where we get our English word “*dynamite*”. As such this *describes teaching that has been hard work, bathed in prayer now electrified and dynamite because of the Holy Spirit.*

Saint's let me apologize for the multiple times that the teaching of the Word of God was not been energizing and explosive to you because the fault lies with me in my feeble preparation and perspiration and not in His Inspiration. And I might add if the Word of God has got you to move or blown apart something that need to be removed in your life that this was a direct result of the Holy Spirit as only He could use one as weak and needy as myself!