MESSAGE OUTLINE



COLOSSIANS 1:24-29 NKJV

24 I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church, 25 of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God which was given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God, 26 the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints. 27 To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. 28 Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. 29 To this end I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily.

INTRODUCTION

We will focus on some key words of the text to answer questions as they arise. And the four words from the text that I will focus on are lacking, minister, mystery, and perfect.

LACKING

24 I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church...

There is nothing lacking in Christ or His suffering in His death on the cross. Jesus said, "it is finished."

There are really only two objects: Christ's afflictions and the church. *What was Paul trying to accomplish?*

MINISTER

25 of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God which was given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God

In Greek, this word is "diakonos" and it means a servant. You get the sense that it was not by choice. This was an important distinction. One of the qualifications of apostleship was to have seen the Lord.

1 Corinthians 9:1, 8-9, *"Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord?" "Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time. For I am the least of the apostles and am unworthy to be called an apostle."*

On the road to Damascus. Pasul experienced His presence, and this radically changed the course of his life.

Perhaps having seen the risen Christ, filled-up what could have been lacking in the apostle?

We are the ones that get exhausted, and want to quit. Is this you, worn out by ministry?

John 20:29, *Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.*

We can do all things through Christ who strengthens us, right? **Philippians 4:13**

We have all that, but still we are lacking something. What are we lacking?

MYSTERY
26 the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations… but now [the mystery] *has been revealed to His saints. 27 To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.*

How are we to garner this strength of the *mysterious* Spiritual power?

Here is your answer: you need a prayer partner.

You are part of *the body* of Christ, Paul says. This is the mystery.

Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them. **Matthew 18:19-20**

When you are involved in ministry, you are going into the trenches of a Spiritual battle. And you are going to face fatigue, loneliness, confusion and hardship, and eventual burnout as you topple over.

For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (prayer), from 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 (fatigue) *through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith* (loneliness)*; that you, being rooted and grounded in love* (confusion and hardship)*, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height– to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.* (to not give up) *Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, 21 to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.* **Ephesians 3:14-21**

Do you have one? Are you in contact with this person? Find one. Don't be prideful. Paul is doing this too.

A whole, Tokyo Baptist Church, we need to be a praying church. Praying for each other:
Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints **Ephesians 6:18**

Are you praying for all the saints, that is in your church, like this?

Application
See TBC Life, not just as advertising for stuff to do–rather advertising for what you can pray for.

It can be the perfect weekly reminder! What is it going to take, five minutes? Can you please pray?

Without prayer, we are going nowhere!

Now perhaps you are listening wondering how the prayers of others connects??

Colossians 4:12 - *Epaphras, who is one of you, a bondservant of Christ, greets you, always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.*

PERFECT
27 To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. 28 Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. 29 To this end I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily.

Let us consider what would it mean to be presented imperfect, and the extreme of what that would be. I cannot think of a better example of this than what Jesus teaches us in **Matthew 7:21-23**:

21 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. 22 Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' 23 And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'

Notice all the great things that they had done! But still, not perfect?

What is the will of the Father, if it is not works?

Jesus says in **John 6:40**, *for this is the will of My Father, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day."*

You see the atoning work of Christ is sufficient to all those who believe. So what can be lacking?

The small problem is that we don't fully embrace the freedom we have in Christ or the gospel.

But the big problem in lack is actually not what is INSIDE the church, but what is OUTSIDE the church.

19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." **Matthew 28:19-20**

You can't teach people to obey unless that are INSIDE the church!

If the Church is not loving on the inside, the people on the outside are going to think we're no different.

What separates us from the OUTSIDE or the world is our LOVE for each other.

Paul is calling us to imitate him! So you too can have JOY laboring in loving Him, His body, the church.

Jesus is asking, "Do you love me? Then..." fill it in! "Do you love my church? Then..." fill it in.

Joy will come when you stop judging, and you start loving.

INVITATION
Jesus said, "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends."

Jesus Christ laid down His life so that you would be set free from the thorns and thistle in life. So that you may have life, and have it more abundantly.

Let me invite you to look upon Jesus, the Son of God, upon His glory upon the cross, and in your heart believe that He has risen from the dead. Then you will be able to live by the will of God, in your life. You can learn how to love like Jesus by the Spirit of God, our God who is Love.

Let's Pray

Jesse Mark Cesario
Tokyo Baptist Church
June 29-30, 2024

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class 201 Maturity

Sept 22nd (Sun)
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