

# Opening Prayer

Guided Prayer: Pray asking for the Holy Spirit's guidance in understanding and applying the truths discussed.

## Recap

In Colossians 1:24-29, the apostle Paul recounts his own calling to ministry which included a calling to purposeful suffering as he fully preached Christ. This stewardship included the sacred message of the gospel, available to Jew and gentile alike. Paul sought to proclaim Christ who alone brings hope. Paul then explains the purpose of faithful preaching, namely to present every man complete in Christ. Paul closes the section by sharing his own labor and struggle to see Christ glorified, all while recognizing that it is Christ at work in him.

## Understanding the Text

1. How can Paul say that he suffered for the Colossians whom he had never met (24)?
2. What does Paul mean when he says that he “fills up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions” (24)?
3. How does Paul see the origin of his apostleship (25)?
4. Why did God call Paul (25)?
5. In what way was the gospel “kept hidden” in the past (26)?
6. What does the passage emphasize about Gentile salvation (27)?
7. What is the relationship between mankind's effort and Christ working in us (29)?

## Practical Application

1. Do you rejoice in suffering? Do you see suffering as fulfilling God's purpose as Paul did?
2. Is your evangelistic focus too narrow? Are you seeking to share Christ with all?
3. Do you reflect on the riches of glory that we have in Christ?
4. Do you live with a continual understanding of Christ in you?
5. How are you progressing and growing in God's wisdom? What are some things the Lord has revealed to you about walking in wisdom?
6. Are you striving to honor Christ in your life? Are you striving in His power or your own?

# God Has More to Say

In Colossians 1:21-24, the themes of suffering, calling, mystery, revelation, hope, spiritual maturity, and gospel labor are prominent.

2 Corinthians 1:5 "For just as the sufferings of Christ are ours in abundance, so also our comfort is abundant through Christ."

Philippians 2:17 "But even if I am being poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I rejoice and share my joy with you all." 2 Timothy 1:8 "Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God",

2 Timothy 2:10 "For this reason I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen, so that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus and with it eternal glory."

Ephesians 3:1–2 "For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles— if indeed you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace which was given to me for you;"

Colossians 4:3 "praying at the same time for us as well, that God will open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been imprisoned"

Ephesians 1:18 "I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints"

Romans 8:10 "If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness."

1 Corinthians 2:6 "Yet we do speak wisdom among those who are mature; a wisdom, however, not of this age nor of the rulers of this age, who are passing away"

Ephesians 4:13 "until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ."

1 Corinthians 15:10 "But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me."