

Colossians 1:27- 2:19

Note the repeated use of vocabulary stressing the need for the believer receiving knowledge: “revealed” (1:26), “make known” (1:27), “proclaim” (1:28), “admonishing” (1:28), “teaching” (1:28), “with all wisdom” (1:28), “know” (2:1), “full assurance of understanding” (2:2), “knowledge” (2:2) “all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (2:3).

1:27 – “Those” (ois) refers to the saints that God “desired” (ethelesen) to know the mystery.

The word “desired” is a form of the same word that was used to state that Paul to be an apostle by “the will of God” in 1:1. The mystery is that the Jewish Messiah dwells in the believing Gentiles.

Two interpretations concerning this state: “Christ in you, the hope of glory.” (Note: The parallel verses in Ephesians do not have a similar statement even though the same content is being discussed.)

- a) The indwelling Christ in the believer. Problem with this interpretation is that it is not developed in these verses.
- b) Christ now dwelling with the Gentiles. In the OT the Jews considered themselves living among the Gentiles as the hope of future glory for the Gentiles. In this context, it is not the Jews who bless the Gentiles, but the Christ.

The mystery is that the Gentiles were always included in God’s plan

Notice the words piled together by Paul to describe how incredible this (literally: “the riches of the glory”):

- a) great
- b) riches – πλουτος “ploutos” ... This word is used by Paul to speak of God/Christ’s spiritual riches in Romans 2:4; 9:23; 10:12; 11:33; Phil. 4:19.

Ploutos (Gr) - **Riches** (Eng) - the Greek word **ploutos** is where the English gets the word **plutonic** (rock formed by solidification at a great depth below the earth’s surface) and **plutocrat** (government by the wealthy). The Greek word **ploutos** originally referred to abundant wealth and riches in the Greek language. In the philosophy of Plato (400 BC) the concept of **ploutos** divided into material **ploutos** and **ploutos** that was not material things, but yet very beneficial to society. This second division included things such as wisdom, character, education, etc. The New Testament uses **ploutos** to refer to great physical wealth, but also to spiritual wealth as in Ephesians:

“..the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches (**ploutos**) of God’s grace that he lavished on us...” - Ephesians 1:7-8 (From “Reps and Sets” Oct. 13, evening)

Note how Paul used this word in Corinth and how the Corinthians abused it which led Paul to correctly identify it:

- a. Cutting irony of 1 Cor. 4:8
- b. Corinthians fail to recognize source - 2 Cor. 8:9
- c. This “ploutos” is in jars of clay - 2 Cor. 4:7
- d. Apostle’s poverty, yet ability to distribute wealth - 2 Cor. 6:10
- e. Possession of “ploutos” produces compassion for people and the ability to be compassionate - 2 Cor. 8:2, 7

In Ephesians Paul uses the word “treasures” in the parallel verses (Ep. 1:7, 18, 3:8, 16.)

- c) Glory – is δοξα “doxa” used in the OT to identify the glory of God. Paul is talking about the very glory, character, nature of YHWH has been revealed to the Gentiles, dwells in the Gentiles and is the hope (or, a deposit) for future glory.

Paul sees this as fulfillment of what the prophets spoke in the OT concerning the Gentiles. See Romans 15:8-13 quote of OT and Romans 15:16-21 Paul defines his ministry.

Ultimately, Christ is the center of the mystery which is “Christ in the Colossians.” Christ has been revealed to the Gentiles, but the Colossians are Gentiles who have believed. So, the Colossians have Christ in them. 1 Timothy 3:16 describes this “mystery” perfectly: “the mystery of godliness –

- The Son of God manifested in the flesh
- The Son of God vindicated by the Spirit (resurrected by God after men condemned)
- The Son of God seen by angels (mystery “seen” or understood in the heavenlies!)
- The Son of God proclaimed to the Gentiles (Christ among the Gentiles)

- The Son of God believed on by the Gentiles (Christ in the Gentiles, or, 'Christ in you')
- The Son of God taken up in glory (fulfilled eschatological purpose)

1:28 – Paul describes his ministry with “we” to include all who were branching off and helping in the proclamation of this mystery to the Gentiles. Paul uses three verbs:

1. “proclaim” (“kataggello” καταγγελλω) is used as a technical term for preaching the gospel. And this is describe as being done with the following two words. For Paul, the proclamation of Christ, the mystery, included :
 - a. “warning” or “admonition” – this verb “noutheteo” νουθετεω meant to set the mind of someone in proper order by correcting their world view and putting them in a right relationship with reality. This word is used in Ephesians 6:4 concerning parents giving admonition to their children. In Titus 3:10 it is used to refer to correcting those with false beliefs. In the NT this word can be used for correcting an error, but it is also used to reer to general instruction and proclamation. See Rom. 15:14
 - b. “teaching” or “instruction” – NOTICE THAT PROCLAIMING CHRIST CONTINUES WITH THE TEACHING MINISTRY! Also NOTICE – the proclamation of Jesus is never considered to be a brief 3-minute invitation to accept Christ at the end of a sermon about “How to be a Better Man,” or “How to Find and Keep Friends.” The proclamation of the mystery involved creating a new worldview and understanding the mystery! This will take more than a few classes and a few memory verses.
 - c. Acts 4:2 – “the apostles were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead.”

2. “Perfect” is “teleios” τελιος which means “complete,” “whole,” “perfect.” This is a reference to the “parousia” or the coming of the Lord.

In an attack against the elitists Paul makes it clear this knowledge and the understanding is for everyone. Notice the three uses of “everyone”:

- “warning everyone,”
- “teaching everyone” and
- “presenting everyone.”

Three things to point out here:

1. The sequence of Paul’s ministry that falls under the general category of “proclaiming the gospel.” It involves a three-step process of ministry: Warn, Teach, and, finally, Present. Warning is evangelism. Teaching is discipleship. Presenting is the eschatological event of glorification (phase three)
2. Paul’s ministry was aimed at “everyone” and he says that three times.
3. The focus was eschatological when the believers are presented as perfect before the throne of God.

1:29 – “labor” (kopiao) “to work, to labor, to labor with wearisome effort, to work to exhaustion”

This concept is used by Paul to refer to himself also in: 1 Cor. 15:10; Gal.4:11; Phil. 2:16; 1 Thes.2:9; 3:5; 2 Cor. 6:5; 11:23....and, to others in Rom. 16:6; 16:12 and 1 Thes. 5:12.)

“**This**” refers back to “present everyone mature in Christ.”

“Striving” makes the “

2:1 – “**struggling**” (agon) is the image of an athletic contest which is strenuous and demanding. This is the athlete striving, straining, suffering, enduring, and overcoming.

2:2 –

Purpose of Paul visiting/writing: Encourage believers in heart and united in love

The Target: So they may have full riches of complete understanding

End Game: Know the mystery of God (which is to know Christ) in whom are the treasures of wisdom and knowledge!

2:3 –

2:4 –

2:5 –

2: 6 –

2: 7 –

2:8 –

2: 9 –

2: 10 –

2:11 –

2:12 –

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