

# Colossians 1:24-29

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## Suffering and Sacrificing For Christ

[Colossians 1:24-29](#) (NKJV)

***<sup>24</sup> 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, <sup>25</sup> 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, <sup>26</sup> the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints. <sup>27</sup> 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. <sup>28</sup> Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. <sup>29</sup> To this end I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily.***

As we have studied before; The book of Colossians is known as one of the prison epistles; meaning that they were written when Paul was imprisoned in Rome. The theme taught in the Book of Colossians is Christ, the Head of the Church.

As we looked at previously, there are many verses in the Hebrew Scriptures that describe an attribute of GOD the FATHER that have a corresponding verse in the New Testament that take the same attribute of GOD the FATHER and that use that attribute to describe JESUS.

Last time we looked at in [Colossians 1:19](#), that it pleased the FATHER that in HIM; (JESUS) all the fullness of DEITY should dwell. As we continue through Colossians we will continue to see examples of the divine nature of JESUS.

Sometimes our outward circumstances may affect our relationship with GOD. If things are going well, and smooth, we think that the LORD is blessing us. But if we are facing trials, Christians may be prone to think that they are out of the will of GOD.

Let's read [Colossians 1:24](#) again.

***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***

In some circles today, these words of Paul, (formerly Saul of Tarsus;) would be considered a negative confession. Paul might be rebuked or chased out of some churches today, for daring to say, “ I now rejoice in my sufferings for you.”

Lets take a short detour and look at the early life of Paul.

Saul of Tarsus; was the Greatest Persecutor of the Early Church after the resurrection It is believed that Saul; part of the Jewish Sanhedrin; consented to and approved of the stoning and death of Stephen. Turn to [Acts 7](#)

[Acts 7:57-58](#) The Sanhedrin was the supreme council in charge of Jewish affairs in Israel; under the Roman Occupation.

[Acts 7:57-58](#) (NKJV)

***57 Then they cried out with a loud voice, stopped their ears, and ran at him with one accord; 58 and they cast him out of the city and stoned him. And the witnesses laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul.***

Some scholars believe that it was the bold witness of Stephen and his compassion on his persecutors; by praying that GOD would not hold this sin to their charge; as he died that was a great conviction upon Saul.

Lets continue in [Acts 8:1-3](#) ***“1 Now Saul was consenting to his death. At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. 2 And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him. 3 As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison.”***

Saul went bezerk and heavily persecuted the church; after Stephen’s death; until he met the Risen JESUS on the road to Damascus.

[Acts 9:1-9](#) (NKJV)

***1 Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest 2 and asked letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. 3 As he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. 4 Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?” 5 And he said, “Who are You, Lord?” Then the Lord said, “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads.” 6 So he, trembling and astonished, said, “Lord, what do You want me to do?” Then the Lord said to him, “Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.” 7 And the men who journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice but seeing no one. 8 Then Saul arose from the ground, and when his eyes were opened he saw no one. But they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. 9 And he was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank.***

The LORD did not leave Saul in this condition, he sent a believer named Ananias to Saul to minister to him. Ananias was aware of Saul's reputation and brought this before the LORD.

[Acts 9:13–15 \(NKJV\)](#)

***13 Then Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he has done to Your saints in Jerusalem. 14 And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Your name." 15 But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel.***

Paul was shown what he must suffer for Christ at his conversion; and he still chose to follow JESUS. How many of us; if we were shown upon conversion, the things that we would have to suffer for JESUS would have still decided to follow HIM.

Turn back to [Colossians 1:24](#)

[Colossians 1:24 \(NKJV\)](#)

***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,***

What things did Paul have to suffer for Christ?

[2 Corinthians 11:23–25 \(NKJV\)](#)

***23 Are they ministers of Christ?—I speak as a fool—I am more: in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often. 24 From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. 25 Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep;***

Why did JESUS allow Paul to suffer all of these things?

Because JESUS said in [John 13:16](#)

[John 13:16 \(NKJV\)](#)

***16 Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him.***

As a servant to JESUS; Paul and us as well are not greater than our master JESUS. JESUS set the example for us through the things that HE suffered leading to and including the cross.

What did JESUS suffer in HIS life here on Earth?

We are not going to turn to all of these; but you may write them down and be a Berean and check these out later.

[Matthew 8:20 \(NKJV\)](#)

**<sup>20</sup> And Jesus said to him, “Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.”**

[Psalm 69](#) details some of the events of JESUS’s early life.

[Psalm 69:7–8](#) (NKJV)

**<sup>7</sup> Because for Your sake I have borne reproach; Shame has covered my face. <sup>8</sup> I have become a stranger to my brothers, And an alien to my mother’s children;**

Remember JESUS’s brothers and sisters did not put their faith in HIM until AFTER HIS RESURRECTION.

JESUS did not own a home to lay HIS head; HE knew the rejection of family.

In several passages in [Isaiah](#) describe some of the events of the crucifixion.

Lets turn to some of these:

[Isaiah 50:6](#) (NKJV)

**<sup>6</sup> I gave My back to those who struck Me, And My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting.**

[Isaiah 52:14](#) (NKJV)

**<sup>14</sup> Just as many were astonished at you, So His visage was marred more than any man, And His form more than the sons of men;**

[Isaiah 53:3–4](#) (NKJV)

**<sup>3</sup> He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. <sup>4</sup> Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted.**

On your own please read this week [Psalm 22](#) which reads as a first account from JESUS hanging on the cross.

JESUS did this out of HIS love for us and so we would know that we could relate to him.

[Colossians 1:24](#) (NKJV)

**<sup>24</sup> 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,**

In verse 24 the word fill up in the Greek is an-tan-ap-lay-ro-o. It means”What is wanting in the afflictions of Christ to be borne by me, that I supply in order to repay the benefits which Christ conferred on me by filling up the measure of the afflictions laid upon him. “

This does not mean that by suffering we “repay” JESUS for what HE did for us on the cross; we bear our afflictions and sufferings out of love for JESUS and endure them by HIS Grace. There are Catholics who believe that through their own suffering; they earn heaven. There are some who will

kneel up stone steps with broken glass to “suffer” for JESUS. If you search on line in the Philippines on Good Friday there are Filipino men who re-enact the crucifixion and literally nail themselves to the cross.

This is absolutely tragic and deception to try to earn heaven, “suffering” for Christ.

True believers today do suffer for the gospel. (FRC article about Nigerian Girl)

*On May 12, a young female student -- Deborah Samuel -- in Sokoto, Nigeria was beaten to death and burned to ashes for praising Jesus on a WhatsApp group chat site. A gang of her radical Muslim classmates saw her post, became enraged, and murdered her. Deborah's "crime?" She was accused of blasphemy against Islam and the Prophet Mohammad -- a crime that calls for a death sentence according to Sharia Law.*

This type of persecution that our Brothers and Sisters in Christ around the world have to endure; has not come to America, YET. But it is coming. ( talk about how Christians are becoming marginalized and with the recent Supreme Court “Leak”.

[John 15:20](#) (NKJV)

<sup>20</sup> Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also.

[Colossians 1:25](#) (NKJV)

<sup>25</sup> 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,

(use Chuck Missler example of a minister.)

Be searching for the specific Ministry that GOD has called you too. HE longs to fulfill HIS will in your life.

[Colossians 1:26](#) (NKJV)

<sup>26</sup> the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints.

The Greek word for mystery in this verse is mysterion and it means something hidden, a secret or a mystery.

God hid something from all of the Writers of the Hebrew Scriptures, which we refer to as the Old Testament or the Old Covenant. Under the Old Covenant, the Jewish people could only approach God through a blood sacrifice of an animal. These sacrifices were a foreshadowing of the blood sacrifice of the New Covenant; JESUS, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the World. What is

the mystery that GOD hid from the Old Testament writers, The Church. The Greek word used in the New Testament for Church is Ekklesia and means called out ones.

The Church is a separate and distinct entity from Israel. The Church has not replaced Israel. Sadly there are some in the Church who teach a doctrine known as Replacement Theology; which teaches that because Israel rejected her Messiah, (JESUS;) that God is done with them and the Church has replaced the Nation of Israel. The opposite side of Replacement Theology is Dispensationalism which believes that GOD is not finished with Israel and still has a plan for Israel.

God deals separately with the Church and with Israel. They are two distinct entities.

God's plan for Israel is found in the Book of Daniel. Please turn to Daniel Chapter 9.

We will look at part of these verses.

[Daniel 9:24-27](#) (NKJV)

<sup>24</sup> "Seventy weeks are determined For your people and for your holy city, <sup>25</sup> "Know therefore and understand, *That* from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, *There shall be* seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; <sup>26</sup> "And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it *shall be* with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations are determined. <sup>27</sup> Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering.

Of Daniel's 70 weeks prophecy 69 of these weeks of years have already been accomplished, in JESUS's First coming. The relationship between Israel and the Church can be viewed like a Chess Clock (explain)

The Church Age is located in the gap between Daniel's 69th and 70th week.

When the Church Age ends then Daniel's 70th week will happen which will be the 7 year Tribulation period, where GOD will be dealing with Israel again to bring the Jewish people to JESUS.

[Colossians 1:26-27](#) (NKJV)

<sup>26</sup> the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints. <sup>27</sup> 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.

In verse 27 To them refers back to HIS saints in verse 26. The word saints means Holy in the Greek.

The Riches of HIS Glory refers to the work of salvation and sanctification that HE is working in the life of those who have received JESUS as LORD and Savior.

Christ in you refers to the down payment of the HOLY SPIRIT given to a person when they receive JESUS as their LORD and Savior. It does not mean that we are little Christs or little GODS.

JESUS is our hope and we eagerly await for HIS return and the completion of the work that HE has begun in each of our lives.

[Colossians 1:28](#) (NKJV)

<sup>28</sup> Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.

We preach JESUS and HIM crucified as payment for our sins.

Warning every man means that like in John Bunyan's **Pilgrim's Progress** we are to warn men to flee from the wrath that is to come. (explain)

[Jude 22–23](#) (NKJV)

<sup>22</sup> And on some have compassion, making a distinction; <sup>23</sup> but others save with fear, pulling *them* out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh.

While some can be won to the Gospel through the kindness of the LORD; some need to be saved by fear of hell. (share testimony)

[Colossians 1:29](#) (NKJV)

<sup>29</sup> To this *end* I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily.

JESUS has promised to finish the work that HE has begun in us.

(Invitation)

<https://www.frc.org/updatearticle/20220516/nigerian-student>