

# Colossians 1:28-2:3

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[0:00] All right, please take your copy of God's Word out and turn to Paul's letter to the Colossians. I hope not this morning.

I will tell you that I struggled this week with finding the bearing of the text. Some months ago, I took the time to sit down and break apart the book of Colossians, leading up to a little bit of a break that I'm going to be taking here in a couple of weeks, and trying to keep us on pace so we can get to that point.

For those who have volunteered to preach on my behalf and have given them text to deal with, I want to keep us moving along well. I certainly could make this into mini-sermons, not just one this morning.

Our text is chapter 1, verse 28, through chapter 2, verse 3. And I really, I worked, I mean, I had tons of notes. I've worked it and worked it and worked it, and I finally saw that it's really a continuation of our look at Paul's ministry.

And some of this began to coalesce for me this morning at about 4 a.m. So this is, it's 11 o'clock now. This is like a 1 o'clock in the afternoon sermon for me. Hopefully, I'll keep the energy high for you.

[1:36] Two weeks ago, we looked in Colossians 1, 21 through 23, where Paul states that he has become a minister of the gospel of reconciliation. He's now going on to elaborate more on what that ministry looks like.

Last week, we began to look at the ministry itself, and we had two points. Firstly, the aim of Paul's ministry. And secondly, the means of Paul's ministry.

So join me in looking at your text, Colossians 1, and let me read to you 24 through 27, before we get to our text today. Paul writes, Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ's affliction for the sake of His body, that is, the church, of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God that was given to me for you, to make the Word of God fully known, the mystery hidden for ages and generations, but now revealed to His saints.

To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. And so today will be sort of a part two of this as we continue to look at Paul's ministry and give application from his ministry for our daily living.

Our text for today, Colossians 1, 28 through 23. Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ.

[3:11] For this I toil, struggling with all His energy that He powerfully works within me. For I want you to know how great a struggle I have for you and for those at Laodicea, and for all who have not seen me face to face, that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding, and the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

This is God's Word to us. It was written for our good and His glory. We would all do well to listen to it in order to believe its promises and obey its commands.

So I'll give you a bit of the outline for today's sermon. As I said last week, we looked at the aim of Paul's ministry. Secondly, at the means of Paul's ministry, verses 24 through 27.

Today I'm going to add points to that. So the third point, or first if you prefer, would be the work of Paul's ministry. Fourthly, or secondly, the strength of Paul's ministry.

And fifthly, the aim of Paul's ministry further developed. An expansion of this idea that we looked back at last week. Now I'm going to switch into points 3, 4, and 5 so as not to confuse you back and forth.

[ 4 : 33 ] But that's what I'm doing. You didn't miss point 1 and 2 unless you were not here last week. So point number 3. The work of Paul's ministry.

And we see this in verse 28. Him we proclaim. Who is the Him? It is Jesus Christ. It was mentioned just before this in verse 27.

Christ in you, the hope of glory. Him we proclaim. Paul's driving desire was to proclaim Him, the hope of glory, who had done so much on His behalf.

Who had rescued Him from His apostate Judaism. Who had delivered Him from His sin. It's Paul's desire to proclaim Him. Proclaim means to publicly declare.

Here in the Greek, it is a general term, and it is not restricted to formal preaching. Not restricted. All preaching is proclamation.

[ 5 : 36 ] Not all proclamation is preaching. And this will be important in just a moment. Remember that all preaching is proclamation. Not all proclamation is preaching. And Paul says, Him we proclaim.

And presumably, he's referring to himself and Timothy. If you recall that the salvation of the Colossians, excuse me, this letter to the Colossians, the salutation, darn you autocorrect, is addressed from them both.

Verse 1, he says, I, Paul, and Timothy, our brother. And this is likely the we he's referring to here. And there is two aspects of their proclamation.

There's one negative and one positive. Or stated in the negative, the warning that he says here. We proclaim warning everyone.

Some of your translations may say admonishing. Warning or admonishing. This is encouraging counsel in view of sin and coming punishment.

[ 6 : 40 ] This is a warning to flee from the wrath to come, stated in the negative. In the positive, there is teaching happening as well. Not this, but this.

Imparting truth in their ministry. So they're warning everyone and they're teaching everyone with all wisdom. Wisdom can be rightly understood as a practical discernment.

Taking those things that we see as true and giving them good and practical application in our lives. I like this little equation that my father has taught me across the years.

That knowledge plus understanding equals wisdom. It's one thing to know something. It's another thing to know what to do with that thing that is known.

So you can know that a tomato is a fruit, but it's really important to know that a tomato should not go in a fruit salad. Knowing the proper application, like a BLT, would be knowledge plus understanding.

[ 7 : 47 ] And then you're wise about the tomato. Sometimes my off-the-cuff analogies just don't play out. Paul wrote in 2 Timothy 3, 16 and 17, All scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

So how is it that we give this type of teaching? This proclamation that they're giving is being done by the Scriptures. The tool that's granted to us, for us to proclaim, warning everyone, teaching everyone, with all wisdom.

Paul says, we proclaim, speaking of himself and of Timothy, and this certainly, what he's referring to here, is the job of church leaders. There's a work to be done in this way, this proclamation, warning, and teaching.

We can see both aspects, the negative and the positive, in the Scriptures. To warn in Acts 20, 31, Paul describes his ministry at Ephesus. He writes, Therefore, be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease, night or day, to admonish or warn everyone with tears.

The church leaders are also supposed to teach. Paul writes to Timothy in 1 Timothy 3, 2, concerning the qualities of an elder in a church, that an overseer must be able to teach.

[ 9 : 21 ] So it is certainly the job of church leaders, but we must be very careful at this point that we don't exclude ourselves from this ministry. Because while it's the job of church leaders, it is also the job of every disciple of Jesus Christ.

Remember, as I said to you before, proclamation is not restricted to formal teaching. This point's driven by Paul later in the letter, Colossians 3, 16, the first part of it, where he says, let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.

Listen to the words. Teaching and admonishing or warning one another in all wisdom. So if you think that potentially the text for today is merely talking about the responsibility of Paul and his

ministry to the churches, which I could give you that here, he certainly broadens the scope of the exhortation later on in chapter 3, verse 16.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you, you believers, you Colossian disciples, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom. In other places, Acts 8, 3-4, we get a great example of proclamation going forth from the early church.

This is just after the stoning of Stephen, if you are familiar with that. In verse 3 of chapter 8, it says, But Saul, pre-conversion Paul, Saul was ravaging the church and entering house after house, he dragged off men and women and committed them to prison.

[10:57] So this great persecution arose on the early church and it caused people to be scattered. Listen to what verse 4 says. Now those who were scattered went about preaching the word.

A very similar, not the exact same word here used for proclamation, but it carries with it the idea of gossiping the word of God. They were going about telling people about Jesus as they were scattered.

Saul, even here, is used by God to advance the church across the known world of time. Again, we see both sides of this stated in the negative and stated in the positive for all believers.

We are to warn or admonish one another. Paul read to the Thessalonian believers in 2 Thessalonians 3, 14 and 15. If anyone does not obey what we say in this letter, take note of that person and have nothing to do with them that he may be ashamed.

Do not regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother. We are meant to work together and minister the word of God to one another. We are meant to bring correction to one another.

[12:07] Beloved, it is our job as a church to hold each other accountable to the standard of Scripture. We need to call a spade a spade. We need to say, you cannot live in this way and let me show you by God's holy writ why you cannot.

You must be brought into line with this. This is the great practice of church discipline which happens not just at a church leadership level, but it's happening all the time if we're a healthy and vibrant church.

We are to warn those who are around us who think they're believers and may not be. Or those who certainly are believers, but they think that they can persist in sin and that there will be no consequence for said sin.

It's the loving and right thing for us to do with one another. We are to warn or admonish one another. We're also meant to teach. Jesus gives to us in Matthew 28, 19-20 what is most commonly called the Great Commission where He says, Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.

This is the mission, the commission given to the church. Not just church leaders, but all of those who are part of the family of God.

[13:25] We are to be teaching one another. I know that many of you may feel inadequate for such a task, but all of you have something to impart to somebody else.

If you are in fact a Christian, you have the Spirit of God within you. You are an expression of God's grace. I need you. I just can't tell you how much I need you.

I am in no way on some kind of a platform elevated above you figuratively. I need you. I need your perspective. I need to learn how God is working in your life.

I need to see fresh pictures of the way that Jesus Christ is bringing about redemption in your life. It is encouraging to me wherever you are in your walk with Christ to see that you're walking.

We need one another. And this activity, all of this activity of admonishing, warning, and teaching, and all wisdom is in order that they and we may present everyone mature in Christ.

[14:32] This is the goal of the Christian ministry. That the saints would be mature in their faith. That they would properly yield fruit as a result of their maturity.

A passage that I hope is very familiar to you. Ephesians 4, verses 11-13. Listen carefully. And He, being Christ, gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers to equip the saints for the work of ministry for building up the body of Christ.

Until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

And so you'll see that Jesus Christ gave gifts to the church that those leaders may work to build up the body for the work of ministry, which is the building up of the body.

You see the language here. To equip the saints for the work of ministry. What is that work? For the building up of the body of Christ. All of us play a part into this until we all attain the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God to mature manhood.

[15:45] This is the desire of Epaphras. Epaphras is likely the man who established the church in Colossae. It was not Paul. It was Epaphras who probably received the Gospel in Ephesus and carried it back to Colossae.

Look at his desire in Colossians 4.12. Paul writes, Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ Jesus, greets you, always struggling on your behalf in his prayers that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God.

His great desire for the church as he's not with them, as he's currently with Paul, likely in his Roman imprisonment, is that the church that he loves, the place that he's from, would be mature and fully assured in the will of God.

It's probable that a praxis actually traveled to be with Paul because of the heresies that are encircling and are within this church in this time.

This letter seems to be written to address these particular things. We don't know the exact nature of the heresies, but likely Epaphras said, I don't know how to address these things, but Paul will know.

[16:58] Maybe I could get him to write a letter and set some of these things straight. So his great desire is that they be mature in Christ. So the work of Paul's ministry was to warn and teach everyone concerning coming judgment and the way of salvation in order that those he ministered to would become mature in Christ.

And this is also the work of our ministry. You have a part to play in the sanctification of the saints. We need you. If you're not a part of this church, someone needs you.

A fellowship of Christ needs you. There's limited capacity of individuals. I don't know how many of you know me very well, but something that you should know about me is that I'm extremely introverted.

I really don't like being in the spotlight, literally and figuratively. It's not really the place I enjoy playing.

If I've ever insulted you unintentionally because I walked by you on a Sunday morning, it's because I've recessed into my head and I've got something on my mind and I just zip right past you.

[18:09] I don't mean to do this thing. I don't mean to insult you, but it's the way that God has made me. I have to work hard. I have to rely deeply on his grace to be open and be with you and to impart myself to you.

It's a difficult thing for me. Very small capacity, I think, for relationship. Some of you have more capacity. For relationship. Some of you are incredibly extroverted.

You absolutely exhaust me with your extroversion. It's astounding to me. Absolutely astounding to me. But what a beautiful picture of the way in which God brings us together and gives us varying gifting.

But whether you're extremely introverted or extremely extroverted, we all have some capacity for deep relationship because we have only so much time in our days. In deep relationship, meaningful relationship takes time.

It's a necessity of it. We have to work at it. In an article published in Psychology Today, this is a secular article, British anthropologist Robin Dunbar wrote a book called How Many Friends Does One Person Need?

[19:20] And in it, he argues that you can only keep friendships with about 150 people at any given time because, quote, Don't ask me to explain what that means.

And, this in turn limits group size where stable interpersonal relationships can be maintained, end quote. Dunbar says his number of 150, quote, refers to those people with whom you have a personalized relationship, one that is reciprocal and based around general obligations of trust and reciprocity, end quote.

There's just only so much we can handle. Social media is making this more difficult for us because now we have so many friends. We're not really, by this definition, friends with any of them.

We're very wide and not very deep with our relationships these days. It makes it very difficult to be devoted to people when you feel like so many people expect so much of you.

It seems that you just can't make anybody happy. And what I'm positing to you is that our problem is that we're extending ourselves way too far because some people don't extend themselves at all.

[ 20 : 36 ] There are too few people in many churches, including ours, that do a lot of work. And it's difficult to do well because of the limit of time. But if we would all be involved and engaged in these processes, we could easily manage the load.

This article goes on to say, our theoretical circle of 150 is not a homogenous social group. That is to say that it's not 150 and they all interact just with each other. Right?

There's a lot of overlapping in our spheres of influence. Dunbar explains, but rather consists of four layers or, quote, circles of acquaintanceship, end quote, which scale relative to each other by a factor of three.

I don't know what that means. An inner core of five intimates and then successive layers of 15, 50, and 150. Oh, now I know what it means. With each successive circle, the number of people included increases, but the emotional intimacy decreases.

You get what he's saying. You can only be so close to so few and you can know these people on some degree and you can know the names of people out here or recognize their faces. Right? But there's a reality to this.

[ 21 : 42 ] The way that we're designed, the way that we're geared, is that we can only do so much with so many. We have to get this. I can't minister personally to each and every one of you.

It's an impossibility. My wife can't minister individually to each and every one of the women in this church. It's an absolute impossibility. And if we try, we will most certainly die.

I didn't mean to rhyme that, but that's the word that popped into my head. It's just too, it's too much. We get spread too thin. And there's a great deal of challenge, and Sam and I talk about this much, that we really feel like we don't do anybody any real service because we're spread too thin.

We can't really devote ourselves to anybody. And what that means for this church and any church that you may be a part of, whether you're a guest here today or just across your life, that you need to invest yourself in people.

So this is the work of Paul's ministry. And it's our work as well. Let's look fourthly at the strength of Paul's ministry. Verse 29.

[ 22 : 56 ] For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me. For this, the things that were aforementioned in the text, right?

Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom that we may present everyone mature in Christ. To this end, I toil. The word toil means to work to the point of exhaustion. Struggling. This word here, we get our English word for agonized, derived from the Greek word for struggling here. To work and to struggle to this end. What I would say to you is that no one can faithfully serve Jesus Christ without working hard.

And there's a great deal of apathy in the church. A great deal of laziness in the church. Christians should be the busiest people on the planet because we work in weighty matters.

Now, don't hear me saying to you that it's not okay to rest at times. It is. It's good and important. To work hard, you have to rest or else you'll run yourself into the ground. But we should be the busiest people because the things that we're to be about have great eternal weight.

[ 24 : 11 ] They matter in eternity. We're not simply building businesses and making money. We're not simply storing things away. Stuff that's all turning to dust.

We're dealing with eternal things. We must work hard. There's a mandate placed upon us as Christian people to do so.

But we must do so by the strength that God works in us. The power of Paul's ministry was not in his education, a brilliant man, or his cultural heritage, in his preaching prowess, or in his charisma. ministries built on these types of things are absolutely doomed to fail or meet some measure of success that's not a measure that God would use.

Paul relied on God's energy that he powerfully worked within. And he kind of stacks these descriptors up. God's energy that he powerfully works within me.

[ 25 : 11 ] And this doesn't mean in proportion with. I work and I labor in proportion with the energy that God gives me. Paul's not talking about measures of grace given in gifting to the church.

He rather means I work with or by means of in reliance upon God's power. The things that I'm doing don't happen apart from God's work in me.

1 Corinthians 15.10 Paul writes, But by the grace of God I am what I am and his grace towards me was not in vain. On the contrary I worked harder than any of them though it was not I but the grace of God that is with me.

Philippians 2.12-13 I love these types of texts that so he so carefully weaves together our responsibility and God's sovereign strength in our lives.

Philippians 2.12-13 Therefore my beloved as you have always obeyed so now not only in my presence but much more in my absence work out your own salvation with fear and trembling for it is God who works in you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

[ 26 : 25 ] Sam Storms in the Hope of Glory said it like this Apart from the conscience consistent concentrated reliance on the power of God burnout is a sure thing.

You try to operate under your own strength for all of this ministry that we are we are meant to be doing this call that's laid upon our lives as a body of Christ burnout is a sure thing.

So how do we consciously consistently and concentratedly rely on the power of God? How do we do this thing that Sam Storms is suggesting that we do?

Paul gives us a clue to that chapter 3 verse 16 this letter to the Colossians I mentioned it previously let the word of Christ dwell in you richly let the word of Christ dwell in you richly fam we need to be studying this book and knowing it I fear that too often this book is just a book amongst a knot of other books I've got a whole study downstairs just full of books too many books to even handle my father gifted me his library I've got books in boxes I don't even know what they are there's so many of them and the great danger is that we put the Bible up on that shelf with all of the others and we hold it in the same regard this is God's word to us and beyond that the spirit of God uses the word of God to affect us this is the tool that he uses as Wes mentioned previously the sword sharper than a two-edged sword this is the way in which the spirit affects us not through our feelings right but through the word of God knowing his word

J.I. Packer said well the holy spirit's ordinary way of working in us is through the working of our own minds and wills he moves us to act by causing us to see reasons for moving ourselves to act read that last sentence to you again he moves us to act by causing us to see reasons for moving ourselves to act that we know the scriptures that we have an eternal perspective that we see things from where God stands that we recognize who he is and how he's working in the world we have this biblical world view not one that's caught up in the momentary pleasures but in the long lasting in the eternal things it makes it easy for us to make decisions about our money as an example I want to store it for myself Trevor in heaven if I know this to be true the spirit works it in me he changes my desires to desire the things that God desires he wants me to gain more of him to know him more that one day I'll know him forever we gotta know the scripture we have to make ourselves available for the application of the scripture in our lives and I'll talk a bit more about our minds and hearts in the next point to further drive the point of

[ 29 : 34 ] Paul's labor chapter 2 verse 1 he writes for I want you to know how great a struggle I have for you that word struggle again and for those at Laodicea and for all who have not seen me face to face again Paul had never visited the Colossian church he also had not the Laodicean church and there were others right the gospel was having its effect apart from Paul God was moving and working in the known world apart from Paul's ministry but he finds himself having a struggle for them as well right having a great and deep concern for the church I want to show you a wonderful scriptural example of this if you will turn with me to 2nd Corinthians chapter 11 I'll begin reading in verse 23 are they servants of

Christ I am a better one he says I am talking like a madman he is making tongue in cheek comparison I'm talking like a madman with far greater labels far more imprisonments with countless beatings and often near death Paul lays out for us the suffering of his ministry verse 24 five times I received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one three times I was beaten with rods once I was stoned three times I was shipwrecked a night and a day I was adrift at sea on frequent journeys in danger from rivers danger from robbers danger from my own people danger from gentiles danger in the city danger in the wilderness danger at sea danger from false brothers in toil and hardship through many a sleepless night in hunger and thirst often without food in cold and exposure and then here's what I'm leading us to verse 28 and apart from other things there's the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches you see the way in which he toiled and struggled

Paul was spending himself for the sake of others we see at the beginning of Romans chapter 9 that Paul wishes that he himself would be accursed cut off from the blessing of Christ that his brothers the Jewish people would know the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ this deep yearning longing desire for the good of others in the church and those who are yet to be counted in the

church do we yearn in this way Paul worked hard by the strength of God and we also should work hard to warn and teach everyone concerning coming judgment and the way of salvation in order that those who we minister to will become mature in Christ and we should most certainly do so by meditating on the strength that God graciously supplies fifthly the aim of Paul's ministry further developed last week's point one verse 25 chapter one

Paul says to make the word of God fully known and I posited to you that the purpose of God in history and Paul's aim in ministry rightly so is that the gospel of reconciliation spread to all the peoples of the world in order to yield God centered Christ exalting churches to make the word of God fully known verse 2 and 3 are an expansion of this that their hearts may be encouraged being knit together in love to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery which is Christ in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge there's a phenomenal amount to be said about those two verses and I'm going to pick up some of that in next week's sermon to lead us into our next text but briefly concerning these two verses this morning Paul has this desire this aim of his ministry that their hearts may be encouraged the heart is the inner person the very center of our lives and how does this relate to what has been previously stated verse 28 him we proclaim warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom that we represent everyone mature in Christ it's connected to this proclamation the warning and the teaching which are things that come into our minds and affect who we are the mind and the heart are never divorced from each other you need to get this straight the mind and the heart are never divorced from each other the proper view of man is a dichotomous view we have the external and the internal beloved please don't understand it any other way right too often

Christians try to separate the mind and the heart there are whole denominations that very largely worship feeling experience both should be true both should be at play but the two should never be divorced from one another let me give you a couple of examples from the scriptures proverbs 4 23 says keep your heart with all vigilance for from it flows the springs of life some translations say guard your heart with all vigilance how do you do this type of thing with your mind psalm 26 2 prove me oh lord and try me test my heart and my mind god used Paul for the strengthening of the church the encouragement of their hearts the strengthening of their hearts acts 18 23 luke records after spending some time there referring to antioch Paul departed and went from one place to the next through the region of!

[ 35 : 56 ] Galatia and Phrygia strengthening all the disciples and God uses us for the very same purpose with all the things that we've said before this proclamation this warning and this teaching in order that we may present one another mature in Christ our hearts are encouraged our hearts and minds!

strengthened! He goes on to say that they would be knit together in love or united together in love and this aorist verb helps explain the main verb of the sentence which is that they may be encouraged the strengthened heart and mind is one filled with love the properly encouraged heart is one filled with love in fact love is the necessary balance of a strong mind many of us know those people who get their knowledge before their maturity love seems to come with the maturing process and they go picking fights about unnecessary things many of us are like babies learning to walk because our heads are just so big and heavy Wes mentioned Graham earlier it's a good example not walking quite so well sometimes because his head causes him to fall over John MacArthur said Christianity is not mindless enthusiasm but neither is it lifeless intellectual orthodoxy there's a healthy balance to be found in this and Paul's desire for them is that they would have hearts encouraged minds strengthened and they would be knit together in love in the high priestly prayer Jesus prayed for Christian unity these hearts knit together John 17 verses 20 through 23 let me invite you to turn there with me this is enough text for you to see it for yourself I would always invite you to turn with me anywhere I go but for the sake of time I try to roll through some things John 17 beginning of verse 20 I do not ask for these only he's just been praying for the disciples but also for those who will believe in me through their word all of us that they may all be one just as you father are in me and I in you that they also may be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me the glory that you have given me

I have given to them that they may be one even as we are one I in them and you in me that they may become perfectly one so that the world may know that you sent me and love them even as you loved me I guess prayer for them is that the Christian church we bound together in order to give this expression of the way in which the father and Christ are one that the father sent Christ into the

world it's astounding!

final apologetic the final proof of the gospel of glory he went on to write in John 13 the point was that if an individual Christian does not show love toward other true Christians the world has the right to judge that he is not a Christian here in John 17 the text I just read to you Jesus is stating something else which is much more cutting much more profound we cannot expect the world to believe that the father sent the son that Jesus claims are true and that Christianity is true unless the world sees some reality of oneness of true Christians now that is frightening should we not feel some emotion at this point end quote the way in which one of the primary ways in which God intended for the gospel to be believed is that Christian people are united together in love this takes a great deal of work we've been talking about toiling and struggling to this great end that we work to maintain the unity of the spirit the spirit has unified us already we just have to work at maintaining said unity this means that you don't dip when things get a little bit rough you get slightly offended! [ 40 : 35 ] by somebody you work out these types of things church is not a thing that we come and consume it is a people called out by God I think one of our major problems is that we too often think of the church as something outside of us right Walmart is a store I have no allegiance to Walmart it's where I occasionally go get things because it's convenient they'll likely have what I'm looking for that's not what the church is the church is the people the church is not this property in this building it's us commit yourself to a group to a fellowship of believers whether it's here or someplace else commit yourself to the people not the programs that exist work through the hard things that we have to work through together as a church progress in truth together I'm not always going to get it right and I need you I need you to partner with me you may have noticed twice this morning I've called you fam I'm going start doing that a lot more often right you don't just dip out on your family it may be hard sometimes to be with your family they invite you on a vacation and you go right you spend time with them you invest in them we should do the same thing with our faith family it's important that we get this the church is not something outside of us the church is us he expands upon this and like

I said I'm going to get into it next week for the sake of time he wants them to have full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery which is Christ confident knowledge of Christ and lives that act according to said knowledge this is the aim of his ministry and ours Paul desired that the Colossian believers hearts and minds would be strengthened and that they would be united in love and we should desire the exact same thing if you don't you have to ask yourself why we should labor to see this become a reality amongst us to the glory of God let's pray!