

Questions

1. What does it mean to have strong roots in Christ and his truth? What are the two big (good) consequences of having strong roots?
2. Why did Paul need to suffer and struggle to grow the church and strengthen its roots in Christ?
3. Read Colossians 1:25-27, and 2:2. What is the mystery Paul keeps referring to? Is it still a mystery? Why or why not?
4. What are some ways that Christians today might be tempted into thinking there is a kind of greater knowledge or higher-level version of Christianity? What *should* it look like to grow in maturity and wisdom?
5. Which of the four "reasonable-but-deceptive" arguments do you hear most frequently, and in what context? Which argument, if any, have you most struggled with personally?
6. In general, why do you think "reasonable-but-deceptive" arguments sound so reasonable?
7. In the hard labors of living faithfully as Christians, how can you encourage other people and contribute to loving unity in the church (Colossians 2:2)?

*After each service, if you need prayer,
someone will be available up front to pray with you.*

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Suffering for a Strong Faith

Colossians 1:24 - 2:5

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Paul shows us that suffering is necessary for growing the church as well as strengthening our roots in Christ so that we can resist reasonable-sounding lies about the true gospel of Christ.

Themes of Colossians (Roots, Growth, Stability)

(1) Roots in Christ and his truth...

(2) ...produce a healthy, fruitful, growing church...

(3) ...and provide stability in the face of false teaching.

Suffering is necessary for growing the church (1:24-29)

Paul is suffering for the church everywhere, especially the Gentiles

Why is he suffering for the church?

1:25, 27, 28

Acts 9:15-16

"I am completing in my flesh what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for his body" (Colossians 1:24)

Wrong interpretations (insufficiency of Christ, treasury of merit)

Philippians send Epaphroditus to Paul (Philippians 2:30)

Right interpretation: Jesus sent Paul to serve on his behalf, just like the Philippians sent Epaphroditus to serve on their behalf.

Suffering is necessary for strengthening the church's roots in Christ (2:1-3)

Strengthened roots are necessary to resist reasonable-sounding lies about the true gospel of Christ (2:4-5)

Four reasonable-sounding, deceptive arguments related to suffering

1. Suffering is an indication that your faith is weak.
2. Rejection of the gospel likely indicates a problem with our gospel message or our gospel messengers.
3. Things used to be so much better.
4. This shouldn't be so hard!