

Colossians Complement #6

Suffering and Rejoicing

Colossians 1:24 – I now rejoice in my sufferings...

Observation #1 about Paul's sufferings:

When he rejoiced in his sufferings, he was not selfish.

- Who did Paul suffer for (Col. 1:24)?
- Why might his motivation for sacrifice transform Paul's suffering?
(Colossians 3:16; Acts 20:20-35, Philippians 2:4, Galatians 5:13)

Observation #2 about Paul's sufferings:

He expected suffering as part of God's plan for him.

- What does he mean that he filled up what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ (Col. 1:24)?
- Why might Paul expect to suffer for Christ's sake?
(Acts 9:15-16, 2 Cor. 11:23-28)
- Is this kind of suffering God's will for only the apostles?
(2 Tim. 1:8, 3:12, 1 Peter 4:12-13)

If we are going to suffer as believers, how does God want us to think about suffering?

- Colossians 1:11, compared with other Scriptures, leads to two conclusions about rejoicing and suffering in the life of a believer:

(1) It is God's will for believers to suffer, sometimes, in this life.

(2) It is God's desire to strengthen believers to rejoice as we suffer.

Discussion Questions

1. Which verse stood out to you tonight? Why?
2. How does knowing God's character impact how you view your own suffering?
3. Do you have a tendency to see suffering on a merely human level?