

Christ in You: Hope of Glory

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Preacher: Paul Barker

[0 : 00] Let's pray. God, your word is light and life.

We thank you for it. We thank you for Paul's ministry of the proclamation of your glorious word. And we pray now that you may fill us with the knowledge of your will, with all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that we may lead lives worthy of Jesus.

Amen. I don't particularly want to suffer. What about you? I guess most of you would probably agree with me.

You don't particularly want to suffer. Most of us fear suffering. Many of us in middle age fear the suffering of old age. Many of us hate suffering and hate pain.

Our most dreaded event may be going to the dentist or, for me, the optometrist. There's a proliferation of painkillers in our society.

[1 : 21] Maybe that's partly why there is so much drug abuse and alcohol abuse. People somehow becoming numb to pain and suffering.

Not necessarily physical pain alone, but psychological, mental pain as well. It's interesting how our society is always trying to get rid of or end suffering.

So the great campaign for euthanasia that's going on around the world and in our own country is because they think it's a noble thing to end suffering. At the heart of Buddhism are four noble truths which are really about trying to get rid of suffering in its cause and in its effects.

And most of us, if we're honest, don't particularly want to or like suffering. And when we see somebody who somehow revels in it, we think they're a bit of an oddball, a strange masochist.

And surely, surely, we would think the Apostle Paul must be one of those. Is he peculiar?

[2 : 42] What's wrong with him that he says, I rejoice in my sufferings? Well, let me say this is no idle boast. We saw this morning, as it happened coincidentally, that as Wayne preached from Acts 16, Paul was in Philippi.

He was thrust by a false charge against him into jail, feet bound. And there during the night, what was he doing?

Writing a letter of complaint to the Roman governor saying, I'm a Roman citizen and I'm here badly. Get me out. No, he didn't do that. Was he whinging and complaining to Silas?

Not at all. Was he shouting at the top of his voice to keep the jailer from sleeping so that the jailer would let him out of jail? Not that either. He was singing hymns.

He was rejoicing and praising God there in the midst of his suffering in prison. A strange thing to do, we might say. Was Paul really rather peculiar?

[3 : 47] Why could he say, I rejoice in my sufferings? And why did he, in fact, rejoice in his sufferings? And not just in Philippi when he was in jail, but so often through his ministry.

If you read in a couple of spots in 2 Corinthians, we read quite a catalogue of suffering. Paul had been hungry, homeless, thirsty, deprived, unpaid, weary from walking around Europe and Asia for the ministry of the gospel.

Lashed, beaten, imprisoned, stoned, rejected, expelled and shipwrecked. And many of those things happened more than once. So why does Paul say?

How can he say, I rejoice now in my sufferings? We could understand him grumbling. We could understand his litigation, his cries and lamentations.

But rejoicing? Is he really mad? As some accused him of being. What makes Paul's suffering an object of rejoicing?

[4 : 55] The answer is actually easy. But profound as well. The answer is Jesus.

It is Jesus that is the grounds for Paul's rejoicing in suffering. It is Jesus who makes Paul able to rejoice in suffering.

The same Jesus we heard last week. Supreme over all. First born in all creation. The head of all things. The one through whom everything was made. The one in whom everything coheres and holds together.

Because Jesus is supreme. Because Jesus is Lord of all. And sovereign over all. Because God's will is to bring everything together under Jesus the head.

Paul can rejoice in his sufferings. Because that hymn that we said together a few minutes ago. Paul is convinced is true.

[5 : 56] He can rejoice in his sufferings. What's the connection between those two things? Why is this glorious statement about Jesus the grounds for Paul rejoicing in suffering?

Why? Well if Jesus is Lord over all. As that hymn suggests. Which summarises really what Christian faith is. If all thrones and rulers and powers are subordinate to Jesus.

As that hymn suggests. If Jesus truly makes peace with all through the blood of his cross. If Jesus alone is the means of God reconciling all things to himself.

If Jesus alone holds all things in this universe together. And keeps it and sustains it. Then suffering for that Jesus.

Ought to be joyful. Indeed. As Paul had earlier said. Part of the life that is worthy of the Lord. Is that in all things we're giving thanks to God with joy.

[7 : 01] Because of what Jesus has done for us. We can rejoice in our sufferings like Paul. When they are sufferings for Jesus.

Because we know the outcome. We know the purpose. We know where it fits in the grand big picture of the universe. That is.

It is part of God's will and plan and purpose. To bring all things reconciled to himself. In the Lord of all. Jesus Christ.

Paul expresses it this way. I am now rejoicing in my sufferings. For your sake. And in my flesh. I am completing what is lacking.

In Christ's afflictions. For the sake of his body. That is the church. That's a very curious expression. It's led some to interpret this in.

[7 : 59] Odd ways. Paul is not saying. That Jesus' afflictions. Are inadequate. Or incomplete. Or lacking.

To bring atonement. For the sins of the world. That's not what he's saying. He's not suggesting that Jesus' act. Of atonement. Somehow doesn't do the job.

What then is lacking. The context of these verses. Make it very clear. In fact. A standard thing of interpretation. Not just of the Bible.

But of any written document. Is that the context. Gives meaning. To the word. The phrases. The sentences. And Paul. Here is telling us. How and why.

He suffers. And how that. Complements. Or fills up. Or completes. What he says is. Lacking in Christ's afflictions. It's not. Jesus' accomplishment.

[8 : 53] To bring salvation. Itself. That is lacking. Or incomplete. Or deficient. But rather. It's the spread. Of the news. Of that event. That is still to happen.

Jesus suffered. To accomplish. Salvation. For the whole world. And Paul. And others. Are to suffer. To spread.

The message. Of that salvation. To the world. And so. What you find. In the verses. In this section. Are Paul. Is reflecting. On his ministry. Of the proclamation. Of the gospel.

That indeed. He's just summarized. In that previous paragraph. That we've said together. Paul expresses it. This way. In 2 Corinthians 4. He says. In my body. I carry around.

The death of Jesus. That is. He's not saying. Somehow. He suffers. And that atones. For sins. And somehow. Does what Jesus' own.

[9 : 49] Atonement. Is insufficient to do. Not at all. Paul's suffering. Is for the ministry. Of the proclamation. Or the propagation. Or the spread. Of the message.

Of Jesus. Atoning death. For the sins. Of the world. There's another connection. That's important here. As well. The message. Of the suffering.

Of Jesus. That brings salvation. For the world. Is then presented. To the world. Through followers. Of Jesus. Who themselves.

Suffer. That is. Paul. Isn't living. The sort of. Luxurious. Limousine. Life. Of an apostle. But pointing back. To someone else. Suffering for them.

He in fact. Reflects. The saviour. As he suffers. Not. He's not. On a cross. Of course. But in the sufferings. That I mentioned. The beatings. The lashings. The rejections.

[10 : 43] And expulsions. And stonings. And all that sort of stuff. That is. Paul fits. The pattern. Of the saviour. And his own sufferings. Are for the spread.

Of the message. To the world. And here again. Is another important. Connection. To get straight. The hymn. That was just. Said. By Paul. Written by Paul.

That we've said. Is about the absolute. Supremacy. Of Jesus. Over the whole universe. Everything. That's made. Jesus is Lord. And at the end of time.

Will be acknowledged. As Lord. By all things. He died. To reconcile. All things. To himself. Therefore. If that is God's.

Will and purpose. As Paul has made clear. As we've seen. The last two weeks. Then what needs. To happen. Is for that. Statement. Of God's.

[11 : 35] Will and purpose. To be spread. To the whole world. That is because. Jesus is the Lord. Of the whole universe. That message. Has to go. To the whole. Of the universe. And Paul's ministry.

Therefore. Compliments. The universal. Lordship. Of Jesus. Of Jesus. Not because. Jesus is somehow. Deficient. Or lacking. In the sense. Of being inadequate. But because.

What Jesus does. Is absolutely. Adequate. For the whole world. Paul. As a fellow. Sufferer. Is to spread. Is to spread. The gospel. To the ends. Of the earth. And not just. Paul. But other apostles.

But. Paul in particular. Had that commission. To be the minister. To the Gentiles. As he was commissioned. After his. Damascus road experience. As we can read. In the acts.

Of the apostles. Of the apostles. If Christ. Were not supreme. Though. If Jesus. Was not. Lord of all. If he was not.

[12 : 31] The only means. Of salvation. And reconciliation. With God. If his. Blood on the cross. Did not bring peace. For the whole universe. If Jesus.

Is important. And ahead of a bit. But not all. Then Paul. Wouldn't rejoice. In his sufferings. Jesus. May in fact. Be very powerful.

He may be. Head of quite a lot. His death. May accomplish. Salvation. Or be sufficient. For salvation. For quite a lot. But if it's not. Total.

If it's not. Universal. Then Paul. Could not rejoice. Because the outcome. Of that suffering. The outcome. Of the ministry.

Is in doubt. That is. It's all premised. On the fact. That Jesus. Is absolutely. Lord of everything. There is nothing. Outside. The dominion. Of Jesus.

[13 : 25] And if there is. Even something. Outside. The dominion. Of Jesus. Then it's. All in doubt. There could be. No certainty. No certain hope. And therefore. No rejoicing.

In the midst. Of sufferings. But because Christ. Is Lord of all. Is supreme. Over all. Then Paul. Has confidence. That even in his. Sufferings. He can rejoice.

Because it's part of God's. Good purpose. To bring all things. Under the glorious. Head. Of Jesus Christ. Notice too. That as Paul describes it.

In verse 24. He is suffering. For your sake. For the Colossians sake. Those Paul's not talking here. About having a cold. Or a sore leg.

Or a blister. On his foot. Paul is talking here. About suffering. For your sake. For the Colossians sake. That is. It's suffering. For being.

[14 : 21] A minister. Of the gospel. Now remember. That Paul never went to Colossae. As far as we know. He's writing to people. Whom by and large. He doesn't know. This is a church.

That Epaphras founded. As we saw two weeks ago. Not Paul. So he's writing. As a. An outsider. As an unknown person. Maybe by reputation. He's known.

But. He's not writing to people. Whom he knows. Whom. He's actually gone there. And preached. And established the church. As he did. In Ephesus. And Thessaloniki. And Philippi. And Corinth. And other places. And yet.

He can say. I'm suffering. For your sake. You see. In the next verse. At the end of the same verse. Sorry. He says. That his own sufferings. Are.

Completing. What's lacking. In Christ's afflictions. For the sake. Of his body. That is. The church. Mostly. The word church. Refers to local church. But here.

[15 : 15] As it was. In fact. In the hymn. In verse 18. As we saw last week. It's the universal church. And therefore. The Colossian church. Is part of that. Paul's ministry. In some places.

Is for the sake. Of the body of Christ. The whole church. Which benefits. From Paul's. Ministry. And it's the same church. That Jesus is head of.

As was said. In verse 18. That's why Paul says. In verse 25. I became. Its servant. That is the servant. Of the church.

Here. Sometimes. Paul is a servant. Of Jesus. Other times. A servant. Of the gospel. He's a servant. Of the church. Not that he does. What the church wants. But he serves. The church. By preaching. The gospel.

I became. Its servant. According to God's. Commission. That was given. To me. For you. To make the word. Of God. Fully known. He's alluding. Back to the Damascus.

[16 : 10] Road. And then. With Ananias. In Damascus. That experience. Of being commissioned. By God. To be the. Apostle. To the Gentiles. That's what he's alluding. To. And he's.

Therefore. A servant. Of the church. As a servant. Of the gospel. And a servant. Of Jesus Christ. And he serves. The Colossians. Not by. Going there. In their case.

But by preaching. The gospel. Through the world. Making it. Fully. Known. As he says. At the end. Of verse. 25. Paul's task.

In making the word. Of God. Fully known. Is actually. Complimenting. His prayer. For the Colossians. Back in verse. Nine. Since the day. We heard of it.

We've not ceased. Praying for you. And asking. That you may be. Filled with the knowledge. Of God's will. In all spiritual wisdom. And understanding. And in verse.

[17 : 08] Yes. And that was what. Paul prayed. For them. That they may. In a sense. Know. In fullness. The gospel. And in verse 19. About Jesus.

He said. All the fullness. Of God. Was pleased. To dwell. Putting it together. All the fullness. Of God.

Dwells. In Jesus Christ. He is the Lord. Of all. And so. The task. Of Paul. Is to make him. Fully known. Known. To all. And known.

To all. In all. Its fullness. As well. That's what he's. Praying for the Colossians. But he's. Laboring for them. And that's. Indeed. God's will. That Jesus.

Be fully known. As indeed. He was. The fullness. Of God. The Lord. Of all. Is to be made. Known. To all. So the hymn.

[18 : 03] Is the basis. Of Paul's ministry. The hymn. Is driving. His ministry. That is. The lordship. Of Jesus. Overall. Is driving. Paul. To make Jesus.

Fully known. To all. The Colossian. Church. Being part. Of that. Well. Let me now. Give you. A formula. For making.

Millions. Of dollars. You take. Something. That's. Long. Hidden. A mystery. Something. From a long. Long.

Time. Ago. Something. A bit. Mysterious. You add. In a religious. Plot. You add.

In a terrible. Death. You add. In the theme. Of world. Domination. Dan. Dan. Brown. May be. A millionaire. But not.

[18 : 58] Paul. He suffered. See what he says. In verse 26. What he's making known. That is. The word of God. Is the mystery.

That has been hidden. Throughout the ages. And generations. But has now been revealed. To his saints. Dan Brown. Eat your heart out. A mystery.

In the Bible. Let's. Plumb its depths. And find out. What it's about. Let's. Crack the code. Of this. Spiritual mystery. But it didn't earn.

Paul millions. It earned him. Suffering. Because this is a true mystery. That Paul reveals. What's the code.

To crack this mystery. What is it about. What's Paul saying here. Simple. He tells us. The mystery.

[19 : 54] Is Jesus. It's not about some. Magic number. Under the Louvre. In Paris. Or something else. Is equally fanciful. It is Jesus.

Lord of all. As indeed. Paul wrote. In the passage. We saw last week. And if Jesus. Is Lord of all. Then it means. That Jesus. Is also. Lord of the Gentiles.

That is. That the Messiah. The Savior. Is not just. For the Jewish people. As so many Jewish people. Thought. But the Savior. For the Gentiles. And that the gospel. Is not just. To go within the bounds. Of Jerusalem.

And Judea. But in fact. To the ends. Of the earth. So Paul goes on. To say. In verse 27. To them. God chose. To make known. How great. Among the Gentiles.

Are the riches. Of the glory. Of this mystery. The saints. Are Christians. Believers. Jew or Gentile. And the mystery.

[20 : 51] Is about Jesus. But because Jesus. Is the Lord of all. This is a mystery. That includes. The riches of grace. And mercy in the gospel. To Gentiles. As well as to Jews.

When Paul uses. The language of mystery. He's not talking about. A puzzle. That you get in the. Newspaper. And you. Ponder over. And try and decipher. But rather. It's something.

That has not been. Fully revealed. Is hinted at. In the Old Testament. But in Jesus. And in the gospel. Is now. Fully revealed. It's not something.

That we have to puzzle over. He doesn't mean. Mystery in that sense. But rather. Something that has been. In a sense. Mysterious or hidden. But now is not. Now indeed.

Has been. Fully exposed. Fully revealed. And it's the gospel. Of Jesus. Indeed. Paul sums it up. At the end of verse 27. Saying that this mystery.

[21 : 46] To them. God chose. To make known. How great. Among the Gentiles. Are the riches. Of the glory. Of this mystery. And what is it? Christ in you. The hope. Of glory.

It is a mystery. In a sense. Hidden in the Old Testament. That salvation. Was for the Gentiles too. And looking back. Now that the mystery is revealed.

It's very clear. It's a mystery. Now revealed. From Jesus onwards. That salvation. Came through the death. Of Jesus. It's a mystery.

Now revealed. From Jesus onwards. That Jesus Christ. Crucified. Alone. Is the hope. Of glory. That's what Paul is summing up here.

This mystery is known. It's revealed. Not because Paul is clever. Not because he's cracked a code. But because God's revealed it in the gospel. In Jesus. And Jesus indeed is.

[22 : 45] The mystery. Revealed. That it's for all. He's Lord of all. Jew and Gentile. Christ in you. The hope. Of glory.

That's how Paul sums it up. At the end of verse 27. As we saw two weeks ago. We often use the word hope. In a. In a low way. I'm hoping that tomorrow.

Might be a bit warmer. But there's no certainty of that. Christian hope is certain. Christian hope is secure.

It is anchored. By the resurrection of Jesus. A real event. A true event. A historical. Factual event. And the resurrection of Jesus. Guarantees our hope.

And we saw two weeks ago. How the. Certainty of Christian hope. Will produce in us. Faith and love. And Paul commends the Colossians. For that demonstration. Faith and love. Produced by their hope.

[23 : 45] Paul says here. Christ in you. The hope. Of glory. He's not expressing. A wishful thought. That somehow. They may receive glory. But a confident.

Assertion. That believers. In Christ. And therefore. Indwelt. By Christ. Will certainly. Have a glorious.

Eternal destiny. With Christ. And with God. Because they've been. Reconciled to God. Through Christ. They've. Had peace. Made for them. Through the blood. Of Christ. Christ. It guarantees.

And secures. Theirs. And our. Eternal destiny. In. Christ. Our hope.

Is certain. Because of the resurrection. Of Jesus. From the dead. Because. Our hope. Is certain. Because. Our hope. Is so certain.

[24 : 37] That nothing. Can take away. That confidence. And hope. That eternal destiny. We can rejoice. In suffering. Because. We know.

That suffering. Is not stifling. Or thwarting. Or derailing. God. Bringing about. That eternal destiny. Of glory. With him. And with his son. For us. So.

We can even. Rejoice. In our sufferings. Because of the certainty. Of Christian hope. Our hope. Is certain. It ought to be certain. And therefore.

The glorious future. That Paul is summing up here. Christ in you. The hope of glory. Is our certain destiny. Glory. Not just meaning. A sort of. Las Vegas. Razzle dazzle.

Shining lights. But glory. Meaning. Perfection. And blamelessness. And irreproachability. In the presence of God. A holiness. Of moral character.

[25 : 31] A perfection. Of character. In the presence of Jesus. And glory. Is so often used. Especially in the Old Testament. To denote. Particularly.

The presence of God. The hope of glory. Is the hope of being. With God. Face to face. For eternity. Astonishing hope.

But a certain one. Because Jesus. Rose from the dead. Because he's supreme. Over all things. Because he's lord over all. In control of everything.

Including all. Powers and authorities. And dominions. As Paul has said. That hope. Is rock solid. Nothing. Can stop it.

Because Jesus. Is lord of all. And we can therefore. Have a sure. And certain hope. Of a glorious. Inheritance. With Jesus. In Christ alone.

[26 : 28] My hope. Is found. He is my light. My strength. My song. This cornerstone. This solid. This solid. Ground. Firm.

Through the fiercest. Drought. Or storm. Could you describe. Your Christian hope. In those words. Paul did. In effect. And we ought.

To be able to. As well. Paul had prayed. As we've seen. That the Colossian church. Will know God's will. Not in day by day.

Little decisions. But what is God's on about. On about. For this universe. That's what he prayed. In verse nine. As I've read it. A couple of times. Tonight already. The purpose.

Of knowing God's will. Is. Verse 10. Of chapter one. So that you may lead. Lives worthy. Of the Lord. Which is then described. In ways that we've seen. Two weeks ago.

[27 : 25] Fully pleasing to God. Bearing fruit. Growing in knowledge. Enduring with patience. Being strengthened. And giving thanks. With joy. That's what Paul's.

God's purpose is. For us. It's what Paul is. Prayed for. And what he's here. Laboring for. For the Colossians. In church. That's all because.

God's will. Is the Lordship. Of Christ. Over everything. As we saw last week. In verse 18. For example. Because of all of that. What does Paul preach?

Jesus. Pure and simple. In a way. He says in verse 28. Him. It is he. Whom we proclaim. The emphasis is on the object.

Of the proclamation. Not that. Oh. We're proclaiming. Jesus. But it's. Jesus. Whom we proclaim. That's summing up his message.

[28 : 22] In effect. The content of the faith. Jesus. The same Jesus. Who's Lord of all. Firstborn of all creation. The head of the church. The one in whom. Everything's created. And holds together.

That Jesus. Paul. Proclaims. So that. Verse 28. Having warned. And taught everyone. In all wisdom.

So that. We may present. Everyone. Mature. In Christ. Notice. Four times. In that verse. Every. Well. It's the word all.

Three times. It's translated as. Everyone. And once is the word all. It's the same word though. All people. All people. All wisdom. All people. Paul can.

Speak about that. As the object of his ministry. Because. As we saw last week. Jesus is Lord of. All things. All people. The emphasis on all.

[29 : 21] Was in that hymn. As well. So because Jesus is Lord of all. Paul is proclaiming Jesus. To all people. Warning. Everyone.

All people. Teaching. Everyone. All people. With all wisdom. So that we may present. Everyone. Or all people. Mature in Christ.

That's his ministry. Mature. Means to be wholehearted. Complete and undivided. And to present them. Is a language he used back in verse 22. There in verse 22.

Jesus has reconciled in his fleshly body. Through death. So as to present you. Holy and blameless. And irreproachable. Before him. That's what Jesus death accomplishes. And what Paul is therefore.

Filling up or completing. Is the proclamation of that. So that. He may present. Everyone. Mature in Christ. It's not two competitions here.

[30 : 21] Of Jesus presenting. And Paul. It's the same thing. Jesus work. Is to present us. Blameless before. Himself. On the day of glory. And Paul's ministry. Of the proclamation. Of Jesus.

Is so that we are presented. On that day. Mature in Christ. It's the same thing. It's complimentary. Not in contradiction. Or competition. And because Jesus.

Is Lord of all. Paul is prepared. To expend. All his energy. On this ministry. So he says. In verse 29. For this. I toil. And struggle.

With all the energy. That he powerfully. Inspires within me. Because Jesus. Is Lord of all. And his ministry. Is to all people. Paul is prepared. To expend. All his energy.

But notice. The balance here. All his energy. That God. Powerfully. Inspires within me. God's power. Pulls energy.

[31 : 16] So we might think. Oh if God's power. Is going to convert people. I'll just sit back. In my armchair. And wait. Or on the other hand. We may so. Ignore God's power. That we just. Slave ourselves.

To the gospel. But Paul's got it. In the bright balance. God's empowering him. But Paul is. Pushing his energy. To the full. Empowered by God. That's what ministry is about. Sometimes people think.

That the ministry. Of proclamation. Is a sort of. Fairly easy life. In a way. Just stand up here. For half an hour. Or a bit longer. If you sort of. Get carried away. And say a few words.

And it's a pretty easy job. Really. Isn't it. Notice how Paul has talked about. Proclaiming him. In verse 28. And toiling. And struggling.

In verse 29. That is. It's not an easy ministry. Ministry is. Toil. Or labor. That's the first.

[32 : 13] Of those words. And it's struggle. That's a word. That suggests. Fighting. Or contending. Suggesting. Opposition. That's why it's hard. That's why he suffers.

Because there is opposition. Spiritual opposition. Often manifest in people. Who oppose him. And stone him. And lash him. And imprison him. And reject him. And expel him. And the same sorts of things.

Happen around the world today. Paul struggles much. In fact. He says in verse. One of chapter two. I want you to know. How much I'm struggling. For you. Fighting. Or contending.

For you. And for those in Laodicea. Twelve miles down the road. And for all. Who've not seen me. Face to face. Like the Colossians. He'd never been there.

Or to Laodicea. It seems. But he struggles for them. He labors for them. It's hard. Work. Paul had prayed.

[33 : 10] For the Colossians. That they be filled. With the knowledge. Of God's will. And what he prayed for. He labors for. He prayed in verse nine.

That you may be filled. With the knowledge. Of God's will. In all spiritual wisdom. And understanding. Knowledge. Wisdom. Understanding. See what he now says. In verse two.

Of chapter. Two. I want their hearts. To be encouraged. And united. In love. So that they may have. All the riches.

Of assured. Good understanding. And have the knowledge. Of God's mystery. That is Christ himself. In whom are hidden. All the treasures. Of wisdom and knowledge.

What Paul had prayed for. Was that they know Jesus. Really. Jesus is God's will. God's will. That's what he said. In the hymn. And what he prayed for.

[34 : 07] In chapter one. Verse nine. He is laboring. Striving. And struggling. For them. So that they may have. All the riches. Of assured. Understanding.

A confident. Understanding. And have the knowledge. Of God's mystery. That is. As we've seen. Jesus. Jesus in you. The hope of glory.

The gospel. Even for the Gentiles. Like the Colossians. In her. And in Jesus. Are hidden. All the treasures. Of wisdom. And knowledge. Paul's saying there.

Is that. Anything spiritual. That's worth knowing. Is found in Jesus. If you want to unlock. The key. To the purpose. Of the universe. You find that in Jesus.

If you want to be wise. About how you live. Jesus. Is the key. To understand that. When we think of wisdom. We often think of wisdom.

[35 : 04] As a sort of. Old person. Long white beard. Intellectual. Big library. Read lots of books. Think strange things. But wisdom here.

And in the Bible. In general. Is much more practical. It's not about being clever. Paul here. I'm sure. Has got in the back of his mind.

Something like. Proverbs chapter 2. A book of wisdom. My child. If you accept my words. And treasure up my commandments. Within you. Making your ear. Attentive to wisdom.

And inclining your heart. To understanding. If you indeed. Cry out for insight. And raise your voice. For understanding. If you. Seek it like silver. And search for it. As for hidden treasures.

Then you will understand. The fear of the Lord. And find the knowledge of God. For the Lord. God gives wisdom. From his mouth. Come knowledge. And understanding.

[36 : 02] He stores up. Sound wisdom. For the upright. He's a shield. To those who walk. Blamelessly. You see. Wisdom. Is not just intellectual. Wisdom.

Is demonstrated. By. Walking. Blamelessly. God guards. The paths of justice. And preserves. The way of his faithful ones. And then you'll understand.

Righteousness. And justice. And equity. Every good path. For wisdom. Will come into your heart. Knowledge. Will be pleasant. To your soul. Therefore. Walk. In the way of the good.

And keep. To the paths. Of the just. You see. The wise living. Is moral living. It's living. A life. Worthy. Of the Lord.

Which was Paul's purpose. In praying. Back in verse 10. And all of that. Is found in Jesus. Because of who Jesus is. We saw last week.

- [36 : 56] It drives us. To the worthy life. Because of Jesus. It drives us. To put on. Humility. And meekness. And godliness. And those sorts of. Characteristics.
- It drives us. To put on love. Because of Jesus. In Jesus. Are found. And all the treasures. Of wisdom.
- And knowledge. Not for being clever. But for leading a life. Worthy. Of the Lord. The Bible you see. Is never in the end.
- Simply legalistic. And moralistic. It drives us. To Jesus. So that we live. The righteous life. On earth. If the Colossians.
- Needed this reminder. About Jesus. So do we. They needed it. Because there were those. Teaching other things.
- [37 : 52] In their midst. It comes explicit. In verse 4. I am saying this. So that no one. May deceive you. With plausible arguments. If they are confronted.
- By false teaching. So are we. False teaching. Is deceptive. That verse told us. It seems plausible. That verse said. That is.
- It is easy. To be led astray. It is easy. To be conned. By heresy. To this point. It seems. The Colossians. Have resisted that. Verse 5. Says.
- That though I am absent. In body. Yet I am with you. In spirit. And I rejoice. To see your morale. And the firmness. Of your faith. In Christ. And Paul earlier on. Remember. Had begun. In verse 3. Of chapter 1.
- Rejoicing with thanksgiving. For their faith. And love. That are evidence. Of their firm hope. He prays. That they continue. In that. What Paul is speaking. And writing.
- [38 : 47] About Jesus here. For the Colossians. Is like an immunization. Against heresy. That is around them. It is not an antibiotic.
- For those who are already. Infected with heresy. I mean. It could function like that. But that is not the purpose. What I am saying is. The Colossians. Are being threatened. By wrong teaching. But to this point.
- Of Paul writing. They have not succumbed. And so. By proclaiming Jesus. As that hymn did. Paul is wanting to. Immunize them. Against the heresies.
- That are bound. Around them. How are we. Immunized against heresy. How do we detect it. When we. Watch something on television. In the early hours. Of some preacher.
- Or some two people. Knock at our door. At some stage. And take us. You know. Off guard. How do we make sure. That we don't end up. With something that sounds. So plausible.
- [39 : 42] There's so much. There's so much heresy around. In the popular media. In the magazines. The TV programs. That try to tell us. About a new discovery. About Jesus.
- And that he never died. Or lived. Or was. Whatever. Often seems very plausible. How do we strengthen ourselves. Not to fall into that. Jesus.
- Lord of all. Supreme over all. First born in all creation. All things. Created through him. All things holding together in him. The head of the church. And he will be Lord of all at the end.
- That's why Paul proclaims Jesus. So that we will be strong in our faith. With an assured understanding. So that we will not succumb.
- To the deception of wrong teaching. That's why Paul wrote verses 15 to 20. That great hymn. That's why he prayed for them. In verses 9 and 10 of chapter 1.
- [40 : 42] That's why Paul struggles and labors. And even suffers for them. As we've seen at the end of chapter 1. And the beginning of chapter 2. And that's why Paul proclaims Jesus.

As he said in verse 28. About 40 years ago nearly. There was a young girl. Woman.
Who was a believer. She would meet with other believers regularly. To hear the scriptures. And praise God and pray. Nothing unusual in that perhaps.

Although this was in Soviet Russia. The KGB. The KGB. The KGB. The KGB. The KGB.
The KGB. The KGB. Were clamping down on Christians. They. Bashed into the place.

That they were meeting one day. They bashed and threatened those who were there.
Including this young woman. Called Natasha. A week or two later.

[41 : 40] The KGB. The KGB. The KGB. The KGB. Came back. And there she was. Still with the scars of the first beating. But with a radiantly joyful face.

Even as she was beaten again. And that joy. In suffering. For Jesus. Was so troubling.

For one of those KGB agents. Sergei Kordakov. That he became a Christian. Later.

Jumping ship. As a KGB agent. Miraculously surviving a swim in icy waters. To the Canadian coast. Found and.

Kept and. Worshipped in Christian churches. Until. Sometime later. Thankfully after writing the story. He was killed. Confidence.

[42 : 40] In the glory. Of Jesus. Supreme. Over all. Will lead us to rejoice. Even in suffering. For his sake. Confidence.

In the glory of Jesus. Lord. Over all. Will lead us to having. Peace. Ruling in our hearts. Whatever situation. We find ourselves in life. Confidence.

In the glory of Jesus. Lord. Over all. Will lead us to. Put on love. Humility. And meekness. And kindness. To be forgiving people.

And confidence. In the glory of Jesus. Will lead us to do. Everything. For the Lord Jesus. With thankful hearts. With joy. No guilt.

In life. No fear. In death. This is the power. Of Christ. In me. From life's. First cry. To final breath. Jesus.

[43 : 39] Commands. My destiny. No power. Of hell. No scheme of man. Can ever pluck me. From his hand. So.

Till he returns. Or he calls me home. Here. In the power. Of Christ. I'll stand. Lord. Let's think quietly.

While the musicians. Come up. Before we sing our praise. To this Jesus. Jesus. Jesus.

You are. Lord. Of all. You are. Our Lord. You secured. Our hope. By your death.

On the cross. And glorious. Resurrection. From the dead. Strengthen us. Fill us. With the knowledge.

[44 : 46] Of your will. Guard us. Against error. And heresy. Fix our eyes. On the risen Jesus. That we may live lives.

Of thankfulness. To you. Living lives. Pleasing to you. And worthy. Of Jesus. And we pray this. For his sake.

Amen. We stand to sing.