

The True Call of Ministry (Col. 1:24-29)

I. The Suffering of Ministry (24)

A. Paul Rejoices in His Suffering

1. How many of us suffer in ministry
2. How many of us give up when suffering starts
3. How many of us rejoice when we suffer

B. Paul Suffers for Christ's Body

1. He shares Christ's (the body's) suffering in his flesh
2. He shares on behalf of Christ's body (church)
3. He fills the lack in Christ's sufferings
 - i. The enemy can't hurt Jesus
 - ii. The enemy can hurt Jesus' body (church)
 - iii. The enemy has his agents within the church walls
 - iv. The battle is being fought there

II. The Essence of Ministry (25-28)

A. The Stewardship of Ministry (25)

1. He was given this stewardship from God
 - i. It wasn't his decision
 - ii. God called him to do it
 - iii. No matter what happens, he is obedient
2. He was given this for the Church's benefit
 - a. Paul is a minister of the Word
 - i. He is to fulfill the preaching of God's Word
 - ii. He is to benefit the body of Christ with the word
 - b. The Battle is being waged in the church building
 - i. The saved are their needing to be fed
 - ii. The lost are their needing to be saved
 - iii. The wicked are there trying to stop both
 - iv. The best way to stop it is destroy the messenger

B. The Substance of Ministry (26-28)

1. Jesus is the Focus of Ministry (26-27)
 - a. He is God's Word Revealed (26)
 - i. He is the mystery hidden in the OT
 - ii. He is the mystery revealed in the NT
 - b. He is God's Word Received (27)
 - i. He is the glory of God's riches
 - ii. He is the fulfillment of Gentile promise
 - iii. He is the hope of glory
 - c. It is hard to focus on sufferings when He suffered so much
2. Jesus is the Gospel Itself (28)
 - a. He is the message
 - i. The Person of Christ is proclaimed
 - a. He is proclaimed with warning
 - b. He is proclaimed by teaching
 - ii. The person of Christ suffered for us

- iii. The preacher models his life after Christ
 - iv. The preacher will also suffer because of Him
 - b. He is the Fulfillment
 - i. The Person of Christ is the Goal
 - ii. The Person of Christ Completes the believer
 - iii. The Person of Christ is the reward
 - iv. The absence of suffering is not the reward
 - v. The comfort of life is not the reward
 - vi. Christ himself is the reward

This all sounds good and spiritual but how in the world can I actually do it?

III. The Power of Ministry (29)

- A. The Minister Labors for the Purpose of the Gospel
 - a. His work is not about bettering his life or circumstance
 - b. His work is not about bettering his people (physically)
 - i. He must meet felt needs
 - ii. He must comfort and love them
 - iii. He must not make these the focus of ministry
 - iv. He must keep the kingdom and the gospel 1st
- B. The Minister Labors in Christ's Power
 - a. No minister is able to accomplish this
 - b. No human can do it / they will all fail
 - c. Only through the power of Christ can it be accomplished
 - d. Christ gives this power for those He calls
 - e. Many times we fail to work in His strength
- C. The Minister is Mighty Through Christ's Power
 - a. Through His power the minister is unstoppable
 - b. He may lose all but His goal will still be accomplished