

## The Burden of Paul the Apostle

**Text: Colossians 2:1-5**

### Introduction

1. Review of Theme & Background (Key Verses: 2:9-10)
2. Chapter 2: Paul confronts the heresy head on. There is a definite tone of warning in chapter 2 (Vs. 4, 8, & 18).

### 4 Aspects to Paul's Burden...

#### I. The Description of His Burden (Vs. 1)

- A. A desire for it to be known.
- B. A description of its fervor.
  1. 'conflict' defined – wrestling, struggle (inner). This conflict was 'great'. Paul was deeply burdened for these believers.
  2. Other translations of the word: It is translated elsewhere as 'contention' (1. Thess. 2:2); 'fight' (1 Tim. 6:12); and 'race' (Heb. 12:1). It is the same word used to describe Christ's agony in the garden when he prayed (Luke 22:44). Another form of the word is found in Col. 1:29 where Paul strives for the sanctification of believers. The same word is used to describe the fervent prayers of Epaphras – "laboring fervently."

#### II. The Objects of His Burden (Vs. 1)

There are 3 groups of people mentioned...

- A. The Colossian Christians – "for you"
- B. The Laodicean Christians

\* The ministry of Epaphras in these 3 cities was an offshoot of Paul's ministry in Asia (Acts 19:10).

- C. The Christians who had not seen Paul.

## Christ is Sufficient – Colossians Series

II. Corinthians 11:28 – *“Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.”*

Question: How much care, concern & love do we have for Christ’s church? Do you take an interest in the spiritual well-being of other believers? In this respect, Paul is a wonderful example of Christ likeness.

### III. The Heart of His Burden (Vs. 2-3)

Paul greatly desires several things for the hearts of these believers. The **‘heart’** in Scripture refers to seat of the affections, the inner being/personality. It involves not just emotions but also our thoughts.

- A. Comforted = encouragement. The noun form of the same word is used to describe the ministry of the Holy Ghost as the Comforter (Jn. 14:16). Heresy unsettles and discourages the believer. This word is in the passive voice, indicating that the source of this comfort comes from another source apart from themselves.
- B. Unified (see Vs. 19)
  - 1. “knit together” - means to gather together, to unite. It is interesting to note that this same word is also translated elsewhere as ‘proving’ (Acts 9:22) and ‘instruct’ (I. Cor. 2:16). Truth is a powerful unifying force in the local church.

1. Cor. 1:10 *“Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.”*

Phil. 2:2 *“Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.”*

- 2. “in love” – divine love (God is love). Love is the great spiritual power that unites believers.

- C. Established/Enriched (see also 1:9-10)

Eph. 4:14 *“That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;”*

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1. The Disposition
  - a. “riches” – wealth, satisfaction & abundance.
  - b. “full assurance” – certain confidence. Abraham was “fully persuaded” that God could fulfill his promise (Rom. 4:21).
  - c. “understanding” – we grasp or get hold of the truth in our minds. It is more than just a lot of disjointed facts, it is a bringing together & unification of the truth.
2. The Doctrine
  - a. Mystery of God
  - b. Mystery of the Father
  - c. Mystery of Christ
    1. ‘hid’ – concealed in Christ but available to all who experience His salvation.
    2. ‘treasures’ – incomprehensible value. Christ is the store house.
    3. ‘wisdom’ – practical
    4. ‘knowledge’ – intellectual

\* “In Christ, as in a great storehouse, lie all the riches of spiritual wisdom, the massive ingots of solid gold which when coined into creeds and doctrines are the wealth of the church. All which we can know concerning God and man, concerning sin and righteousness and duty, concerning another life, is in Him Who is the home and deep mine where truth is stored...The central fact of the universe and the perfect encyclopedia of all moral and spiritual truth is Christ, the Incarnate Word, the Lamb slain, the ascended King.” Alexander Maclaren

\* “He who places secular knowledge, and the things of the world, before this study and sacred knowledge, prefers rubbish to treasure: for the mystery of the Gospel is treasure; all else is dung and dross.” John Davenant

**Phil. 3:8** *“Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,”*

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### IV. The Reason for His Burden (Vs. 4-5)

#### A. False Teachers (Vs. 4)

1. Deceptive – ‘beguile’ means to reason falsely, to reason alongside.
2. Persuasive – ‘enticing words’ refers to persuasive speech or oratory.

Rom. 16:17-18 *“Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.”*

#### B. Paul’s Absence (Vs. 5)

In the spirit he Rejoiced & observed:

1. Their Order
2. Their Steadfastness

Paul was concerned that these spiritual qualities were being eroded by the false teachers. It is as if he longs to be there personally to confront the issue. He impresses on them that he is there in spirit, taking an active interest in their spiritual condition.

### Conclusion