

“Hoping for Glory”
Colossians 1:24-29

I. The Fact of Paul’s Suffering for the Church

A. It was given to Paul to suffer for the gospel:

Acts 9:16 - For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name.

B. How did Paul’s suffering complete what was *lacking* in Christ’s afflictions?

1. Christ’s suffering for sin was already complete:

1 Peter 3:18a - For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God...

2. Two good theories on Paul’s meaning:

a. Completing the “Messianic Woes”. (Unlikely)

b. Suffering as Jesus would if He were physically present.

Philippians 2:29–30 (NIV) - ²⁹ So then, welcome him [back] in the Lord with great joy, and honor people like him, ³⁰ because he almost died for the work of Christ. He risked his life to make up for the help you yourselves could not give me (lit. “to fill up what was lacking in your service”).

3. Implications:

a. When other believers endure hardship for us, they are representing Jesus to us.

b. When we suffer for other believers, we are representing Jesus’ concern for them.

II. The Reason for Paul’s Suffering for the Church

A. To make God’s mystery known to the world, i.e. that Christ has come into the lives of the Gentiles by faith.

Ephesians 3:4–6 - ⁴ When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, ⁵ which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. ⁶ This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

B. The revelation of Christ's presence within them gave the Colossians a sure hope of eternal glory.

1. Nothing else was needed.
2. That message is still true for us today.

C. What kind of glory are we assured of with Christ (and can get only *from* Christ)?

1. The Glory of radiance of being.

Matthew 13:43 - "Then 'the righteous will shine forth as the sun' in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear."

2. The Glory of respect and adoration that comes from a perfect character.

Colossians 3:3-4 - ³ For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.