

08-25-13

Title: Strong Hearts

# Paul's Struggle

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## **Colossians 2:1a**

*I want you to know* – you know that  
Reminder of what is important here...

*How great a struggle* – what Paul has endured  
He really has and does struggle  
Part of the struggle is that he is in prison  
In prison because of proclaiming the Gospel

Relates back to *striving according to His power*

## **Colossians 1:29**

Struggle not so much with the circumstances of his life...  
Striving, laboring, struggling in proclaiming the Gospel  
How much work, energy do we put into this?  
More than that...  
His struggle is for the Colossians and...

## **Colossians 2:1b**

Remember – 3 cities in region  
Laodicea is 11 miles NW of Colossae  
Laodicea, Hierapolis and Colossae  
All in Lycus valley

Very interesting that Paul has never been to Colossae, or Laodicea  
And yet he has this struggle, this striving for them  
When he hasn't even met them

## **2 Timothy 2:10**

*10 For this reason I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen, so that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus and with it eternal glory.*

Paul loved the church in Colossae (and Laodicea and Hierapolis)  
He had a deep concern for them  
He was in agony for them to know Jesus  
Even though He didn't personally know them  
He had a goal for them – the prize – Jesus

Paul is writing to Colossae  
Also to Laodicea and Hierapolis  
He is including all of them in this letter

### **Colossians 4:16**

Even though Paul hasn't met them  
He is personally concerned for their walk w/ the Lord  
He is the Apostle to the Gentiles

Need to remember NT hasn't been compiled yet  
Still being written

This is the way for them to be taught  
Paul's letters to them  
This is the way they grow

What does Paul specifically want to see in their lives?  
What is he struggling for them to gain

## **Strong hearts**

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### **Colossians 2:2**

Paul's struggle, Paul's striving, Paul's labor  
Was so they would be encouraged in their hearts

We think of the heart as the center of our emotions  
Not so in this time – not just emotions...

The heart is the center of one's will and emotions  
Their inner-self  
The center of life, the mind

What happens when our minds are filled with biblical truth?  
Does it change our thinking?

**Romans 12:1-2** – transformed thinking

There will still be sorrow and pain in this life

We should look at things differently

We live as aliens and strangers, knowing this world  
is not our home

We know God controls everything...

That He is always good...

## **2 Corinthians 4:8-9**

*8 we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; 9 persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed;*

He wants their hearts encouraged...

- *Encouraged* –comforted or strengthened

This comes from the knowledge of our salvation

That God has redeemed us

That God has paid the penalty for our sins

That we are forgiven

The Colossians needed strength to stand firm

Stand firm against the lies that were around them

That is the comfort/strength we all need to walk in daily

God has forgiven me, redeemed me, paid my penalty...

This comfort/strength is more than intellectual and emotional

This is comfort/strength that comes from God Himself

From the Holy Spirit living inside of us

The comfort/strength that comes knowing we are forgiven

Paul's desire is that the church would be courageous

That they would be able to stand and cope w/ any situation

That the Messiah would dwell in their hearts

That they would be rooted and grounded in love

That they would know the Messiah's love

Be filled with all the fullness of God

That their hearts would be strengthened and encouraged...

# Loving each other

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- ...having been knit together in love

United, brought together

A strong heart is one that is filled with love

At the last supper Jesus prayed for His disciples and those who believe in Him through their word...

**John 17:21-23**

*Francis Schaeffer said in his book *The Mark of the Christian* – In John 13 [is] point was that, if an individual Christian does not show love toward other true Christians, the world has a right to judge that he is not a Christian. Here [in John 17:21] Jesus is stating something else which is much more cutting, much more profound: We cannot expect the world to believe that the Father sent the Son, that Jesus' claims are true, and that Christianity is true, unless the world sees some reality of the oneness of true Christians.*

*Now that is frightening. Should we not feel some emotion at this point?*

Our unity needs to be on display to the world

They will see Jesus through us, our love for each other

**Philippians 2:3-8** tells us how to do this

Humility is the key here

The key to love and unity

Jesus' emptying of Himself is the prime example

Jesus is the prime example of love as He laid down

His life for us

This love is not defined by having warm feelings

Rather it is seen in meeting their needs

This is sacrificial love

Love is first action

Emotions follow

A strong heart is one that has learned to love sacrificially...

## Full assurance

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- *...full assurance of understanding*

The more we know and understand

The salvation God has brought and worked in our lives

The more assurance we have

*Billy Graham tells the story of a time when Albert Einstein was going on a train to an out-of-town engagement. The conductor stopped by to punch his ticket. The great scientist, preoccupied with his work, with great embarrassment rummaged through his coat pockets and briefcase to no avail. He could not find his ticket. The conductor said, "We all know who you are, Dr. Einstein. I'm sure you bought a ticket. Don't worry about it. Everything is okay." The conductor walked on down the aisle punching other tickets. Before he moved to the next car, he looked back and saw Dr. Einstein down on his hands and knees looking under his seat trying to find his ticket. He came back and gently said, "Dr. Einstein, please don't worry about it. I know who you are." Einstein looked up and said, "I too know who I am. What I don't know is where I'm going!"*

Having assurance involves applying biblical principles in our daily lives – knowing the truth and acting on it

The truth of where we are going, and what we should do

Assurance comes in the application of truth

- *...resulting in a true knowledge of God's mystery, that is, Christ Himself,*

This understanding involves a true knowledge of God

A true knowledge of Jesus, the Messiah

Jesus is God

Jesus paid the penalty for sin in full

Salvation is found in Him alone

That is full assurance

There are those who say to become a believer in Jesus, the Messiah, you must give up knowledge...

It only takes faith

I would say there is also knowledge

There is great understanding involved  
We do not check our brains at the door

This knowledge is knowledge of God's mystery  
Discussed mystery earlier  
The mystery of the Messiah  
That He would come, that He did come  
That He gave Himself as an acceptable sacrifice  
That all who repent and trust in Him have eternal life  
This is truth we can stand on  
Be fully assured in  
A strong heart is one that has learned to love sacrificially...  
A strong heart is one that is fully assured

## Great treasure

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### **Colossians 2:3**

*3 in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.*

In Jesus, the Messiah

All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden

All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are found in Jesus

In Jesus alone...

Jesus is wisdom

In Jesus alone do we understand God's will and  
plan...

It was hidden so that it can be fully exposed

Fully understood

B/c ALL the treasures are found in Him

We need nothing else

We don't need to seek what is an illusion

We have the real thing in Jesus

Why does a Pirate hide his treasure?

So that only He can find it

Why does God hide this treasure?

So that it can be found...

God has revealed this treasure to all of us

He has revealed His plan of salvation to us

Because it is hidden God will reveal it to us – He made it that way

A strong heart is one that has learned to love sacrificially...

A strong heart is one that is fully assured, seeking Jesus as the treasure

## Stability

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### **Colossians 2:4**

*4 I say this so that no one will delude you with persuasive argument.*

The basic attack of all false systems

Through all history has been...

Denial of Jesus' deity

Denial of Jesus' sufficiency to save and sanctify

Jesus is fully God

Jesus is enough, Jesus is all we need

Paul wants the Colossians to understand this truth

He wants us to understand it as well

We need to know and understand who Jesus is and that He alone is sufficient, He alone has eternal life

### **Colossians 2:5**

It is Paul's desire for the Colossians to stand firm

It brings him great joy to see them doing that

Paul was absent in body – he was in prison

Their good discipline, their stability of faith in the Messiah

These brought him joy

Good discipline and stability are both military terms

Paul was in prison, having daily contact w/ Roman soldiers

Good discipline – line of soldiers drawn up for battle

Stability is the solidity of a formation of soldiers  
The Colossians were standing firm against false teaching  
Paul wants them to stay settled  
Holding to the truth – true understanding  
Not giving into doubts from these attacks

### **Conclusion**

A strong heart is one that has learned to love sacrificially...  
A strong heart is one that is fully assured, seeking Jesus as the  
treasure  
A strong heart is stable, it holds to the truth of who Jesus is and the  
great salvation He has brought

How much energy are you putting into your spiritual growth?  
Is the world seeing the reality of our love for each other?  
Are you filling your mind w/ God's Word?  
Is it transforming you?

Do you have a true knowledge of Jesus, the Messiah?  
Jesus is God  
Jesus paid the penalty for sin in full  
Salvation is found in Him alone  
Have you repented and trust Him as your Savior

Benediction:

### **1 Corinthians 15:58**

*58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable,  
always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil  
is not in vain in the Lord.*

Strong Hearts

08-25-13

Colossians 2:1-5

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Full a \_\_\_\_\_

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W \_\_\_\_\_ in Him