

Concern For Christ-Centered Service (Part 4)

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[0 : 00] And part four of a four-part message series that I'm doing in the latter part of Colossians chapter one.

If you would turn there, Colossians chapter one. And the title of my message is Concern for Christ-Centered Service.

Concern for Christ-Centered Service. Now I made the statement a couple of sermons back. That the not-so-secret secret to joyful Christ-Centered Service.

Is to see that service as our privilege. It is our privilege to serve one another as brothers and sisters in Christ.

Knowing that it is Christ Jesus we are serving. As we do that together. That's the key. That's the not-so-secret secret.

[1 : 02] To the joyful way of serving one another. To the sacrificial nature of serving one another. We talked about it not being really service.

If it doesn't cost us something. So as we serve one another and serve the Lord. You should feel it. And there should be a sense of joy about what you feel.

In that sacrifice. As you deny yourself. Take up your cross. Follow the Lord. And pour your life into other Christians. It begins there.

Why? What did we say? This is a review. Why did we say that? This is a test. You must pass or fail. If you fail you have to go out and stand in the heat. Alright.

The reason that we do this. The whole point of serving one another in the church. Joyfully and sacrificially. As it becomes the testimony to the world. Of what Christian love looks like.

[2 : 04] This is how we show the world the love of Jesus. As we give ourselves to one another in service. They look in and see that love. That willingness. That joy. That sacrifice.

And they say. Oh. That's what love is from God. Yes. And then where do we point them to see the ultimate sacrifice of service? Jesus on the cross.

Raised again to give new life. So that all works together. That's what we've been talking about. Faithfulness in the Christian life is following the example of Jesus.

In giving himself for the good and the benefit of others. That's not simply part of the Christian life. It is the Christian life. You're not living the Christian life if you're not sacrificially serving on behalf of Jesus.

Jesus. And that service begins and finds its foundation. Service in the church. To one another. To one another. So I've been working through what I'm calling four features.

[3 : 09] Or four marks of this Christ-centered, sacrificial, joyful, willing, Christ-honoring service to one another. In the local church.

Four features. We've covered a couple of them. So I want to jump right in and give you point number three. In this little outline that we're working on. And we'll put it up here on the screen. And I'll prompt Michelle as we go through.

And she'll put them up here for us. The content of Christ-centered service. The content of Christ-centered service. Let's read in Colossians chapter one.

Beginning in verse 24. Down through the end of the chapter. So that we can gain the context of what we'll be dealing with today. Now I rejoice in my sufferings, Paul says.

Here it is again. Just as we saw in Thessalonians earlier. I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake. And in my flesh. I do my share on behalf of his body.

[4 : 10] That is the body of Christ. Which is the church. In filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions. Of this church. I was made a minister.

According to the stewardship from God. I've bestowed on me for your benefit. So that I might fully carry out. The preaching of the word of God. So now chapter one verse 26.

That is. The mystery which has been hidden. From the past ages. And generations. But has now. Been manifested to his saints.

Or his holy ones. To whom. God willed. To make known. What is the riches of the glory of this mystery. Among the Gentiles.

Which is Christ in you. The hope of glory. We proclaim him. Admonishing every man. And teaching every man. With all wisdom.

[5 : 06] So that we may present. Every man. Complete in Christ. For this purpose also. I labor. Striving according to his power. Which mightily.

Works within me. So the content. Of Christ centered. Service. In our church family. Has to do with the message. Or the substance.

Of our service. So we're going to ask. And answer the question. Through this message. What is the heart and soul. Of our service. To one another. What is the heart and soul.

Of our service. To one another. Now folks. God has a purpose. For our service. That is wonderful. The purpose. For our service.

Is a purpose. Given. Sanctioned. Carried forward. And empowered. By God himself. As Jesus works. Through us. To serve one another.

[6 : 01] God has a purpose. And the content. The message. Of the service. That we render. To one another. The substance. Serves to bring about.

That purpose. God has a purpose. The message. Helps carry that purpose. And you're an. Integral. Critical. Part. Of that purpose.

Being fulfilled. In the Lord. And I think it's wonderful. It's also challenging. And humbling. To know that God. Would use little old me. Little old insignificant.

Nothing me. Where my life. Is a mere blink. Of an eye. To carry out. A magnificent purpose. That honors God. And honors heaven.

And that I get to be part of that. So do you. Every Christian. Is brought in. To that purpose. Let me put this slide up here for you. Our service to one another.

[6 : 56] Has both a foundation. And a form. Which function together. Towards a final outcome. Now you've heard me talk about this. In previous messages.

Teleos. Or teleos. We get the word teleological. So it means completed. Outcome. Fulfilled. Out there. So the teleological. Way. Of this message. Is a way. Of. Fulfilling. It's moving somewhere.

It's going somewhere. It's rooted. And it's moving. Toward. A goal. That's teleology. Teleos. That is very.

Very. Important. For me. As a Christian. It should be for you. That we're engaged. In an endeavor. That has. A purpose. Being. Carried. Along. By God. And hear this.

[7 : 51] Guaranteed. By the Lord. In other words. You might. You might. Take yourself. Out of the picture. Of being. Used. By the Lord. By being.

Undisciplined. And lazy. And slothful. And. Worldly minded. And the Lord. May discipline you. In that. As his child. You may do that. But here's one thing. You can't do friends.

You can't thwart. The purpose of God. Through this message. In service. To the church. The church. Isn't in danger. God's got his hand. On the church. Okay.

The true church. Is going to be preserved. By the power. Of almighty God. There's no power. In heaven or earth. That can destroy. The church. Belongs to him. He brought the church.

Into existence. He's going to sustain. The church. And he's promised us. He'll bring the church. To glory. That's all done. Now. What I need to ask you.

[8 : 47] According to scripture. In this text is. Where's your part. In all of that. And what part. Are you playing in it. As a Christian. As a Christian. Where's the devotion.

To God. In all of that. Paul refers. To this content. That we're talking about. This message. He refers. To this content. Notice. As a mystery. A mystery.

And he says. Two things. About this mystery. That are very important. For us to understand. If we're going to engage. In biblical. Christ honoring. Christ centered. Service to each other. Here at our church.

At grace. All right. Put up another slide. First. From the text. Of scripture. In Colossians. First. Notice. This is a mystery. Which has been hidden. From past ages. And generations. Verse 26. We've already covered. 24 and 25. I spent three messages. On just those two. Now you're just getting. One message. On four. I hope. We'll see.

[9 : 43] The mystery. Which has been hidden. From past ages. And generations. The second thing. He says about it. But has now. Been. Manifested. To his holy ones.

Paul spoke. Of this. Mystery. To both. The Christians. In Corinth. And those. In Rome. In a very. Similar way. Using the term.

That he's using here. So I'm going to take you. First to Romans 16. Hold your finger. At Colossians. Now I'm going to be. Jumping from Romans. To Corinthians. Back to Colossians. But. Hopefully. It'll all make sense. And you can stay with me. Romans 16. I want you to see this. There's a very. Very important reason. That I'm going to take. A little bit of time here. A few moments. To hammer this out.

For us. In Romans 16. Beginning in 25. Paul is ending. This long. Beautiful. Deep.

[10 : 39] Wonderful. Treatise. On justification. By faith. And he says. In verse 25. Of chapter 16. Now to him. Who is able. To establish you. According to my gospel.

And the preaching. Of Jesus Christ. According to the revelation. Of the. Mystery. Which has been. Kept. Secret. For long. Ages past.

But now. Is manifested. And by the scriptures. Of the prophets. According to the commandment. Of the eternal God. Has been made known.

To all nations. Leading to obedience. Of the faith. To the only. Wise God. Through Jesus Christ. Be the glory. Forever. Amen.

And then. I just need to flip over. One page. To first Corinthians. Chapter two. And we'll pick it up. In verse six. This is a very similar.

[11 : 34] Themed. Writing. That Paul's doing. About this mystery. Yet we do speak. Chapter two. Verse six. Yet we do speak. Wisdom.

Among those who are mature. However. A wisdom. However. Not of this age. Nor of the rulers. Of this age. Who are passing away.

But we speak. And this is important. God's wisdom. And we speak it. He says. In a. Mystery. The hidden wisdom. Which God.

Predestined. Before the ages. To our glory. The wisdom. Which none of the rulers. Of this age. Has understood. For if they had understood.

This wisdom from God. They would not have crucified. The Lord of glory. But just that. As it is written. Things which eyes. Not seen. Ears not heard. And which have not. Entered the heart of man.

[12 : 28] All that God. Has prepared. For those who love him. Now the first thing. That we're grabbing here. Is this. Other worldly. Wisdom. This mystery. That's being described. In Colossians.

Is also being described. In Romans and Corinthians. Just two places. And it's an other worldly. Wisdom. That God. Exclusively. Owns.

That wisdom. Has not entered. Into the heart of man. That wisdom. Has not come about. By the wisdom of man. Through the eye of man. The ear of man. The heart of man. No. This is an other worldly.

Kind of thing. Now what is. What is all. What does all that mean? Well let's just keep reading. Verse 10 of. First Corinthians 2. For to us.

God revealed them. Through the Holy Spirit. For the Spirit. Searches all things. Even the depths of God. Now I need to qualify. For to us. There means the apostles.

[13 : 24] This is a passage. That is outlining. To us. How God. Through the power. Of the Spirit. Use the apostles. To write scripture. And Paul is speaking.

Directly to that process. All right. For who among men. Verse 11. Knows the thoughts of a man. Except the spirit.

Of the man. Which is in him. Paul is using an analogy. Even so. In a similar way. The thoughts of God. No one knows. Except the spirit of God.

And so Paul is saying. We're getting ready. To reveal these things. To you. Only because God. Has made them known. To us. We didn't figure this out.

We didn't invent this. This is something. That God is conveying. To us. By his power. According to his purpose. And in his time.

[14:18] And now. Is that time. Verse 12. Now. We have received. Received. See. Not the spirit.

Of the world. But the. Capital S. Holy Spirit. Who is from God. That we may know. The things freely. Given to us. By God. Which things. We also. Speak.

Not in words. Taught. By human wisdom. But in those. Taught. By the Holy Spirit. Combining.

Spiritual thoughts. With spiritual words. Folks.

Where do we have. The combination. Of spiritual thoughts. And spiritual words. Written down. For us. The Bible. Exclusively. The Bible.

Verse 14. But a. Natural man. That is an. Unsaved man. Okay. A person. Who's not a Christian. Not born again. A natural man.

[15:13] Does not accept. The things. Of the spirit. Of God. For they are foolishness. To him. And he cannot. Understand them. Because they are. Spiritually. Appraised.

Or understood. Evaluated. But he. Who is spiritual. Appraises all things. Yet he himself. Is appraised. By no one. Now verse 16. Who has known. The mind of the Lord.

That he will instruct. God. But we have. Whose mind. Do we have. All right. Now where do we get. The mind of Christ. Right.

From the word. From the word. So this is a process. That I wanted you to see. From both Romans. And Corinthians. Where Paul is. Is fleshing out. The idea.

Of this. Mystery. What is this mystery. Well it's not. Magical. It's not. Cryptic. In the sense.

[16:05] That I'll explain. In a minute. It isn't. Human. The mystery. That Colossians. Is speaking of. Is not. Human. It's not.

Make believe. Knowledge. Mystery. Refers. To. Truth. Or wisdom. Known. Only. To God. And kept. Hidden.

So this is a. Hidden. Wisdom. Known. Known. Only. To the Lord. Kept. Secret. By God. Until. He. Determined. The appropriate. Time. To disclose it.

So we're told. Very clearly. That Old Testament. Saints. Didn't have. The same. Understanding. That we do. Of this. Mystery. They didn't.

Have that. We have it. Why? Because we're smarter. Because we're more. Sophisticated. Because we have. Gasoline. Automobiles. We have higher.

[17:03] Technology. We're in the modern age. No. Remember. He made a big deal. Out of saying. This isn't human. This has come. From another place. And that place. Is from the heart.

Of God himself. We have the mind. Of Christ. So why do we know? Because it's been revealed. Because God chose to reveal it.

In this particular time. So this mystery. Is God's divine. Purpose. In salvation. For people. Of every. Nation.

A mind-boggling concept. To the Jews. At that time. The salvation. That God. Is going to offer. Is going to. Go outside.

Of the Jewish nation. And they don't have to become. Jews first. Nope. Yes and no. Yes it's going outside. No they don't have to become. Jews first.

[17:58] It's not a salvation. Limited to the Jewish nation. It was salvation. For the Gentile nations. As well. And that mystery. Had been kept. From the people.

Of the Old Testament. And it's not until now. At the writing. Of the New Testament. By the apostles hands. Through the power. Of the Holy Spirit. That that mystery. Is being revealed.

Even Peter. Had a hard time. With it. Right. Even Paul. Had a hard time. With it. Paul became. The apostle. To the Gentiles. He was a Jew.

Of Jews. He was killing. Christians. And now. God's going to save him. And send him out. To see these same. People he was killing. Built up.

So that he can write. These tearful. Pleading. Heartfelt letters. To him. And say. All I want. Is for your faith. To increase. I'm willing. To lay my life down. For that purpose. This is the power. Of the Spirit.

[18:52] Of God. So this mystery. This salvation. For the Gentile nations. Was predestined. By God. Before the ages. To our glory.

That's 1st Corinthians 2. 7. That we just read. 1st Corinthians 2. 7. But we speak. God's wisdom. In a mystery. The hidden wisdom. Which God predestined. Before the ages.

To our glory. Is it to your glory. To know now. That as Gentiles. You are offered. Forgiveness for sins. Through Jesus Christ. That's a wonderful thing.

Would you go so far. As to say. It's life changing. You better. You better have a changed life. If you're a Christian. Yes. In Romans 16.

This mystery. Was prophesied. In the Old Testament. And kept secret. For long ages past. He says. [19:50] But now. Is manifested. Romans 16. 25. This was kept secret. For a long time. But now. Is being shown. Revealed by God.

That's the same phrase. Paul uses. In Colossians 1. 26. If you go back. To Colossians 1. 26. Just for a second. I told you. Keep your finger there.

Look with me. That is. The mystery. Which has been hidden. From the past. Ages. And generations. But has. Now. My Bible says.

Now. Been manifested. To his holy ones. Now. Means. During the time. Of the writing. Of the New Testament. During the time.

Of the writing. Of the New Testament. And in Romans. 16. 26. This mystery. Has been made. Known. To all. The nations. Hold your finger there.

[20:47] And go back to Romans again. And then we'll be done. I'll. I'll show you a couple things. In first Corinthians. And we'll be done with that. It has been made known.

To all the nations. In Romans. 16. 26. But now. Is manifested. And by the scriptures. Of the prophets. According to the commandment. Of the eternal God. Has been made known.

To all the nations. Now. He's not meaning. That it's been made known. To every single person. In every single nation. He's just trying to say.

We have tried to blanket. The known world. With the gospel. And so. People from all different. Kinds of nations. Are being exposed. To the truth.

That Jesus is the Messiah. Jesus is the only way. To forgiveness. For sins. It's Jesus. And Jesus. Alone. All right.

[21:42] It's going outside. Of the Jewish nation. It is being revealed. To certain people. From every nation. And for those certain people.

This saving wisdom. Has led to. The Bible says. Obedience of faith. Never divorce. That salvation. From obedience. To faith. One of the proofs.

That we have truly. Been. Born again. And transformed. Into the image. Of the Lord. Jesus Christ. By the power. Of the Holy Spirit. As we continue. To be transformed. We move.

From one. Level of glory. Second Corinthians. Three. Eighteen. To another. One aspect. Of taking on. The character. And flavor. And tone. Of Jesus. To another.

As you mature. As you grow. In Christ likeness. Your speech. Changes. If you used to have. A foul mouth. And you became. A Christian. God cleans. That mouth up.

[22:38] Because he cleans. That heart up. And he puts his. Words. And his thoughts. Into your heart. And so your mouth. Speaks from the overflow. Of your heart. Right? Luke 6.

45. So now you're. Speaking differently. You're thinking. Differently. God's given you. A whole new way. To think about life. You're thinking.

About life. The way the scriptures. Teaching you. That's Romans 12. One and two. You're no longer. Being conformed. To this world. But you're being. Transformed. By the renewing. Of your mind.

How's God. Renewing. Your mind. He's teaching you. To think. Like scripture. Because that's his mind. The mind of Christ. You're thinking. Like Jesus.

You're speaking. Like Jesus. It makes sense. That you'd now. Start behaving. Like Jesus. There's a gentleness. That settles. Over your life. But most of all.

[23:32] There is this. Simple. And pure. Devotion. To the Lord. Jesus Christ. In everything. Second Corinthians. Eleven. Three. There's this. Simple.

And pure. Devotion. That's growing. In you. For Jesus. This warm. Hearted. Love. And faithfulness. That you're willing. To walk with the Lord. In. In every way.

And that's what he comes to say. Let me take you to it. In first Corinthians. Two. Nine. First Corinthians. Two. Nine. But just as it is. As it is written. Things which.

I has not seen. Ear has not heard. He's just trying. To make the point. This is not. Humanly. Discoverable. No. No. I. No. Ear.

No. Heart. No. Mind. No. Wisdom. On earth. Could ever figure this out. Or discover it. And he says at the end. All that God has prepared. For those who.

[24 : 26] What church. Love him. Love him. Now listen carefully. Paul says this. Saving wisdom. Which has been. Hidden. From previous generations.

Is now being. Revealed. Disclosed. Unpackaged. By God himself. But he's doing that.

To a particular. People. To people from every nation. Yes. Everybody can be exposed. To this truth. And needs to be exposed. But notice.

Only to people. Identified. As those who love him. Do you know people. In your life. Who've heard the gospel. And heard the truth. And they don't love God. I do too.

Now. How do you explain that? Are they more powerful. Than God? Tell you folks. This is challenging stuff. Many.

[25 : 21] Many. Many. People. Might come to hear. Of God's salvation. But not all of them. Will believe in. And love God. Why not? Well.

In verses 10 through 14. Of 1st Corinthians. We see why not. And if you go to verse 14. It's very clear. An unsaved person.

Does not accept. The things of the spirit of God. Well Paul just told us. That the word of God. Is of the spirit of God. Why don't people. Who are unbelieving. Accept the word of God.

Because they don't accept. The things of the spirit of God. Because the spirit of God. Does not live in them. Look with me at verse 14.

In 1st Corinthians 2. And let's read the rest. For they are foolishness. To him. People who are unbelieving. And unsaved. The truths of God.

[26 : 15] In scripture. Are foolishness. To them. And it goes a step further. Paul says. He cannot. Understand them. Why not? Because God hasn't chosen.

To reveal it to him. There was a time. In my life. And probably in yours. Where I heard. The Bible preached. On occasion. I didn't. I wasn't raised. In a Christian home. But I sat under the Bible. And I heard preaching. And I heard people. Talk about Jesus. And my mom and dad. Sent us to Sunday school. On the. On the Sunday school bus. On occasion. And I sat. And listened to lessons. And none of it.

Made a bit of sense. But when I was almost. 20 years old. In college. I sat under. Godly preaching. And came to know Christ. Because it was at that time. God chose to reveal.

To me. To open my mind. And my heart. To things that were spiritual. And the Holy Spirit. Came to live in my life. And transformed me. So that now. By the power of the Spirit.

[27 : 10] Living in me. I could now. Attain to. Spiritual. Of the Holy Spirit. Things. Including the Bible. And that's the same exact thing. That's happened to you.

If you're a Christian. You have to have the Holy Spirit. Living in you. To appraise. Spiritual things. The Bible. And that's why people. In your life.

And people in my life. Do not respond. To the scripture. In obedient. Faith. It is a miracle. Of salvation. That God would open their eyes. That's why you pray.

Folks. You pray for your. Unsafe friends and family. And you ask God. To do that work. Through the power. Of the scriptures. To open their heart. To the truth. Never stop praying that.

Don't give up. On these people. All right. Love them enough. To say. God. I'll pray for them.

Continually. That you'll open their eyes. To the truth. You'll open their eyes.

[28 : 06] Well. Now we go back to Colossians. And pick it up. In verses 26. And 27. Where it tells us. That God hid this mystery. So only God. Can reveal this mystery.

And to whom. Has God revealed it. He says. To his saints. Do you see that there. In the text. To his saints. At the end of verse 26. It has now been shown. Manifested.

Revealed. To his. Holy ones. To his holy ones. Those who. Love him. So this is God's. Gift.

This is a gift. In other words. It isn't simply. A matter of. What people. Hear. And what people. Will. Within themselves.

To do. Or not. To do. It is more. The matter. Of what God. Wills. And to whom. He wills it. Let's let God. Be sovereign. Let's not make man.

[29 : 03] Sovereign. Now. I've said this. To you before. And I'll say it again. Here. It just seems. Appropriate. I don't have a hang up. About this idea. That I have a free will.

I don't have a hang up. About that. I'll tell you why. If God had left me. To my free will. I wouldn't be here. Doing this. I'd probably be dead. Because I chased. Sin. Hard.

And if I'd have chased it. Much harder. For much longer. Or I just don't know. How I'd have survived. I am glad. God overcame. My will. I praise the Lord. That God loved me enough. To overcome. My stubborn. Will. And saved me. And brought me to faith. In Jesus Christ. And gave me a new. Will. To live. And that will now. Is a will of choice. To walk with him. And I praise him. For that. And I hope you will too. It's not about what we will.

[30 : 00] It's about what he wills. Notice verse 27. Where he says this. To whom. To whom. That refers to his saints.

God willed. To make known. See. That's the emphasis. It's not my will. Your will. It's his will. This saving wisdom. They are holy ones.

Expressly. Because God willed. To make them. Holy ones. Paul is driving home. To the hearts. Of the Colossians. That it is God. Who wills. To make known.

To each person. This saving wisdom. And so. Each of them. Possesses. A very precious. Precious gift. From God. As those. Who have been.

Chosen of God. Holy and beloved. Greg read that. Earlier. This morning. Look at. Colossians 3. 12. God has given.

[30 : 54] This precious gift. Of the knowledge. Of this wisdom. Of salvation. In Jesus Christ. To Gentiles. So.

Colossians 3. 12. As those. Who have been. What? By God. Aren't you glad? Can you say. Hallelujah. For being chosen.

Amen. You're chosen. Why you? Is it okay. For me. To look at you. In the eye. And say. You're nothing.

And I'm right there. With you. I'm nothing. Why me? By the kind. Intention. Of his will. He chose us. He chose.

Was there anything. In you. That he said. Oh. Look at that one. Down there. That's a squared away. One. I'm going to get that one. For sure. Paul said. No. He chose. The worst.

[31 : 49] Of the worst. To manifest. The good. Of the good. And I'll start squalling. If I keep that up. Because I'm. I'm in that worst category. I can't get over the fact.

That God plucked me. Out of the worst. When I was at my worst. And showered me. With his love. And gave me hope. And then folks. I live for Jesus. For a little while. And I was just loving.

The Christian life. I'd met this one. Over here. And you know. I'm. I got this pretty girl. In my life now. And I'm like. Man. I don't deserve. Any of this. Right. I look at what I was doing.

Look at what I was doing. Why would you trust me with that? I didn't. I don't know how to be with something like that. A Christian girl. A virtuous woman. I don't know how to. What is that?

I hadn't known one of those. I wasn't one of those. I didn't know how to be with God. I didn't know how to be with anything like that. And then after I walked with God a little while. God called me into the ministry.

[32 : 44] And after a little while longer said. And I want you to preach. the walking talking miracle in front of you as the power of God works in my life didn't deserve one single bit of it it's a precious precious gift that God has willed to make known to each of the Colossians and to each of us Christ in you the hope of glory the hope of glory is nothing on this earth if you're putting your hope in anything in this earth you're going to be sorely disappointed if you're not already Christ in you the mystery revealed is Christ in you how in the world could any of the Old Testament saints have ever figured out that God was going to send his son to die on a cross and in dying on a cross and be raised again God was going to make it possible for his son to live in you say Jeff explain that okay here I go you ready Christ lives in you by the power of God that's as much as the Bible tells us that's as far as I can go that's enough for me and I want to tell you friends when Jesus Christ comes to live in you that is radical and the life ought to show it don't tell me God can come and live in you and you can keep living like the devil that doesn't work there is a radical change in people who come to know Jesus there's a change in every part of who you are as a human being it doesn't mean that we don't sin anymore folks that's why we talk about progressing in Christ likeness takes a lot of patience a lot of grace a lot of kindness a lot of gentleness and we do that together we pick each other up when we're stumbling and discouraged when the world gets to us when our eyes get off of Jesus and get focused on a circumstance and it starts to drain us happens to all of us and that's why we're here to pick each other up and build each other up all I'm saying is this here hidden from past generations is the rich and glorious truth that God has made a way for people from every

single nation every single person on the planet needs to hear can hear can come to know Jesus Christ in a saving way for Jesus to come and Christ is our hope and our glory Christ Christ Christ you can't discover it on your own you can't earn it you can't buy it you can't find it within you no and you cannot reason you cannot reason your way to it there is no mind that's ever lived that can reason its way to God the mind is hostile to God turned away from God in rebellion it takes the power of God to change it let me throw this slide up here for him next Michelle how does

God reveal this mystery to us if you look at the end of verse 25 in the beginning of verse 28 end of verse 25 Paul says so that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God and then in verse 28 we proclaim him it is revealed through the proclamation of the gospel the good news that Jesus Christ can live in you so that his sinless life lived on earth to the glory of God the father becomes your new life a person whom God has chosen to reveal this truth to is one who has been brought out of alienation separation and sinful hostility with God into favor with God man so that God now sees the sinless life of his son in you let's see a show of hands of how many people deserve that no one's raising their hand none of us deserve the life of Jesus put into us so that when God looks at you now he sees the righteous perfect holy life of his son he doesn't see you and me in all that sin he sees the righteousness of his son and it's the righteousness of his son in you that's going to cause him to receive you into glory and take you into his arms so that's why we we don't we don't sing songs like this it's all about me oh I know it's all about me you're so lucky to have me and here's the chorus me me me me me me me me no that's why we sing you Jesus it's all about you Jesus it's all about you Jesus is it any wonder then when Paul says and we proclaim him Paul doesn't say we proclaim Judaism which he used to be real high on or we proclaim religion rules we proclaim regulations we proclaim rituals ideas concepts philosophies highly developed opinions heady theories and the like nope in fact listen we could produce a mountain of lists of what Paul doesn't proclaim and only one item on the list that he does proclaim what does he proclaim and we proclaim that's right Jesus one item friends the message is crystal clear it is not Jesus plus anything it is just Jesus in you we proclaim him him is that up there you're so good Michelle I have all these notes and highlights that tell me when I come to my prompts and I just blow right by him I'm I am in the zone thank you verses 28 and 29 we proclaim him admonishing every man teaching every man with all wisdom so that we may present every man complete in Christ for this purpose also I labor striving according to his power which mightily works within me here's the fourth and final one that we'll do real quickly the conduct of Christ centered service the conduct what is this conduct in the church look like as we actively try to serve one another we're serving each other this message we're constantly serving each other in this gospel reality we never ever stop adoring devote devoting ourselves to and talking about Jesus Christ as our Lord so we're ministering the message and the person of Jesus to each other constantly so I want you guys to come to church and ask each other how's your walk with the Lord gone this week we're not being nosy we're being loving how's your how's your walk with the Lord how's your time in the word been this week since we have the mind of Christ through the Bible how much time have you spent in the word this week letting the Bible teach you how to think the thoughts of God about life see that's that's not rule keeping and regulation folks it can be that's I'm concerned for your walk with the Lord are you growing in your heart's devotion to God all right let me give you a few of these he lists several of them proclaiming let's put that just proclaiming up there for now Michelle proclaiming is a general term it carries the idea of a solemn open announcement about something all right so the word in Greek here that's being used for proclaim is katangelo katangelo it means to declare to report to announce it's a general term now I want to distinguish this term for you hold your finger in Colossians and go over to 2 Timothy 4 2 just a just a few chapters beyond where you are to 2 Timothy chapter 2 or excuse me chapter 4 2 Timothy 4 where Paul is closing out this letter to his young protegee Timothy who's pastoring at Ephesus and he says in verse 2 of chapter 4 preach the word preach the word and he tells him be ready in season and out of season use the word of God to rebuke the people admonish the people teach the people correct the people exhort the people but use the word of God for the people of God in their lives preach the word now the word that's used preach here is not the same as the word proclaim in Colossians katangelo the word here is keruso keruso it means to be a herald to officiate as a herald so the word here that's being used for preach is more of an official kind of thing which is why he's telling Timothy to do this you've been given the mandate from God as a pastor to preach the word on an official level to the people of God now if you go back to Colossians the word proclaim we proclaim him what we don't want to do is

confuse that with what I'm doing now in the way of preaching it's not limited to the idea of preaching is in the sense of what I'm doing while God does gift and call out preachers and teachers who shepherd the church like Greg and I the term that's being used by Paul here is better applied to all Christians proclaiming him and that's the point you say Jeff this proclaiming thing that's you preachers you guys do that no you do it you proclaim Christ now here's the kicker that might surprise you where does that proclamation of Jesus begin where does it start what is the context that I've been hammering for three weeks now where that proclamation starts I'll give you a hint here church we speak gospel love to each other and we practice gospel messaging to each other right here it's a safe place to do it because I hope that as we do that with each other here you're not going to find somebody do to you what happened to me when I did it once bow right there and I went that way I barely got it out of my mouth and he hit me thank the Lord he didn't hit me in the face

[44 : 15] I think he had compassion on me as a Christian I really do because he could have messed me up he hit me in the chest and back over the table I went I kind of deserved it I was dumb enough to go to an acid rock concert Judas Priest and I'm walking around in the halls of the Judas Priest concert with tracks in my Bible as a young Christian witnessing to all these people he's the first guy I walked up to pow I went oh man in here don't punch anybody for telling you the gospel don't punch anybody for sharing with you about where they are in the Lord and what's going on in their life alright the next word that we want to deal with admonishing we proclaim him admonishing nuthateo nuthateo for some of you you'll recognize this word nuthateo nuthetic this is where J Adams a very prominent Christian counselor a pioneer in biblical counseling developed his process of nuthetic counseling it just meant biblical counseling admonishing one another from scripture exhorting one another rebuking and correcting one another from the word of the Lord so it's a way of warning away in our context it refers to then a heartfelt warning filled to the brim with Christ-like concern alright so it carries a strong emphasis on gently but firmly setting someone's mind right or helping them to think biblically so this isn't you sharing your opinion and insisting that they do it your way or think the way you think about something this is you sitting down with someone and allowing the scriptures to speak into their life and you do it with great patience and gentleness that's Galatians 6 1 through 4 just one place and 1 Corinthians 13 what 4 through 8 alright and then teaching didascho it means to instruct or to impart skills or knowledge we have that up here too didascho yes there it is so this is positive instruction in God's truth or in his wisdom for living the Christian life with all wisdom emphasizes this for us this is God's wisdom it being instructed being taught conveyed you say

Jeff I know that's what you and Greg do no this is what you guys do with each other so admonishment might more often take the form of like warning against something admonishment would be more of a man don't do that don't go there okay and then teaching is more often do this or do that or continue along in this manner or thought or behavior so again in verse 28 we proclaim him admonishing every man teaching every man with all wisdom so that we may present every man complete in Christ what words do you see repeated in that verse several times every man every man every man that's Paul's great concern all of it might sound so terribly obvious that it may be boring for us to rehearse some of this but listen to this observation from a seasoned pastor and author

I'm going to put this quote at length up here on the screen for you this is another pastor saying this if one were to look closely at many churches today and assess the shape and form of ministry verse 28 would likely need to be rewritten as follows him we mention and only in passing lest we offend seekers or sound excessively religious rather than warning and teaching we seek to please and entertain everyone so that they might feel good about themselves and be reassured that all is well in the world now as cynical as that might sound this man says it is all too tragically true we have abandoned admonishment and warning for it would require that we speak of sin a forbidden word in many congregations today to instruct or teach would require both that pastors study and prepare and that Christians listen and learn but we live in an age where people refuse to endure sound teaching but with itching ears they accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions and they turn away from listening to the truth and they wander off into myths and that's heartbreaking so the proclamation of Christ involves admonishing and teaching and it applies to every single person why the emphasis on every man well once again if you look at chapter 3 verse 16 in Colossians chapter 3 verse 16 why the emphasis on every man let the word of

Christ richly dwell within you with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms hymns spiritual do you see any clauses in there that allow you not to be involved in the teaching and admonishing no that's why every man is so important you don't outgrow your need for this friends there's no situation of life or circumstance where you get to take a break from the gospel thank the Lord every person means this is what Christ centered service looks like it's not just a preacher thing you need to proclaim you need to admonish you need to teach you need to counsel one another in the truth of the Lord well you say to me Jeff what kind of people let's put this slide up there Michelle this last one what kind of people want this kind of life people who have been put into the church and who care about holiness people who put a premium on being the family of God church life people people who are willing to risk it all and commit it all people who love one another enough to tell each other the truth in love that's kind of people who care about this kind of stuff that's why you're here and I praise

God for you now I ask you to keep praying for one another in a tumultuous world with a very real enemy who wants to discourage you away from this all right let's pray I know that we're hastening for time here real quickly but let's pray and then Greg will come after we sing and we'll be dismissed Father we thank you God for your love and kindness we thank you for your goodness and grace we thank you almighty God for the way that you help us walk in faith with you we thank you for the truth of the word and God while we would not judge we will not judge the motives of other pastors in our community other churches we see the reality all around us Lord where Jesus is not being put front and center and the word of God is not being held high as our sufficient word for life and godliness as the church of Christ and this we say with a tragedy in our hearts

[51 : 57] God with a sense of heaviness and so we pray for our brothers and sisters in Christ around Williamsburg across our country we pray for an outpouring of the spirit of the Lord and for revival we ask you almighty God to do what only you can do to revive the hearts of your people and to bring many to know you by the power of the Holy Spirit thank you for our visitors today Lord thank you for those who did come today and chose to be with us may you bless them Lord may you bring this word to their hearts and make them doers of this word and not hearers only and as we sing this final song in your stead in your glory to your praise as we offer our final prayer for our service and then as we convene together over at Doug and Terrace for a time of fellowship and our baptismal service we thank you for these two precious souls that will be baptized today we thank you for working in their hearts and in the lives of their parents to help them understand the gospel to help them see the gospel modeled in their parents lives and in the lives that we live together here as a church and we give you all of the glory for the growth that we're experiencing both spiritually and in numbers and we just continue to look to you to help us walk a walk of faith in Jesus precious name amen bath for a evening