

Colossians – Week 5 – Christ in you – Bible Study Helps

Title: Christ in You: The Mystery Revealed and Our Purpose in Ministry

Sermon Summary: This sermon explores the profound truth of Christ dwelling in believers, a mystery revealed through the Apostle Paul. It emphasizes the importance of understanding and living out this reality, which transforms our identity, purpose, and effectiveness in ministry. The sermon challenges Christians to fully embrace their role as vessels of Christ, participating in God's work of maturing believers and spreading the Gospel.

Key Points:

- Paul's perspective on suffering for the church as Christ's body
- The revealed mystery of "Christ in you, the hope of glory"
- The indwelling of Christ through the Holy Spirit in believers
- The purpose of ministry: to mature believers in Christ
- The importance of yielding to God's presence and power in our daily lives
- The contrast between living in the flesh versus living by the Spirit
- The call to participate in God's work of evangelism and discipleship

Scripture Reference:

- Colossians 1:24-29

Stories:

- The sermon uses several analogies and examples to illustrate points:
 - The comparison of God's revelation throughout history to pouring out truth gradually
 - The analogy of a parent bringing a child to maturity as a picture of spiritual discipleship
 - The example of a teacher aiming for true understanding rather than just passing tests

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Discipleship and Small Group Guide: Christ in You - The Hope of Glory

Opening Prayer

Key Takeaways:

1. God has revealed a glorious mystery: Christ dwells in believers through the Holy Spirit.
2. This indwelling presence should transform how we live, think, and interact with others.
3. Our purpose is to mature in Christ and help others do the same.

Discussion Questions:

1. What stood out to you most from the sermon? Why?
2. The sermon emphasized that Christ lives in believers. How does this truth impact your daily life? Are there areas where you struggle to live in light of this reality?
3. Discuss the concept of "fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ" (Colossians 1:24). How does this relate to our role in the church and sharing the gospel?
4. How does understanding that God lives in you change your perspective on:
 - a) Your identity
 - b) How you handle trials
 - c) Your relationships with others
 - d) Your purpose in life
5. The sermon mentioned that we can "grieve" or "quench" the Holy Spirit. What do you think this means practically? How can we be more sensitive to God's presence in our lives?
6. Discuss the point about doing things in our own strength versus relying on God's power within us. Where do you see this struggle in your own life?

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7. How can we better "present every man perfect in Christ Jesus" (Colossians 1:28) in our spheres of influence?

Practical Applications:

1. Daily Reminder: Place a small note or object somewhere you'll see it every day to remind you of Christ's presence in you.

2. Intentional Dependence: Before making decisions this week, pause and consciously ask for God's guidance, acknowledging His presence within you.

3. Ministry Focus: Identify one person in your life you can invest in spiritually this week through encouragement, teaching, or service.

4. Self-Reflection: Take time to examine areas of your life where you might be "grieving" the Holy Spirit. Confess these to God and ask for His help to change.

5. Group Accountability: Partner with someone in the group to check in mid-week about how you're applying the sermon's teachings.

Closing Prayer:

Thank God for His indwelling presence and ask for His help in living out these truths in the coming week.

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Discipleship Questions

How does understanding the concept of 'Christ in you' change your perspective on daily Christian living and your relationship with God?

In what ways might we be unintentionally grieving or quenching the Holy Spirit in our lives, and how can we become more sensitive to His presence?

How can we balance the idea of God's indwelling presence with the reality of our ongoing struggles with sin and the flesh?

What practical steps can we take to move from merely knowing the truth of God's indwelling to actually living it out in our daily interactions and decisions?

How does the Apostle Paul's attitude towards suffering for the sake of the church challenge our own approach to difficulties in ministry or Christian service?

In what ways might our understanding of the 'mystery' revealed to Paul impact our evangelism and discipleship efforts?

How can we cultivate a deeper appreciation for the 'riches of the glory' that Paul speaks about in relation to Christ dwelling in us?

What does it mean practically to 'present every man perfect in Christ Jesus', and how might this goal shape our approach to ministry and relationships?

How can we maintain the passion and urgency that Paul demonstrates for spiritual growth and maturity in ourselves and others?

In what ways might the truth of Christ's indwelling presence transform our understanding of the purpose and potential of the local church?

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A 5-day Bible reading plan and devotional guide

Day 1: The Indwelling Christ

Reading: Colossians 1:24-29

Devotional: Paul reveals a profound mystery: "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27). This truth is revolutionary - the Creator of the universe chooses to dwell within believers. Reflect on what it means to have Christ living in you. How does this change your perspective on daily life? Your struggles? Your purpose? Consider that you are never alone, never without divine guidance and strength. Today, practice awareness of Christ's presence within you. In your decisions, conversations, and actions, pause to acknowledge Him and seek His leading. Let this truth transform how you view yourself and others as temples of the Holy Spirit.

Day 2: Suffering with Purpose

Reading: Romans 8:18-30

Devotional: Paul rejoiced in his sufferings for the sake of the church (Col. 1:24). This seems counterintuitive, yet it reveals a deeper spiritual truth. Our trials can have eternal significance when endured for Christ's sake. Today's reading reminds us that our present sufferings are not worth comparing to the glory that will be revealed. How might your current struggles be shaping you for God's purposes? Ask the Lord for His perspective on your challenges. Seek ways to encourage others who are suffering, sharing the comfort you've received from God. Remember, nothing can separate you from His love, and He works all things for the good of those who love Him.

Day 3: The Ministry of Reconciliation

Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:14-21

Devotional: As believers, we are called to the ministry of reconciliation. Christ has reconciled us to God, and now we are His ambassadors, imploring others to be reconciled to Him. This echoes Paul's mission to present everyone mature in Christ (Col. 1:28). Reflect on your role in this divine mission. Who in your life needs to hear the message of reconciliation? How can you more effectively represent Christ to those around you? Today, pray for opportunities to share God's love and the hope of the gospel. Look for practical ways to demonstrate Christ's reconciling work in your relationships and community.

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Day 4: Striving with His Power

Reading: Philippians 2:12-13, Colossians 1:29

Devotional: Paul describes his ministry as "striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily" (Col. 1:29). This beautifully captures the partnership between human effort and divine empowerment. We are called to work out our salvation, yet it is God who works in us. How does this balance challenge or encourage you? Reflect on areas of your life where you might be striving in your own strength. Where do you need to more fully rely on God's power? Today, commit your efforts to the Lord, acknowledging your dependence on Him. Ask for His strength to be made perfect in your weakness.

Day 5: The Hope of Glory

Reading: 1 Peter 1:3-9

Devotional: The indwelling Christ is our "hope of glory" (Col. 1:27). This hope is not mere wishful thinking, but a confident expectation of future glory with Christ. Peter reminds us that this living hope sustains us through trials and refines our faith. How does the promise of future glory impact your present circumstances? In what ways can you cultivate this hope in your daily life? Today, meditate on the eternal perspective this hope provides. Let it fuel your joy, strengthen your faith, and motivate your obedience. Share this hope with someone who needs encouragement, reminding them of the imperishable inheritance that awaits in Christ.