

The MYSTERY

Hidden for Ages

Is Now REVEALED

A Study of the Book of Colossians

LESSON 10

This Week's Passage:

Colossians 2:1–5


New International Version (NIV)

¹ I want you to know how hard I am contending for you and for those at Laodicea, and for all who have not met me personally. ² My goal is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, ³ in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. ⁴ I tell you this so that no one may deceive you by fine-sounding arguments. ⁵ For though I am absent from you in body, I am present with you in spirit and delight to see how disciplined you are and how firm your faith in Christ is.

Memory Verse: Colossians 1:19–20

¹⁵ The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶ For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. ¹⁷ He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. ¹⁹ ***For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.***

Day One: Read Colossians 2.

1. Paul begins this section by telling his audience “how hard [he is] contending” (v. 1) for them. In what ways is Paul “contending” for those he has never seen? (Col. 1:3, 28–29;  Col. 4:12)
2. Fill in the sentence below to see what Paul desires for the believers, personally and corporately, as he contends for them. (2:1)

“that they may be _____ in heart and _____ in love, so that

they may have the full riches of complete _____, in order that

they may _____ the mystery of God, namely Christ”

Paul knows that discouragement and disunity are two dangers that threaten the church.

- a. Why do you think they are so dangerous?

- b. Why are encouragement and unity such a high priority to Paul? (Jn. 13:35; 17:20–21; 1 Cor. 12:12–27; Heb. 10:24–25)
- c. What are some things that cause you to be discouraged or out of sync with others in the body of Christ?
- d. How do you think Paul would attain his goal for them to “be encouraged in heart and united in love” (v. 2)?


What Paul expresses here is clearly a reference back to his prayer for them in 1:9–10.¹ With these two passages in mind, pen a prayer for someone in your life or express your own desire to the Lord for this kind of growth and Christ-centeredness.

Day Two: Read Colossians 2:1–5.

3. The Old Testament is filled with people, practices and promises which all point to Jesus, but until he came and revealed their meaning, they were hidden, wrapped in mystery. Fill in the chart to see but a few of them.

What was the mystery?	What has been revealed?
Gen. 3:14–15	Heb. 2:14–15
Is. 53:5	Rom. 4:25; 1 Pet. 2:24
Hosea 13:14	1 Cor. 15:20–22, 55–56
Ps. 16:8–11; Acts 2:29	Acts 2:22–36

Day Three: Read Colossians 2:1–5.

4. Read Colossians 2:2–3 together with 1 Corinthians 1:17–31.
 - a. How do these passages show that wisdom and knowledge are inaccessible apart from knowing Christ?
 - b. What does the treasure of wisdom in Christ encompass? (1 Cor. 1:30;  Eph. 1:3–10)


“Paul rarely uses the word ‘treasure’.... [His use of it here] serves to underscore the value of wisdom and knowledge that is found in Christ.”²

Day Four: Read Colossians 2:1–5.

5. In verse 4, Paul states his concern for the Colossians.
 - a. What threatened the Colossians’ knowledge of Christ? (v. 4)
 - b. How do you think his desires for them in verses 2–3 would protect them from this threat?

“Neither man nor angel nor any other creature has anything at all to offer which cannot be found in *incomparably superior essence and infinite degree* in Christ. In him all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden...[ready] to be unearthed.... ‘In Christ all these treasures are stored away. Hence, come and discover them and enrich yourselves by means of them.’”³

6. False teachers claim to have a special knowledge that they say the Colossians lack.
 - a. In contrast to this, what is Paul’s claim? (vv. 2b–3)

b. How is Paul's claim possible? (Col. 1:19; 1 Cor. 1:24b–25;  Is. 11:2–4a)

7. Paul has heard from Epaphras about how things are going in Colossae. How does he use this to encourage the believers? (v. 5)
8. Sometimes it is easier to focus on what's going wrong in the church and in the lives of others. Take the opportunity to follow Paul's example and use your words to encourage someone. (It may take time on your knees before the Lord to see the good!)

Day Five: Read Colossians 2:1–4.

9. God chose Paul “to know his will and to see the Righteous One and to hear words from his mouth” (Acts 22:14). This encounter with Jesus, the Righteous One, revealed to Paul the mystery of God and as a result, he would never be the same. Now Paul, pastor-at-large, wants the same for all believers: a life firmly rooted in and occupied with Christ.

Read Philippians 3:8–9. Ask God to give you this same all-consuming passion to know Christ “in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Col. 2:3).



Reminder: Remember to read the entire book of Colossians this week.

* Indicates verses for further study

¹ Douglas J. Moo, *The Letters to the Colossians and to Philemon* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 167.

² Moo, 170-171.

³ William Hendriksen, *Philippians, Colossians and Philemon* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1985), 104-105.