



July 26, 2015

Hope for the Next Generation

Colossians 1:28 – 2:8

Last week we talked about personal spiritual growth and were reminded by the apostle Peter to *make every effort* to grow and bear fruit (2 Peter 1:3-8). This week we'll see the apostle Paul's ambition toward growing believers, even as he writes from prison.

Passion

Read Colossians 1:28 – 2:1-8:

²⁸ He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ. ²⁹ To this end I strenuously contend with all the energy Christ so powerfully works in me.

^{2:1} 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.

⁶ So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, ⁷ rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

⁸ See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ. (NIV)

[Q] What are Paul's goals for his readers?

[Q] Describe Paul's passion for helping others grow.

[Q] When you picture someone who is spiritually mature, what kinds of qualities and activities come to mind?

Patterns

[Q] In Colossians 2:5 Paul says he delights to see their firm faith and how disciplined they are. Look up the following verses for a few patterns for spiritual growth:

Romans 12:2

2 Timothy 3:16-17

Psalms 1:1-3

[Q] What patterns, disciplines, or routines are you developing for renewing your mind? How can these activities fuel your effort to help the next generation to grow?

[Q] The region around Colossae was obsessed with magic and the occult. What warnings does Paul offer in Colossians 2:4 and 8?

[Q] How would spiritual disciplines help strengthen the Colossians' faith? The faith of the next generation in our culture today?

Sermon Response:

[Q] Discuss: What insight, principle or observation from this weekend's message did you find to be: Most helpful? Eye opening? Troubling? Challenging? Explain.
Is there any action you want to take as a result of the worship time or message?

*Your faith and love have arisen from the **hope** laid up for you in heaven,
which you have heard about in the message of truth, the gospel Colossians 1:5 (NET)*

Pray
