

COLOSSIANS: STABILITY BY CHRIST'S ALL-SUFFICIENCY AND SUPREMACY

Part VIII: The Believer's Discipling Stability In The Apostles' Writings

(Colossians 1:24-29)

I. Introduction

- A. Today's unsettling, insecure world has led many believers to become unsettled and insecure, so in contrast to today's world, we believers need to focus on the stability and security we have in our Lord.
- B. Colossians presents Christ's all-sufficiency and supremacy in ways that settle and provide security, and one way it does is by teaching us of the believer's discipling stability in the writings of Christ's apostles.
- C. Colossians 1:24-29 teaches this provision, and we view it for our insight and stability in living (as follows):

II. The Believer's Discipling Stability In The Apostles' Writings, Colossians 1:24-29.

- A. Though writing to his Colossian readers from prison (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, p. 1690), Paul expressed his great joy to be able to participate in the sufferings of Christ for the sake of His body, the Church, Col. 1:24.
- B. Paul then explained the cause of his great joy was the ministry Christ had given him and to the other apostles with him toward the **complete** discipling of believers *by the apostles' words*, Colossians 1:25-28 (as follows):
 - 1. The Apostle Paul wrote that he had been made a servant according to the stewardship from God that had been given to him by God in behalf of his believing readers, Colossians 1:25a.
 - 2. That stewardship was for Paul to make the word of God fully known relative to the truth that had been hidden in ages and generations of believers past but was now revealed to God's saints, Col. 1:25b-26.
 - 3. Specifically, Paul added that God chose to make known to believers in the Church era the riches of the glory of this truth that is "Christ," or the Hebrew **Messiah**, being **IN Gentiles**, the hope of glory, Col. 1:27.
 - 4. Accordingly, Paul added that he and the other apostles ("we") proclaim, "warning" and teaching everyone in the Church with all wisdom, that they might present everyone in the Church "complete" in Christ, Colossians 1:28 KJV. This statement in its context has enormous application to the believer relative to the stability his spiritual maturation in Christ (as follows):
 - a. The KJV word "warning" translates the Greek participle, *nouthetountes* (Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 676) from the root verb *noutheteo*, to "admonish, warn, instruct," Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 546. Biblical counselor Jay E. Adams in his book, Competent to Counsel, 1978, p. 41-64 has taken this verb to coin the term "nouthetic counseling," how mature believers need to **confront** others about sin and righteousness that they might **address** it for needed spiritual adjustment and growth!
 - b. The KJV word "complete" translates the Greek term *teleion*, meaning "mature" (Ibid., B. K. C., N. T.), but this term was highly significant in the secular world as it had already been used by famous Greek philosopher Plato to refer to "the Perfect Man" who had attained "'firm and true views,' insight and philosophical knowledge," Theol. Dict. of the N. T., vol. VIII, p. 69. Since Paul later directs his Christian readers at Colossae to avoid vain secular philosophy (Colossians 2:8), he noted here in Colossians 1:28 that all they needed to attain complete maturity in Christ, what the secular philosophers upheld to be "the Perfect Man," was available by their heeding the instruction of Christ's apostles in their words!
 - c. In summary, Paul claimed that the words he and Christ's apostles taught believers provided all they needed for "nouthetic counseling" in confronting them about sin and righteousness that they might grow to the point where they reached the maturity secular Greek philosophers like Plato only imagined attaining!
- C. Accordingly, Paul added that he toiled for this great discipling achievement in believers, struggling with all his energy that Christ powerfully worked in him to achieve this ministry objective, Colossians 1:29.

Lesson: Paul revealed that the words of himself and Christ's other apostles invaluable taught of Christ's presence **IN** believers in Christ, and, to the great glory of God, those words nouthetically confronted, warned and instructed believers to address issues of sin and righteousness in their lives in such a way that they would end up attaining a maturity level that even famous Greek philosophers only imagined attaining in their "Perfect Man" ideal!

Application: (1) Since the WORDS of Paul and the other apostles of Christ are written in the New Testament Gospels and/or epistles and the book of Revelation, we believers have assurance of discipling stability so that IF we HEED those words, we are ASSURED of being disciplined by God's nouthetic counseling unto complete maturity in the Lord. (2) May we then VALUE so as to HEED the WRITTEN WORDS of the apostles for discipling! (3) By way of application, may we VALUE so as to TEACH the WRITTEN WORDS of the apostles to disciple other believers unto complete maturity in Christ! (4) May we COUNSEL by use of WRITTEN SCRIPTURE for results!