



## Group Guide

# Preaching Christ

*March 9, 2025*

**Main Passage: Colossians 1:24–2:3**

## Theological Theme

Suffering is part of the Christian life, and we shouldn't be surprised when we encounter it. Like Paul, we should walk in the purpose God has for us, laboring for the sake of the gospel with the Holy Spirit's help.

## Introduction

- ❓ What other examples of people suffering for the sake of the gospel (modern, historical, or biblical) can you think of? What did they do and what was the impact?
- ❓ What does it mean to suffer for the sake of the gospel in 2025?

## 1. Suffering for Christ (Colossians 1:24-27)

Just a verse before this, Paul wrote that he was a servant of the gospel (v. 23), and we get a taste of what he meant by this idea in verse 24: he was willing to suffer for the gospel. Paul's life and ministry was full of suffering for the sake of Jesus. Jesus Himself said Paul's ministry would be marked by suffering for His sake (Acts 9:16).

- ❓ What does it mean to rejoice while we are suffering? How is this possible?
- ❓ What can we learn from Paul about our own need to pursue God's purposes in our lives?
- ❓ Application: Reflect on your life. What "commission" has God given you? What purpose has He given all followers of Christ?

## 2. Laboring for Christ (Colossians 1:28-29)

These verses outline Paul's purpose: teaching others what it means to follow Jesus. God gave Paul a specific commission in his ministry, but Jesus gave all of us a command to go and make disciples, telling others about Jesus and teaching them how to follow Him.

- ❓ What does it mean to labor for the sake of the gospel? How do we strive with Christ's strength and not our own?

- ❓ What does it mean to “proclaim” Jesus (v. 28)? How do we do this in daily life?
- ❓ Application: What are some ways we could labor for the sake of the gospel in our lives today?

### 3. Encouragement in Christ (Colossians 2:1-3)

Previously in our text, Paul noted that he rejoiced in his suffering on their behalf and was laboring and striving for the gospel. In Colossians 2:1, Paul wanted them to know how greatly he struggled for them and other congregations who had not met Paul personally. Paul used an athletic metaphor here, much like the idea of someone striving in a race for the sake of the gospel he presented in 1 Corinthians 9.

- ❓ Why would Paul’s suffering encourage these believers?
- ❓ What did Paul say he hoped would be the outcome of encouraging the Colossian believers?
- ❓ Application: How can we encourage fellow believers who may be experiencing difficult times or false teaching today?

### Conclusion

In our passage today, Paul presented the idea of suffering for the sake of the gospel. There are examples of followers of God suffering all over the pages of Scripture, and Jesus warned us this would come in John 16:33. As we walk the path God crafts for our lives, we shouldn’t be surprised when we suffer, but the commission of God is worth it. Jesus is worth more than earthly comforts, and we’re called to teach everyone about Him.

- ❓ When was a time you faced suffering for the sake of the gospel? How did you respond?
- ❓ How could we grow in proclaiming Jesus in our lives?
- ❓ Who is God calling you to proclaim Jesus to this week? How will you act toward this?