**PAUL’S 3-FOLD MINISTRY TO GOD’S PEOPLE**

Colossians 2:2-3

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**INTRODUCTION**

As we mentioned previously, Colossians is one of Paul’s four prison letters, written from Rome around A.D. 60-65. In chapter 1, Paul wrote to encourage the Christians by reminding them about what Jesus had done for them by rescuing them from the grasp of Satan and delivering them to the Light of Christ. Then, he described Jesus in terms of His nature, His position, and His symbolic role. Here in chapter 2, Paul explains his 3-fold ministry to God’s people.

1. **HE SEEKS TO ENCOURAGE THE HEARTS OF GOD’S PEOPLE.**
2. He recognized that God’s people **often** get downhearted.
3. He realized that God’s people **always** need encouragement.

*Discouragement is always a result of allowing the world to distract us from our focus on Jesus Christ and His working in our lives. Needless to say, we are easily distracted and need encouragement to gain new focus. We do NOT need a bombastic denouncement!*

1. **HE SEEKS TO UNITE GOD’S PEOPLE IN LOVE.**
2. He knew that love is fragile & the **first** thing lost when difficulties arise.
3. He was aware that love is the **only** thing that truly unites us.

*When love is gone, it takes years to restore love and trust among God’s people. Thus, even though nothing can separate us from the love of Christ (see Romans 8:35-39), we must work diligently to insure that nothing separates us from our love for one another.*

1. **HE SEEKS TO GIVE FULL UNDERSTANDING TO GOD’S PEOPLE.**
2. He wants us to **experience** the full riches of complete understanding.
3. He wants us to **enjoy** the hidden treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

*Paul was well aware that God’s people will never be happy in their Christian life until they have full understanding of all that God desires for them to possess. He knows that we will be miserable if we only have partial understanding of God’s will and God’s way.*

**CONCLUSION**

Paul’s three missionary journeys were all about preaching the Gospel where it had never been proclaimed before. Of course, his primary goal was to win people to Christ. However, his ministry was more than just a ministry to unbelievers. In our text today, he mentions that he has a 3-fold ministry purpose for God’s people. He wanted to make sure that God’s people received encouragement to be united in love and have a full understanding of God’s plan for their lives, as well as for the world. God wants you to be aware of what He is doing and what He is going to do. He does not want you to be in the dark—as you once walked in the past. No! He wants you to walk in the light of Christ in all of your future days here on earth. Take heart and walk in the Light of His love and love one another!

“*Pressing more closely to Him Who is leading, When we are tempted to turn from the way;
Trusting the arm that is strong to defend us, Happy, how happy, our praises each day.*

*How beautiful to walk in the steps of the Savior, Stepping in the light, stepping in the light,
How beautiful to walk in the steps of the Savior, Led in paths of light.”*