

1:24-2:5 Discussion Questions

1. What does Paul mean by “in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions” (v. 24b)?
2. What role does Paul’s suffering play in him “making the Word of God fully known”? How does our suffering help reveal the gospel to others?
3. Have you ever witnessed God’s power revealed in the suffering of a fellow Christian?
 - a. Have you seen God’s power revealed in your own suffering? How so?
4. How do we walk the balance of being honest about our suffering or weakness so that God can get the glory when He works through it, but at the same time not complaining and being self-absorbed?
5. In vv. 25-28 Paul unpacks the mission that God gave him. What is this mission and what does it involve?
 - a. What is the mission that God has given all Christians?
6. As Paul describes his heart for both the mission of God and the Colossian church, what words stand out? How would you describe his attitude and feelings towards both?
 - a. How does this challenge or encourage you with regard to the mission God has given you and the way you relate toward other Christians?
 - b. It can be so hard to be focused and passionate about God’s mission and church like Paul was. How do we get there?
 - c. When do you find that you are most passionate about doing your part to fulfill God’s mission?

7. God called Paul to a specific aspect of His mission (apostle to the Gentiles) that used his skills, abilities, experiences, and connections. In light of your experiences, abilities, skills, and connections how has called you to fulfill the great commission in a specific way?

8. In 1:28 and 2:3 Paul continues to develop this theme of wisdom that he introduces in 1:9. Words like "wisdom", "knowledge" and "understanding" are all really important in the Bible's wisdom literature, like the book of Proverbs.

a. What is wisdom? How is Jesus the ultimate source of wisdom?

b. What "plausible" or "fine-sounding arguments" do you find yourself confronted by that attempt to draw you away from Christ? Are there any "well-crafted" arguments that are currently really challenging your faith?

c. How does God's wisdom that we find revealed in the life and teaching of Jesus help you to respond to these arguments?

d. How has God used His wisdom revealed through Jesus to help you to recognize and reject deceptive and well-crafted arguments that seek to draw us away from Christ?

9. In 2:2 Paul says that he wants them to understand how much he struggles for them, so that they might be "encouraged, being knit together in love."

a. What does this verse teach about the relationship between encouragement, unity and love?

b. Where have you seen this at work in your own life?

c. Where do you currently need support or encouragement?