Jordan Evangelical Theological Seminary Chapel Dr Imad Shehadeh

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**Persistence That Pays**

***Colossians 1:24-29***

**Topic:** Persistence

**Subject:** How can we be persistent despite life’s pressures?

**Complement:** Persistence stems from a focus on Christ.

**Purpose:** The listeners will persist in Christ.

# Introduction

### Interest: Believers face obstacles.

### Need: What barriers and pressures are you facing? Making a living, raising a family, and supporting children, among other things.

### Subject: How can we be persistent despite life’s pressures?

### Background: Paul helps the church distinguish between false teachings and true in this letter.

### Preview: The text shares three ways to persist in Jesus. Paul gives three guiding persistence principles.

### Text: Colossians 1:24-29

# I. We are called to share in the unique *pain* of Christ (24).

## “I am glad when I suffer for you in my body, for I am participating in the sufferings of Christ that continue for his body, the church.”

## Jesus asked Paul on the Damascus Road, “Why are you persecuting me?”

## Now, others persecute Paul without knowing the reason.

## Hebrews 13:14 tells us to go outside the camp to bear the reproach that Jesus bore. We need to identify with Jesus in this place of shame.

## The Christian life is a call to share in the pain of Christ. Realizing this enables us to be persistent.

(Besides sharing in Christ’s pain, how else do we persist despite life’s pressures?)

# II. We are called to share in his *plan* for the church of Christ (25-27).

## “God has given me the responsibility of serving his church by proclaiming his entire message to you. 26 This message was kept secret for centuries and generations past, but now it has been revealed to God’s people. 27 For God wanted them to know that the riches and glory of Christ are for you Gentiles, too. And this is the secret: Christ lives in you. This gives you assurance of sharing his glory.”

## We are called not only to share in his pain, but also his plan.

## We should not ask God to bless our plan, but to ask God to help us follow his plan.

## This plan is God’s mystery, which is God’s unknown plan of the OT that is now known. This truth is Christ in Jews and Gentiles as well. The mystery previously hidden is now made known.

## The idea here is to make Jesus the center of your life.

## There is no greater honor than to share in God’s glory by being invited into Christ’s pain and plan.

## “Christ in you, the hope of glory” is engraved in the prayer tower at JETS in Greek: Cristo\ß e˙n uJmi√n, hJ e˙lpi«ß thvß do/xhß.

## Eph. 1:9 God has now revealed to us his mysterious will regarding Christ—which is to fulfill his own good plan.

## Eph. 2:11 Don’t forget that you Gentiles used to be outsiders. You were called “uncircumcised heathens” by the Jews, who were proud of their circumcision, even though it affected only their bodies and not their hearts.

## Jesus paid a high price to bring us into this highest plan.

## Now, all believers—Jew and Gentile—exist in the church without distinction (cf. Gal 3:26-28, “For you are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27 And all who have been united with Christ in baptism have put on Christ, like putting on new clothes. 28 There is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male and female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus.”)

(How do we share in his pain and plan in our own strength? We cannot, so…)

# III. We are called to share in his *power* with the life of Christ (28-29).

## “So we tell others about Christ, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all the wisdom God has given us. We want to present them to God, perfect in their relationship to Christ. 29 That’s why I work and struggle so hard, depending on Christ’s mighty power that works within me.”

## Jesus can take any person and lift him in his power.

# Conclusion

### Persistence stems from a focus on Christ (Main Idea).

### Main Points

#### We share in Christ’s pain (24).

#### We share in Christ’s plan (25-27).

#### We share in Christ’s power (28-29).

### Application: Share in all three!