

Series: There is Nothing Greater Than Walking with Jesus

Lesson 3: “Jesus is the Greatest Mystery”

*Announcements, encouragement to invite people and opening prayer.



Connect: an opportunity for people to immediately interact and connect with each other; icebreaker/attention getters. **Icebreaker:** What does it mean to be alienated from someone? Is it ever easy to correct the situation when you've been alienated?

Transition: We were created in the image and likeness of God and we were very good, that is until we chose to disobey God and to bring sin into the world. That choice to sin alienated us from God. And there was nothing we could do about it on our end. Fortunately, that isn't what God wanted and so He does all the work to build a door that would resolve the alienation we created from Him. The door is called Jesus.

Bottom Line: Jesus Christ in us is the hope, the certainty of glory! Jesus is the great mystery, the combination to the lock that can end our alienation. There is nothing greater than walking with Jesus.

LESSON PLAN

Question: How would you describe to someone what it means to walk with Jesus?

Question: Do you believe you have the hope, the certainty of Glory, living in this relationship with Jesus now and forever?

Read Colossians 1:21-23

1. Why does Paul say to the Christians they were once alienated from God?

Question: What are some ways people today are enemies of God in their minds

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2. What was the act of God that removed our alienation from God?

3. How do we appear before God because of Christ’s death?

4. Notice that God uses the conditional word, “if”. We are holy in God’s sight, His promise is fulfilled “if” what condition is met?

We are holy in God’s sight “if” we continue in we CONTINUE in the faith, established in it, remaining firm, not moved away from the hope we accepted when we acted in faith upon the offer of salvation from the Gospel through a personal relationship with Jesus as Lord.

Question: What does that say to those who believe their past faith and baptism and prayers from years gone by will make them holy in God’s sight? Does this seem to contradict the idea that everyone who was ever once a Christian will be saved, regardless of whether they live an active Christian faith or not?

Continuance in faith is a test of the reality of sincere faith, faith that is not grabbed quickly and then thrown away. The Scripture from Paul and Jesus in Revelation continually speak about remaining faithful to the end, completing the race. The encouragement and warning is continually given so Christians do not become lacking in their faith, apathetic and fall into a false sense of security.

5. Obviously, the gospel has not been heard by every creature under heaven. Why would Paul use this hyperbole, extreme exaggeration to make a point and what was that point?

He is using this to impress upon them the ONE gospel that has spread like fire since the first sermon by Peter as the Holy Spirit spoke through him on the day of Pentecost. That united message of the good news of salvation and forgiveness through the risen Lord was complete in its power and story. Everyone still has not heard the gospel, but Paul



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impresses the point that it is one story, period. One message alone can save and it has been spreading like a wildfire across dry land.

6. **Read Hebrews 10:24-25.** Look at the actions called for in this passage.
 - a. Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess.
 - b. Let us hold unswervingly to the fact that God is faithful.
 - c. Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love.
 - d. Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward good deeds.
 - e. Let us not give up meeting together.
 - f. Let us meet to encourage one another.
 - g. Let us encourage one another with a continual increase in encouragement.

Question: How is this reflected at your church? Where do you think your church falls short?

7. Remember, Paul said “IF” you continue in the faith...” How is this instruction helpful to meeting the condition of faithfulness that the Holy Spirit has used Paul to present to the Colossian Christians?

He is emphasizing the power of the local church, the body of believers where you know and care for each other. Meeting regularly was essential to faithfulness because by ourselves we are fragile and weak when we try to stand alone. That is why the church is the ECCLESIA, those called out to be the body of Christ. Notice that one of the purposes for meeting together is that we are to encourage one another and all the more as you see the Day approaching. The Day meant the return of Jesus. Of course that would also relate to when your opportunities end when you die and your choices are sealed.

Question: What do these passages do to the person who doesn't like local churches and claims he doesn't need the church because all he needs is a Bible and a mountainside to practice his faith?



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Breakout Group or Discussion Time: Brainstorm the following areas: 1) In what areas does the local church need to better emphasize the encouragement of other Christians? 2) In what areas do we need to consider ways to spur one another on to love and good deeds? 3) How can we increase our encouragement? 4) How can we help one another better hold on to the hope we profess, in other words to continually grow in our hope?

Final Question: What is the one idea that stands out to you most from this lesson?