



V. 1

“Struggling” comes from the root of our word for ‘agony’ and it has built into it the idea of a **strenuous** activity. The particular struggle that Paul had in mind appears to have been that of **prayer**.

V. 2

“encouraged in heart”

- “Encouraged” (*parakaleo*) means “to call **alongside**.” In this context it is best understood as “**strengthen**” because the Colossians were under attack by false teachers and needed strengthening more than comfort.
- “Heart” refers to the inner person, the center of life, most specifically to the **mind**. Jeremiah 17:9; Proverbs 53:1
- When Paul says his purpose is that they may be “encouraged in heart,” he is hoping that they would be strengthened in what they **know** to be true.

“united in love”

By using a participle form of “united,” Paul is giving the **means** by which the encouraging takes place: by taking what they know and putting it into action, **loving** each other, which naturally builds unity with each other.

“...the full riches of complete understanding”

- “Complete understanding” refers to applying biblical **principles** to everyday life.
- “Full riches” indicates that this is an **awesome** and desirable thing and Paul wants this reality in each of these believers.
- Once you receive the truth in your mind and it is worked out in love for other believers in your life, the result will be a settled **conviction** that what you believe is really true.

“in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ”

The more we take the words of Christ and put them into action and by doing so find them to be true, the more we realize and become confident that Jesus is **who** He says He is and will do what He **promised** to do.

V. 3

“Hidden” means unknown to those who are not **Christians**.

V. 4

The arguments the Colossians were getting hit with centered around two things: that Jesus wasn’t **God** and that Jesus wasn’t enough for **salvation**.

V. 5

- “Order” (*taxis*) and “firm” (*stereoma*) were **military** words. They express Paul’s joy that the Colossians were **standing firm** against these attacks of false teachings.
- By encouraging them, Paul **inspires** them to continue and maybe even do better in the days to come.

SO WHAT NOW?

- 1) Instead of bickering and being proud and rejoicing over the failures of other believers, we ought to have the same **struggle** in our hearts for those who are missing out on the full life that God wants for them.
 - a. We have got to learn to love the Body of Christ, not just our **part** of it. It will take all of us to be who Christ wants the Church to be.
 - b. God wants you to be a person who struggles in **prayer** on behalf of the family of God.
- 2) When you battle with doubt, a lack of confidence, or worry, the problem is most likely **not** that you need to know more but that you need to put what you know into **practice**.

Philippians 4:9

 - a. The strength of your relationship with Christ is in direct proportion to how much you **live** by what He says.
 - b. You can say you believe whatever you want, but if you aren’t living it, you don’t **believe** it.
- 3) Hold **onto** Jesus for yourself and hold **out** Jesus for everyone else.