

SOLD OUT

LESSON 4 | DISCIPLINED FAITH

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Colossians 2:1-5 NIV

"I want you to know how hard I am contending for you and for those at Laodicea, and for all who have not met me personally. My goal is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. I tell you this so that no one may deceive you by fine-sounding arguments. For though I am absent from you in body, I am present with you in spirit and delight to see how disciplined you are and how firm your faith in Christ is.

The Big Idea

This portion of scripture has a multiplicity of context that we could draw from, however, the big idea is built around three resounding topics; Love, spiritual discipline, and firm faith. In this stanza, Paul states that his main goal is "that we be encouraged in our hearts and United in love." Paul confronts the issue of despondency in our hearts and the potential it has to rob us of a greater revelation of the reality of God. Discouragement can be the breaking point of our faith. Paul makes it clear that to keep discouragement in check, you must practice a healthy prayer life, know the Word of God, and have fellowship with other believers. It is critical to walk in these spiritual disciplines so that our hearts are strengthened and our faith is kept firm in Christ.

One of the greatest weapons against discouragement is the genuine, abundant, and unending love of Christ that is expressed and revealed in the body of Christ. As believers, God reveals His love in and through us. We have the incredible honor of revealing the profound mysteries of Christ by the way we love one another and the world around us. The love of Christ has been poured out on our hearts by the Holy Spirit so that we may love like Jesus. We are the tangible expression of the richness of His love. How will people know the full extent and reality of Christ's love unless we reveal it to them?

The Conversation

1. Being strengthened in Christ requires that we seek after God in prayer, in His Word, and in fellowship. What disciplines do you have in place to keep you encouraged and united in Christ?
2. It is very easy to be lazy in our relationship with God. What do you suppose could happen to a believer when he/she does not prioritize God in their life?
3. Sharing the love of Christ is our greatest honor. In what ways are you expressing God's tangible love with others?

The Takeaway

This week, take note of your effort in pursuing after God. Develop a plan to be with God in prayer, in His Word, and in fellowship with the body of Christ.

