

5-Day Devotional: Christ in You, the Hope of Glory (Colossians 1:24–27)

Day 1 — Joy That Doesn't Need Permission

Read: Colossians 1:24, James 1:2–4, Romans 5:3–5, 2 Corinthians 4:16–18, John 16:33

Paul opens with a sentence that feels almost wrong: “Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake.” He’s not writing from a hammock. He’s writing from prison. So this isn’t denial or spiritual bravado. It’s a joy anchored somewhere deeper than circumstances.

We usually treat suffering like an interruption. Like life glitched and God stepped out of the room. Paul treats suffering as something God can use without being the author of evil. He’s not celebrating pain. He’s celebrating what God does in the middle of it. That’s why James can say, “Count it all joy... when you meet trials,” and Paul can say suffering produces endurance, character, and hope. The point isn’t that suffering is good. The point is that God is good, even there.

Joy like this doesn’t come from pretending you’re fine. It comes from knowing you’re held. It’s the kind of joy that can be bruised but not broken. It’s joy that can weep and still worship. It’s joy that admits, “This hurts,” while also saying, “This won’t win.”

If you’re in a hard season, the invitation today isn’t to plaster on a smile. It’s to bring your pain into the presence of Christ and let Him teach you what kind of hope can survive reality.

Reflection Questions

1. What has been stealing your joy lately—big suffering, daily stress, or both?
2. Where are you tempted to interpret hardship as God’s absence?
3. What would it look like to practice honest faith instead of forced positivity?

Practical Application

Write one sentence prayer you can repeat this week: “Father, my circumstances are loud, but You are faithful.” Put it somewhere you’ll see it.

Prayer

Father, You know what weighs on me. Teach me the difference between pretending and trusting. Give me joy that doesn’t depend on my day going well, but on Christ holding me fast. Strengthen me to endure and to hope. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Day 2 — Christ Takes His Church Personally

Read: Colossians 1:24, Acts 9:4–5, Matthew 25:40, 1 Peter 4:12–14, Romans 8:17

When Jesus confronted Saul on the road to Damascus, He didn't say, "Why are you persecuting my people?" He said, "Why are you persecuting Me?" That's not poetic language. That's union. Christ is so joined to His church that what happens to His people is a personal offense to Him.

That truth changes how we view suffering—especially suffering connected to following Jesus. The world may shrug. Friends may not understand. Even believers may misread your season. But Christ is not detached. He is the Head. The church is His body. He doesn't ask you to bleed alone.

Paul says his sufferings are "for your sake" and "for the sake of His body." That means suffering can become service. Some of the most strengthening things in a church happen when someone keeps trusting Christ publicly while hurting privately. Their endurance becomes a kind of quiet sermon: "Christ is worth it."

This also reshapes how we treat the church. It's easy to get cynical. Easy to stand back and critique. But Christ loves His church. He calls her His body. If you want to serve Christ, love what He loves. Stay committed when it's inconvenient. Bear burdens. Forgive. Show up. Pray for people by name. Ministry isn't always flashy—it's often faithfulness that costs you something.

Reflection Questions

1. Where have you been tempted to detach from the church instead of serving it?
2. Who in your church family is suffering right now, and how could you step toward them?
3. What does it mean to you that Jesus identifies with His people?

Practical Application

Text or call one person today: "I'm praying for you. How can I carry something with you this week?" Then follow through.

Prayer

Father, thank You that Christ is not distant from His people. Teach me to love Your church as Christ loves her. Make me quick to serve, slow to criticize, and ready to carry burdens with joy. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day 3 — Stewardship Means We Don't Get to Edit

Read: Colossians 1:25, Acts 20:24–27, 2 Timothy 4:1–2, 1 Corinthians 4:1–2, Psalm 19:7–11

Paul says his ministry is a “stewardship from God... to make the word of God fully known.” A steward handles what belongs to someone else. He doesn't invent the message. He delivers it. That's the basic idea, and it's a needed correction in every generation.

We live in a time when people want spiritual encouragement without spiritual authority. Comfort without conviction. Inspiration without repentance. But God's Word doesn't work like a playlist — you don't skip the tracks you don't like and still claim you've listened to the album.

Paul's calling was to make the Word “fully known.” That doesn't mean he knew everything. It means he faithfully gave God's people what God had said. He wasn't a religious influencer. He was a steward. And the health of the church depends on that kind of faithfulness.

This matters for more than pastors. Every believer is shaped by something. If Scripture isn't filling your mind, something else will. You will be disciplined—by fear, outrage, entertainment, resentment, or the constant pressure to curate an image. God's Word is not just information; it's formation. It steadies the heart, exposes lies, and points you to Christ again and again.

So today, the question isn't, “Do I like what Scripture says?” The question is, “Will I let God speak?”

Reflection Questions

1. What parts of God's Word are you most tempted to avoid or soften?
2. What voices are shaping you more than Scripture right now?
3. How has God's Word recently corrected or steadied you?

Practical Application

Read Colossians 1:24–27 slowly out loud. Then write one sentence summarizing what God is saying to you through it.

Prayer

Father, forgive me for treating Your Word like advice instead of truth. Make me teachable. Give me hunger for Scripture and humility to obey it. Let Your Word shape my thoughts, my desires, and my choices. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day 4 — The Mystery Revealed: Outsiders Brought In

Read: Colossians 1:26–27a, Ephesians 2:13–18, Ephesians 3:4–6, Genesis 12:2–3, Colossians 3:11

Paul talks about a “mystery hidden for ages... now revealed.” In the New Testament, “mystery” isn’t code for secret spirituality. It’s God’s plan that nobody could have figured out unless God revealed it.

And the surprising center of that plan is this: God’s salvation would reach the nations. Gentiles—outsiders—would be brought in, not as second-class citizens, but as full heirs through union with Christ. The dividing wall would come down. A new people would be formed.

That’s good news for anyone who has ever felt like they don’t belong. The gospel isn’t a private club for the polished. It’s God rescuing sinners and creating a family. In Christ, old labels lose their power. That doesn’t erase differences, but it does reorder identity. Christ becomes first. Everything else becomes secondary.

This is also where the church must be careful. It’s easy to rebuild walls Jesus tore down. We do it with preferences, politics, social status, personality types, and even “spiritual” peacocking. Paul says God chose to make this known. God wanted outsiders to know they are welcome in Christ. So we don’t get to rehide what God revealed.

The question isn’t whether someone fits our comfort level. The question is whether Christ has welcomed them.

Reflection Questions

1. Where are you tempted to treat church like “people like us” instead of “people in Christ”?
2. Have you felt like an outsider spiritually? What does this passage say to you?
3. What walls have you seen believers rebuild that Jesus broke down?

Practical Application

Practice intentional welcome: sit with someone you don’t normally talk to, invite someone to lunch, or introduce yourself to someone you don’t know.

Prayer

Father, thank You that You bring outsiders near through Christ. Kill pride in me. Remove my suspicion and my partiality. Teach me to love the church as a redeemed family, not a curated community. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Day 5 — Christ in You, the Hope of Glory

Read: Colossians 1:27, Romans 8:9–11, Ephesians 1:13–14, Galatians 2:20, 1 John 3:2–3

Paul ends with a phrase that can carry a whole life: “Christ in you, the hope of glory.” Not Christ near you. Not Christ as a memory. Christ in you—by His Spirit.

That means the Christian life isn’t powered by grit. It isn’t “try harder.” It isn’t religious cosmetics. It’s resurrection life. Christ doesn’t just forgive you and leave you to figure it out. He indwells His people. He applies His finished work by His Spirit. He gives new desires. He strengthens faith. He convicts and comforts. He makes holiness possible.

And that indwelling presence creates hope. Hope isn’t denial. Hope is a settled confidence that what God promised is coming. The Spirit is called the guarantee of our inheritance—God’s down payment that glory is real and secured. If Christ is in you, glory isn’t a maybe. It’s a promise.

That also means your struggle doesn’t cancel your salvation. Believers still fight sin. We still feel weak. We still have days when we don’t want to pray. But the battle is not proof of abandonment. Often it’s proof of life. Dead hearts don’t fight. New hearts do.

So today, bring your fears and failures into the light. Don’t hide. Don’t pretend. Christ doesn’t indwell a cleaned-up version of you. He indwells sinners, He saves and sanctifies. And He will finish what He started.

Reflection Questions

1. Where are you trying to live the Christian life on willpower instead of Christ’s strength?
2. What future fear is stealing your peace right now?
3. How does “Christ in you” change how you face temptation and suffering?

Practical Application

Memorize Colossians 1:27 this week. Say it when anxiety spikes: “Christ in me, the hope of glory.”

Prayer

Father, thank You for the gift of Your Son and the indwelling Spirit. Help me stop relying on myself and start relying on Christ who lives in me. Strengthen my faith, grow my holiness, and fix my eyes on the glory to come. In Jesus’ name, Amen.