



BIG IDEA: A church that looks like Jesus proclaims him, warns and teaches every person, aims at full maturity, and pays the price it takes to get there.

1 THE WORK (COLOSSIANS 1:28)

- Herald language — public, declarative. Paul fronts the pronoun "him": not a program, not a personality, not even right doctrine. The herald points at the person.
- Warn and teach come as a pair. A church that only teaches is a classroom. A church that only warns is a courtroom. Col 3:16 hands the same pair to every member.
- Three times "everyone" in the Greek. No inner ring. No second-tier disciples. Every person aimed at full maturity — not just the easy ones, the gifted ones, the promising ones.

Colossians 1:28 CSB *We proclaim him, warning and teaching everyone with all wisdom...*

Colossians 3:16 CSB *...in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another...*

KEY TRUTH: A church that looks like Jesus proclaims him — not its programs, not its preferences, not even its right doctrine.

FILL IN THE BLANKS — SECTION 1

Col 1:28 — "We _____ him, _____ and _____ everyone..."

Col 1:28 — "...teaching _____ with all _____..."

Col 3:16 — "...teaching and admonishing _____..."

2 THE AIM (COLOSSIANS 1:28)

- A presentation-day word. Paul sees the day he hands his people, fully formed, to Christ. Same verb as 1:22 — the cross presents us holy; the ministry presents us mature.
- Mature does not mean flawless. It means full-grown. Not a sinless person — a grown-up. Someone who has come into what they were made to be.
- The measure is a person, not a checklist. We aim at him — his patience, his sacrifice, his courage, his love that does not quit on the unlovely.

Colossians 1:28 CSB *...so that we may present everyone mature in Christ.*

Colossians 1:22 CSB *...to present you holy, faultless, and blameless before him...*

KEY TRUTH: Numbers without maturity is just a crowd. Activity without maturity is just a program. The only metric Paul names is grown-up Christians.

FILL IN THE BLANKS — SECTION 2

Col 1:28 — "...so that we may _____ everyone..."

Col 1:28 — "...present everyone _____..."

Col 1:28 — "...everyone mature _____..."

3 THE COST (COLOSSIANS 1:29)

- Wearing toil. Paul does not pretend ministry is light. The tiredness is part of the assignment — the Saturday-night prep, the late-night call, the fifth casserole.
- Root of our word "agony" — an athletic contest. Not just tiring; contested. Epaphras wrestles in prayer for the same maturity (4:12). The fight happens in two places.

- Two opposite lies refused — that ministry is easy, and that ministry runs on us. The labor is real. The strength is given. We do the work, not on our own steam.

Colossians 1:29 CSB *I labor for this, striving with his strength that works powerfully in me.*

Colossians 4:12 CSB *Epaphras... is always wrestling for you in his prayers, so that you can stand mature...*

KEY TRUTH: We give the labor. He gives the strength. The work is hard. The strength is not ours.

FILL IN THE BLANKS — SECTION 3

Col 1:29 — "I _____ for this..."

Col 1:29 — "I labor for this, _____"

Col 1:29 — "...with his _____ that works powerfully in me."

APPLICATION

Take one. Carry it into the week.

- One you proclaim** — Pick one conversation about Cornerstone this week and make sure what gets heralded first is Him, not us.
- One you teach or warn** — Pick one brother or sister. Be willing — gently, with all wisdom — to put truth in their mind, or to receive it from them.
- One you wrestle for** — Name one person whose maturity you will wrestle for this week on your knees. Not just think about. Pray for. Like Epaphras.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Paul fronts the pronoun: "Him we proclaim." When you talk about Cornerstone, what gets heralded first — him, or our distinctives?
2. A church that only teaches becomes a classroom; only warns, a courtroom. Where are we strong on one and soft on the other?
3. Paul says "everyone" three times in v. 28. Who is easiest for you to invest in at Cornerstone — and who is easiest to let drift?
4. Mature means full-grown, not flawless. How does that change what we ask God for when we pray for one another's growth?
5. Epaphras wrestled in prayer for the same maturity Paul labored for in public. Whose maturity are you wrestling for on your knees right now?

MY TAKEAWAY

ANSWER KEY

S1: proclaim · warning · teaching · everyone · wisdom · one another

S2: present · mature · in Christ

S3: labor · striving · strength