

## Partnering with God for Great Things

### Colossians 1:24-29

The most important accomplishments in our lives happen in a partnership that includes our hard work and God's empowering presence.

**Three components of Paul's example** that help us know how to partner with God for great things:

- **Component #1: YOU MUST BE WILLING TO SUFFER FOR GOD'S GREAT CAUSES.**

*Now I rejoice in what was suffered for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church.* Colossians 1:24 (New International Version)

*Five times I received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one. <sup>25</sup>Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I was adrift at sea; <sup>26</sup>on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers . . .* 2 Corinthians 11:24-28 (English Standard Version)

Joy is not happiness. Joy = that deep inner sense of contentment that is present in a believer's life regardless of the circumstances.

*We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; <sup>9</sup>persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed.* 2 Corinthians 4:8-9 (NIV)

*Even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all.* Philippians 2:17 (ESV)

- **Component #2: YOU MUST BE AVAILABLE TO TAKE ON GOD'S ASSIGNMENTS.**

*I have become its servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness—<sup>26</sup>the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the saints. <sup>27</sup>To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.* Colossians 1:25-27 (NIV)

Commission = *oikonomia*      *oikos* = house; *nemo* = manage

### Paul's Commission

To present the word of God → the mystery kept hidden → Christ in you

*Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? . . .* 1 Corinthians 6:19 (NIV)  
(See also Romans 8:9 and Ephesians 2:22)

*Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." <sup>7</sup>So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir.* Galatians 4:6-7 (NIV)

- **Component #3: YOU MUST LEARN HOW TO PARTNER WITH GOD BY RELYING ON HIS POWER.**

*We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. <sup>29</sup>To this end I labor, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me.* Colossians 1:28-29 (NIV)

Labor = work to the point of exhaustion

*But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.* 1 Corinthians 15:10 (NIV)

*With this in mind, we constantly pray for you, that our God may count you worthy of his calling, and that by his power he may fulfill every good purpose of yours and every act prompted by your faith.* 2 Thessalonians 1:11 (NIV)

*Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.* Ephesians 6:10 (NIV)