**TO THIS END I LABOR**

Colossians 1:24-2:5 (Key Verse 1:29)

To this end I also labor, striving with all His energy working powerfully within me.

1. What does ‘rejoice’ mean (24a)?  Suffering is not a pleasant experience to go through, yet Paul says: “I *rejoice* in what was *suffered* for you.”  What does Paul’s example reveal about suffering for doing good in the Lord?  (Romans 5:3-5; 1Pe 1:6-7)

2. Paul says in present tense, “I *fill up* in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ’s afflictions...”  (24b) What do you think Paul might have meant by: 1) “what is still lacking in regard to Christ’s afflictions” and 2) “for the sake of his body”?  What does “I fill up” reveal about Paul’s attitude towards suffering (or affliction)?  Why does he fill them up in his ‘flesh’?

3. What do the following show us about the efforts the members of the church need to make in serving God’s Word to all people on earth (1:25-2:3):

* “the commission God gave me to present to you the Word of God in its fullness”;
* “the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory”;
* “we proclaim him admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom”;
* “so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ”;
* “I struggle with all his energy”;
* “that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love”; and
* “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”?

4. How does one become deceived by someone (4)?  What does “fine-sounding arguments” suggest about the way deceivers attempt to trick you? What does this passage teach us about the importance and purpose of spiritual letter writing among the saints (5)?