

I. ME

- A. Enough Questions
- B. Not a Xian- See what this is all about
- C. Crosscreek
 - 1. Mission
 - 2. Vision
 - a. Change how people see church
 - b. The local church (when done right) is the hope of the world.
 - c. Better life, Better at life, Hope, Peace, Purpose
 - d. Change the lives of the people of Salem for the better
- D. How does it happen?
 - 1. **Changing a city happens one person at a time**
 - 2. Not really through the organization church... through YOU individually.

II. WE

- A. We all want to have purpose and make a difference (whether Xian or not)
 - 1. But then the questions and fears come.
 - 2. Do I know enough, enough experience, enough to handle all the “what if’s”?
 - 3. Do I have enough time/energy? It sounds like a lot of work!
 - 4. It is.
- B. No one knew that more than Paul
- C. Paul Bio
 - 1. Hater
 - 2. Apostle
 - 3. Prison

D. Colossians Bio

- 1. 60 AD
- 2. Mixture of beliefs coming in

E. How can we make a difference... change lives?

- 1. It takes hard work but at the same time is insanely simple.

III. GOD (Colossians 1:24-2:5)

A. V. 24-25

- 1. Doing something that matters is hard work
 - a. Ex. Lord of the Rings
- 2. Changing lives (for eternity) is even more so.
- 3. Paul knew what it was to suffer... examples
- 4. But He knew it was a natural process of creating change...
- 5. “Fill up what is still lacking...”
 - a. There is still more suffering to do in order to build up this church.
 - b. Like contractions... each one brings you closer to the baby... but you have to go through them to get there.
- 6. What is Paul doing that is so difficult?
 - a. Presenting the word of God in all its fullness.
- 7. That seems like a big deal.
 - a. If there’s a God... who interacts with His creation... what would be the totality of His message to us?
 - b. Rules? I’m big. You’re small. Tremble?
 - c. Something worth suffering for... that could change the lives of everyone who knows it.

B. V. 26

- 1. Wow sounds really important...
- 2. Mystery- Something once hidden but now revealed.
- 3. A mystery of the universe... only now revealed... to a certain group of people... secret knowledge...
- 4. Like some kind of movie... EXCEPT THIS IS REAL

C. V. 27

1. **The mystery of the ages** that is now revealed, **that changes lives**, the complete and total message/word of God **is** the truth about **Jesus**.

D. Gospel.

1. Free Gift
2. Sin
3. God
4. Jesus
 - a. A Jewish carpenter, turned preacher, who 30 yrs before Paul wrote this letter... said he was God,
 - b. Said he would die to pay the penalty for our evil and restore our relationship with him...and rise again
 - c. He did and was seen by over 500 eyewitnesses
5. Faith
 - a. When someone chooses to trust Jesus' he sends Spirit of God to live in them
 - b. **Christ in you**- And he starts a process of transformation... making them into who they were always meant to be.
 - c. **Hope of glory**- And promises them eternal life... death is not the end...
 - d. Since he conquered death... his people will one day do the same.
6. The world changing knowledge, message of God, is not a philosophy, or a list of do's and dont's, not some mystical magical universe force... it's a person.

7. John 14:6

E. V. 28

1. And this life is available to everyone... everywhere
2. **Fully mature**- fully relying on Jesus to make them who they were always meant to be.
3. If we believe this we need to tell others... everyone...
4. But for everyone to hear... it takes work... hard work.

- a. Some people don't want to hear... some people have preconceived notions of who God is and what he's all about.

5. How do we do it?

F. V. 29

1. **Changing lives takes hard work and letting go at the same time.**
2. In Paul's thinking there is no room for the attitude of... "I'm just going to live my life and people will notice there's something different and ask about it."
3. For anything to happen you have to do something... **you have to work.**
4. But if you try to do it all on your own... you will be ineffective and exhausted.
 - a. **Like a drill with no battery.** It'll do something... but not much.
5. So we must rely on the power of God in us to accomplish it... to say the right things, to see the right opportunities, to have the love, to have the energy and courage.
6. **Work like it all depends on you and pray like it all depends on God.**
7. So Paul works with everything he has and more... relying on the power of God.
8. But it's still not easy

G. V. 2:1-2a (...united in love)

1. **Changing lives takes courage.**
 - a. **Encouraged in heart**- Heart was used not just to describe emotions but the center and source of personality... the deepest part of your being.

- b. People don't like change... to be a change maker you need a courage that comes from knowing who is in you and for you.
- c. If God is for us who can be against us?

2. Changing lives takes love

- a. To show people that God is for them... they have to see how you are for them. And how you are for those who are with you.
 - b. It's a love that comes from God in you.
 - c. God loving others through you.
 - d. Unity in love... committed to the needs of others... not our own.
 - e. Love is what you do.
- 3. That's nice but I still don't know enough... yes... you do.
 - 4. Remember when I said it's not easy but it's insanely simple?

H. V. 2:2b-3

- 1. What you need to know is Jesus.
- 2. Not church history... not the answer to every question about God...
- 3. There is no deeper secret knowledge that we keep for higher level 4th degree Xians.
- 4. **If you know who Jesus is, what he did, and what trusting Him has done for you... you can change a life.**
- 5. Of course you can get better at sharing that but you KNOW enough.

I. Not Xians-

- 1. You know enough to start making a decision... you can get lost in every question about the universe and God and all of that...

- 2. But if you are going to make an honest judgment about Xianity...
- 3. ... the question you have to wrestle down to the floor and once and for all
- 4. ... and answer for yourself is... WHO IS JESUS?
- 5. That's it. Look at the **EVIDENCE**... who is Jesus?
- 6. Not how did Xians 1000 yrs ago act... not what are those crazies on tv saying... but who is Jesus... that's what this is all about.
- 7. When you can answer that you know enough to make an honest judgment.

J. For both groups... why is this question the central issue?

K. V. 2:4

- 1. There are plenty of other philosophies out there that on the surface sound good...
- 2. They claim to have the secret to peace, or a secret knowledge about life, or even some rituals that will make your life better...

3. The truth is so much simpler than that...

- 4. God loves us. Wants to restore a relationship with us... and sent Jesus to make it happen.
- 5. In that relationship is peace, contentment, purpose, and truly understanding what life is all about... LOVE for God and others.
- 6. And Paul is willing to do whatever it takes to get that truth out b/c of the result...

L. V. 2:5

- 1. The reason Paul works so hard... to change lives...

2. People's lives are not out of control
3. And they can confidently trust Jesus through any situation in life.

M. Summarize...

N. In Jesus we have and know enough to make a decision.

O. And once you do...

P. In Jesus we have and know enough to change lives.

IV. YOU

A. **If you're just checking things** out... **challenge**... look into the evidence... good books

1. More Than a Carpenter- Josh McDowell

2. Case for Christ- Lee Strobel

3. Mere Christianity- C.S. Lewis

4. Could you believe it? Not will you, just could you?

B. If a Jesus Follower...

1. What's your part?
2. What difference are you going to make?
3. Who are you contending for?
4. Who's life are you trying to change?
5. It happens one personal at a time...
6. Who's your person that you are willing to work to love like it all depends on you and pray for like it all depends on God?

7. Write the name down.

8. You have and know enough...

V. WE

A. Crosscreek

B. **We are a church that is for our neighbors because God is for our neighbors.**

C. What that looks like...

1. Starts with one person changing the life of another person.