

Christ In You: The Deep Dive, Lesson 6

COLOSSIANS 1:24-29 (WEB) · SMALL-GROUP LESSON · DIGDEEPER.AI

The Big Idea

The risen Christ has actually moved in and set up house inside you right now, so the hope you keep waiting to arrive from somewhere out there is already living under your own roof.

Opening Lines

Paul is writing this in chains, and the first thing out of his mouth is that he's glad about it. Not brave, not resigned. Glad. By the end of these six verses you'll know why, and it has everything to do with where Christ is standing at this very second.

Before You Teach

- Goal: Get the room to feel the strangeness of 'Christ in you' — that the glory once locked behind a temple veil now lives inside ordinary people. If they leave saying 'wait, he's actually in me right now,' you've hit it.
- If you're short on time, cut: The full historical detour on why Gentiles-on-equal-footing scandalized Jews. Name it in one line and move on; the indwelling is the treasure, not the backstory.
- Where the moment lives: In the gap between 'Christ is somewhere out there' and 'Christ is in me as I do the dishes.' The turn happens when a person names one ordinary task tomorrow and pictures him already inside it.
- Your prep: Sit with verse 27 until 'Christ in you, the hope of glory' stops being a slogan and startles you again. If it doesn't move you, the room won't move either.

Run It In Your Setting

The same lesson, sequenced three ways. Pick the one that fits your group and your clock.

CLASSROOM · ~20 PEOPLE · 45 MINUTES

Locked-box opening (4 min). Read passage aloud, teach mystērion with the hands-behind-back image (10 min). Questions 1-2 in pairs, then report back (12 min). Silent vote on question 3 — window vs. door — and defense (12 min). Land on question 5 and out-loud commitments (7 min). Transformation lives in the vote and defense — that's the fixed center. If time's short, cut question 2 and shorten the pair work.

SMALL GROUP · ~8 PEOPLE · 60 MINUTES

One-word 'what are you waiting for' opening (6 min). Read passage, teach mystērion slowly with silence after verse 27 (12 min). Questions 1 and 2 conversationally (14 min). Silent vote and full defense on question 3 (14 min). Question 4 personal and question 5

(10 min). Commitments out loud, spontaneous prayer over their actual words (4 min). Transformation lives in question 4 — the hardest room to believe Christ is in it. Cut question 2 first.

COFFEE · 2-3 FRIENDS · 30 MINUTES

'Where do you picture God when you pray' opening (4 min). Read the six verses, land hard on 'Christ in you' and let it sit (6 min). Skip straight to question 3 as conversation, not a vote — where do you actually picture him (10 min). Question 5 and one real commitment each (7 min). Short prayer naming what each person said (3 min). Transformation lives in the honest answer to 'out there or in here.' Cut the word study if you're tight — the one line carries it.

Go First, Go Real

This is a habit for every lesson you'll ever teach — this week we drill it deliberately. Remember week 1, when you went first with a real story to set the honesty level in the room? Level two raises the bar: don't just go first, go first with the ONE you'd rather keep buttoned up. This week's table question asks who first told you the gospel and whether you ever thanked them. The easy rep is naming a Sunday school teacher you barely remember. The hard rep — the one that sets the room free — is naming the person you never thanked and admitting out loud that you didn't, and why. Go there before you ask anyone else to.

Why This Passage Matters

Most of the people in your room are quietly waiting for their lives to get better before they can feel close to God. Better circumstances, better discipline, a season that finally lets them breathe. Paul, writing from a prison cell, blows that up in six verses. He says the thing God kept secret for ages and finally shouted from the rooftops is not a technique or a doctrine. It's a location. Christ is not far off, not waiting for you to climb to him, not scheduled to arrive when you've cleaned up. He has taken up residence inside ordinary believers, and that indwelling is the whole hope. The tabernacle had God behind a veil. The temple had glory in a room nobody could enter. Now the glory lives in the person doing your dishes and the person you're teaching. That's why Paul can rejoice in chains and pour out his life laboring — a man carrying that treasure will bleed to hand it on. You get to be the one who tells a room full of people that the presence they keep chasing already lives under their own roof. There are few better things to say to a human being.

Catch the Fire First

Before you teach a word, do the exercise yourself. Take the hardest thing you're carrying right now — a loss, a diagnosis, a relationship you can't fix — and pray, out loud, in your own kitchen this week, that God would use that exact thing for someone else's good. Then text one grieving person and tell them you're praying for them by name. Do it before Sunday. When you stand up to teach 'I rejoice in my sufferings,' you'll be speaking

as someone who tried it this week, not someone quoting an apostle. The room can always tell the difference.

Bring Your Own Story

- Name the person who first told you about Jesus — and whether you ever actually thanked them.
- Tell about a hard thing you're still carrying that you've started to suspect God is using for someone else's good.
- Describe the last time you did an ordinary task — dishes, an inbox, a commute — and it landed on you that Christ was in you the whole time.
- SAMPLE (polished vs. real): Polished — 'God has taught me to find joy in every trial.' Real — 'My mom's diagnosis came in March and I still don't have a tidy lesson from it, but last week I prayed God would use it for the woman down the hall going through the same thing, and something in me settled for the first time in months.'
- Guardrail: bring it lived-in, not raw — a scar you've made some peace with, not a wound still bleeding on the room.

Three Ways to Open

CLASSROOM: "Hold up a locked box or your closed fist. Say: for centuries God kept something inside, not out of stinginess but the way a father hides a gift behind his back until the right moment. Today we find out what was in the box — and I promise you it's not what you'd guess."

Concrete object before abstract truth — give the mind something to hold.

SMALL GROUP: "Go around fast, one word each: what's the thing you're waiting to arrive before you'll feel close to God? A calmer season, more time, less pain? Hold your word. Paul, in a prison cell, is about to tell us it already arrived, and we've been looking in the wrong direction."

Start with a shared human ache before the text speaks to it.

COFFEE: "Quick — where do you picture God when you pray? Up there? Across the room? Out ahead of you somewhere? Hold that. Paul writes six verses from prison that move God to the last place anyone expected, and I want to read them with you."

A blunt personal question earns the right to open the text.

Teaching the Word

The word to teach is *mystērion* — verse 26, 'the mystery which has been hidden for ages.' Kill the modern meaning first. We hear 'mystery' and think of a puzzle, a whodunit, something clever people crack. That's not it. *Mystērion* means a plan God held back — locked in the counsels of heaven, impossible for any human mind to reason its way toward — until God himself decided to say it out loud. Here's the image: put both hands

behind your back like you're hiding something from a child, and hold it there. Let the room wait a beat too long. That waiting IS the ages and generations. Now bring your hands forward, open. That's verse 27. And what's revealed isn't a formula. It's a place: Christ in you, the hope of glory. Read that line slowly, and then stop talking. Let the silence do its work.

Discussion Questions

1. Paul says he rejoices in his sufferings. Not endures — rejoices. What's the difference, and does that sound possible to you or does it sound fake?

Coaching note: Let the skeptics speak first; if someone says it sounds fake, thank them and keep it open — don't rescue Paul too fast. The honesty here sets the depth for everything after.

If it stalls: Have you ever met someone who genuinely seemed at peace in the middle of something awful? What was different about them?

2. God kept this plan hidden 'for ages and generations,' then flung it open. Why hold a good gift back at all? What does the timing tell you about how God works?

Coaching note: Resist letting this go abstract-theological. Steer them toward the father-hiding-a-gift image and toward their own experience of God's timing.

If it stalls: Think of a time you finally understood something about your life that you couldn't have handled years earlier. Ever felt like God waited on purpose?

3. Here's a real split. When you actually pray, is Christ mostly OUT THERE that you're reaching toward, or IN HERE already living in you? Vote with your feet — window if 'out there,' door if 'in here.' Now defend your spot.

Coaching note: This is your silent-vote-then-defend moment. Make them commit physically BEFORE anyone talks — it locks in independent judgment so the quiet ones don't just echo the confident talker. The split itself will surprise them. Push both sides to defend honestly.

If it stalls: If nobody moves, go first: stand where YOU actually live most days and say why. Then ask one person by name where they'd stand.

4. Paul says God works in him 'mightily' while he labors at ordinary work. Where's the hardest place for you to believe Christ is actually in you and at work — which room, which task, which relationship?

Coaching note: This is where it gets personal. Name your own hardest place first. Watch for the person who names a job or a marriage — that's the real answer, protect it.

If it stalls: Name one thing you'll do tomorrow that feels too ordinary or too discouraging for God to bother with.

5. If 'Christ in you' is true right now — not someday — what's one thing you're carrying or waiting on that changes tonight?

Coaching note: This is the landing question; don't rush past silence here. Let them sit in it. Whatever they name becomes the material for your closing prayer.

If it stalls: Finish this sentence out loud: 'If Christ is really already in me, then I can stop ____.'

Questions You May Hear

"What does 'fill up what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ' mean — was Jesus' suffering not enough?"

No — Paul isn't adding to Christ's finished work on the cross. He means the suffering that comes with carrying the message out to people who haven't heard it yet; a man handing on this treasure will bleed to do it, and that cost still needs paying by servants like Paul.

"Why does Paul make such a big deal about the Gentiles?"

For a Jew of Paul's training, the idea that God's ancient promises would belong to outsiders on equal footing, without their becoming Jews first, looked like a scandal — a betrayal of everything Israel had guarded. Paul says it was never a mistake; it was God's plan all along.

"What exactly is the 'mystery' that was hidden?"

Not a puzzle to solve but a plan God held back until the right moment. And the content is startling: not a doctrine but a person in an unthinkable place — 'Christ in you,' the risen Lord living inside ordinary believers, Jew and Gentile alike.

"Paul says 'that we may present every man perfect in Christ.' Does that mean sinless?"

'Perfect' here means mature, complete, brought to the goal — a believer fully formed in Christ, not a flawless one. Paul's whole aim is to grow people up into the Christ who already lives in them.

For Experienced Leaders

- When you read 'Christ in you, the hope of glory,' do not explain it immediately. Read it, then count five silent seconds. The line does more work in silence than in your commentary.
- On the silent vote, your job is to keep it genuinely two-sided. The moment you tip your hand about the 'right' answer, everyone drifts to your side and the exercise dies.
- Someone will say Paul's joy in suffering sounds fake or superhuman. Don't defend it. Say 'you might be right — let's find out why he could mean it,' and let the text answer instead of you.

Landing the Lesson

Commitments: Before you go, say it out loud, not in your head: name the one ordinary task tomorrow where you'll picture Christ already in you, and name the one grieving person you'll text this week telling them you're praying for them by name.

Close by praying out loud over the actual things people just named — the specific task, the specific person they're going to text, the thing they said they could stop carrying tonight. Don't reach for a written prayer; naming their own words back to God is what makes it land.

If you run out of time: If the room only gets through question three — the vote and

defense — that's a full evening. The split about where they picture Christ is worth more than rushing to a tidy ending. Stay there.

Midweek follow-up: Next week, open by asking who actually sent the text they committed to — and what happened. Don't shame the ones who didn't; just keep the door open.

Free at digdeeper.ai/devotionals/colossians/1-24-29/lesson

Handout

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During the lesson:

- The one thing I'm waiting to arrive before I'll feel close to God:
- Mystērion doesn't mean puzzle — it means a plan God held back. In your own words, what was in the box:
- When I actually pray, Christ feels mostly OUT THERE / IN HERE (circle one). Why I stood where I stood:
- The hardest room, task, or relationship for me to believe Christ is in it with me:
- If Christ is really already in me right now, then I can stop:

Take-home actions:

- Take one hard thing you're carrying and pray specifically that God would use it for someone else's good — then text one grieving person and tell them you're praying for them by name.
- Before you clock in, open your inbox, or start the dishes tomorrow, say out loud: 'God, do your work through this ordinary thing' — then do the next task in front of you as if it matters to him.
- Pick one person you'll see this week and speak one genuine word of gospel hope into their week.

Christ is not waiting outside your day. He is already dwelling within you as you step into it.