

Colossians 1:24-29

Every day, in front of an innocuous looking building, a guard was posted in London. No important governmental functions took place in the building. No large sums of money exchanged hands there. The building didn't house any valuable documents. So why was the guard stationed there? No one seemed to know. The guard didn't know. Like a good soldier, he simply followed orders. The people in the building didn't know. They said there had always been a guard posted there as long as they could remember. So a member of parliament decided to find out. It seems that over a century ago, someone had made threats against a high ranking official who worked in the building. An order was issued providing the guard for his protection. Long after the threat had subsided, long after the man was dead, a guard continued to show up, day after day, week after out. No one bothered to ask why.

每一天，在伦敦的一个普普通通的大楼前，一名警卫在站岗。在大楼里，没有什么重要的政府职能，没有的大笔的资金储存。该大楼也没有收纳任何有价值的文件。那么，为什么警卫驻守在那里？似乎没有人知道。士兵不知道。就像一个好战士，他只是听上级的命令。在楼里的人们不知道。他们说，他们一直记得有个士兵在站岗。所以国会议员决定一探究竟。在一个多世纪前，有人威胁一个在大楼工作的高级官员。上级下达命令对他提供保护。在威胁平息后的很久之后，在男子去世的很久之后，一名警卫继续站岗，一天又一天，一周又一周。没有人去问为什么。

This morning I want to ask the question *Why?* Why are we here? For some of you it's your first time, but for others you have been here five years, ten years, thirty years and more—faithfully showing up, week after week, often sitting in the same place. We sing the songs, pray the prayers, listen to the sermon, attend Bible study groups, and so on. Why? What's the purpose behind it all?

今天早上，我要问的问题就是为什么？我们为什么在这里？对于一些人你是第一次到这里，但对于其他人，你在这里已经五年，十年来，甚至已经三十多年了，你每周忠诚的出现在这里，经常坐在同一个地方。我们一起唱歌，祈祷祷告，听布道会，参加查经班，等等。为什么？这一切的背后目的是什么？

I hope we can answer the question better than the guard at the building in London. If you can't, or you aren't sure, then you need to pay particular attention to this morning's message, because today's passage reflects the purpose of our church. It's contained in Colossians 1.24-29. This passage explains the motive and the mission we will pursue until the One who assigned us to this place comes back.

我希望我们能够比那个士兵更好的回答这个问题。如果你不能，或者你不知道，那么你需要特别注意今天上午的信息，因为今天的信息反映了我们教会的使命。在歌罗西书 1.24-29。这段话解释了我们的动机和使命，一个我们将继续追寻的使命，直到赋予我们生命的他回来了。

Verses 24-27 gives us

I. WHAT A PRIVILEGE WE HAVE SERVING THE LORD! (1.24-27)

I. 我们能够侍奉主是一件多么荣幸的事啊！

Paul begins with a statement that that should make us a little uncomfortable.

保罗从一段让我们有点不舒服的陈述开始。

A. READ V. 24.

A. 阅读 V.24

1. All Christian ministry has a cost. Jesus makes this clear. Paul makes this clear. Do you know what I find amazing about the people who pay a price to serve Christ? They often pay the price gladly.

1. 所有的基督教事工都是有代价的。耶稣表明了这一点。保罗表明了这一点。你知道我在服务于基督的人中发现了一个令人惊讶的事实是什么吗？他们是很高兴付出这个代价的。

a. Take Paul as an example. He describes some of his sufferings in one of his letters: *I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food...* He talks about being flogged, exposed to death over and over. Five times he was whipped, three times beaten with rods. In one place, people stoned him and left him for dead.

a. 用保罗来举例子。在他的一封信中，他介绍了一些他的痛苦经历：我不眠不休的劳苦和辛勤工作；我常常又饥又渴，没有食物吃.....他一遍又一遍地讲述被鞭打，一次又一次的近距离的接触到死亡。他被鞭打五次，用殴打棒打三次。在同一个地方，人们用石头打他，离弃他。

b. But instead of enumerating all the things he suffered, he emphasizes one thing to us: *I am more than happy to pay the price.* How can he say that? We go to extreme lengths to avoid suffering.

b. 但他没有列举所有他所受的苦难，他强调一件事给我们：我非常乐意为此付出代价。他怎么能这么说？我们常常竭尽可能的避免痛苦。

c. He gives us some clues in this chapter.

c. 他在本章中给我们了一些线索。

i. READ VV. 3-5. The truth about Jesus changes people. We have every reason to get excited about the changes Jesus makes in us and in others. It

doesn't merely change them externally. It changes internally. It doesn't change them temporarily. It changes them permanently, eternally.

i. 阅读 V3-5. 那些关于耶稣改变人们的故事的事实。我们应该能够充分的感受到耶稣给我们自己或者他人带来的改变。他并不只是改变人的外在。他改变人的内心。他不只是占时的改变。他会永久的永远的改变人们。

I think of a friend of mine who reached out to an older man who is a little strange. Other people tend to avoid him. He mowed the lawn for this older man. In fact through the lawn mower his own lawn got infected with some strange disease from the old man's lawn. He took him to a professional baseball game. Why would he do that? It's the life transforming power of Jesus. Everyone wants to have a life that counts, that makes a difference. Can you imagine a more significant impact than helping people come to this life-changing faith?

在这里我想到，我的一个朋友，他接触到一个有点怪的老头。其他人往往会避开这样的人。他帮助这个老头割了他的草坪。然而通过割草机他自己的草坪却感染了老人的草坪上一些奇怪的病。他带他去看职业棒球比赛。他为什么要这么做？这是耶稣的改造力量。每个人都希望有重要的生活，能够有作为。你能想象一个比帮助人们改变生活的信念更有影响力的事情吗？

ii. But I think there's another motivation, a higher motivation, later in chapter 1. Listen to his description of Jesus. READ 1.15-18. Paul treasures the privilege of knowing and exalting our matchless Savior. When we see people come to faith and grow in faith, it displays the glory of Christ. That's why God created us—to bring glory to Himself. When you serve the good of others and the glory of God, that brings matchless joy.

ii. 但我认为在第 1 章的后面还讲述了另一个目的，其有着更高的积极性。让我们来看看耶稣的讲述。阅读 1.15-18。保罗无比荣幸的了解并高举我们的救主耶稣。当我们看到有人来敬拜和在信仰中成长，这彰显了基督的荣耀。这就是为什么上帝创造了我们，把荣耀归给他自己。当你为了他人服务，为了神的荣耀，这将带来无比的喜悦。

I was watching a Public Television series on great scientists. One of the researchers they highlighted was a zoologist who studied gibbons. (Gibbons are related to monkeys.) This man went to Thailand in order to study them. He spent months tracking them through dense, almost impenetrable forests, lugging around very heavy equipment. Eventually, he laid out an identification system for several different kinds of gibbons. He had to deal with swamps, insects, leeches, and all sorts of wild animals in his pursuit of observing and classifying gibbons. He developed a permanent crick in his neck as a result of his observations--gibbons live in the forest canopy approximately 100 ft above the forest floor. Here is man who willingly paid the price to advance the scientific study and knowledge of a

group of primates. He suffered voluntarily and gladly for that purpose. How much greater is our calling!! How much greater is our task!! All ministry involves a price, but when we realize what's at stake, we can pay the price gladly.

我正在看一部关于伟大的科学家的电视连续剧。其中一位他们着重介绍的研究人员是研究长臂猿的动物学家。（长臂猿与猴子属于同类。）这个人去泰国研究它们。他花了几个月穿过浓密，在几乎不可穿越的森林追踪他们，自己拖着很重的设备。最终，他研究出来对几种不同类型的长臂猿的识别系统。在他的追求观察和分类长臂猿的过程中，他不得不面对沼泽，虫，水蛭，各种各样的其它的野生动物。他的脖子上因此留下了永久性的肌肉损伤，因为长臂猿生活在离森林林地上约百英尺以上。这是一个愿意为了获得灵长类动物的科学研究和知识而支付代价的一个人。他自愿遭受各样的痛苦，因为自己的目的他愉快地接受这样的痛苦经历。比此更大的是对我们的呼召！比此更大的是我们的任务！所有的传道都有一个代价，但是当我们意识到什么是最重要的，我们就很乐意支付这样的代价。

2. I want to take a moment to explore something else in this verse.

REPEAT V. 24B. What on earth does that mean?

2. 我想在这个经文再多花一点时间。阅读 V24B。这究竟是什么意思呢？

a. This much we know elsewhere from Paul. Christ's sufferings as a sacrifice for sin are perfect and complete. We can't add anything to His sufferings in that sense. Paul says as much in the next chapter. READ 2.13-14.

a. 对此我们从保罗书的其他地方也能知道。基督为了赎罪而受的苦难是完美并且完整的。我们在这个意义上无需添加任何更多的苦难。保罗在下一章也提到这些。阅读 2.13-14。

b. At the same time, there is a sense in Scripture in which Christ continues to suffer. *Wait a minute, Bill. Explain that.*

b. 与此同时，圣经中也提到在某种意义上的基督的继续持续的受苦。等一下，比尔。请解释一下这个差别。

Here's what I mean. Christ identifies with us as His people so much that the things we suffer for Him are His sufferings. Let me illustrate with the life of Paul himself. Do you remember what the Lord Jesus said to him when He first appeared to him? *Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting ME?* We think Saul persecuted Christians, and he did. But Jesus identifies with us in our suffering on His behalf, so when Saul persecuted the early Christians he also persecuted Jesus.

下面是我想表达的。基督把我们视为他的子民，我们为他所遭受的痛苦就是他自己的痛苦。从保罗的经历来看，你是否记得当他第一次见到主耶稣，主对他说了什么吗？扫罗，扫罗，你为什么要逼迫我呢？我们认为，扫罗迫

害基督徒，他确实做了。但是，耶稣与我们同受我们的痛苦，所以当扫罗逼迫早期的基督徒时，他也就是在迫害耶稣。

Or, think of when Jesus talked about what it would be like on the day of judgment. He says, *I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in* and so on (Mt. 25.35-36). They ask, *When did we do these things?* Do you remember His reply? *I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me* (v. 40). I'll never forget when that first hit home for me. I did a summer internship in my home church and after going to the hospital to visit some people, the pastor told me that he often thinks about Jesus when he visits people in the hospital because it's like visiting Jesus. Jesus identifies with us in a very powerful and personal way. Paul helps us see that in this passage. We never suffer alone when we suffer for following Jesus. More than that, when we do suffer that way we help complete God's plan for suffering.

或者，想一想当耶稣谈论审判日会发生什么。他说，我饿了，你们给我东西吃，我渴了，你们给我东西喝，我是一个陌生人，你请我进入你的家中（太 25.35-36）。他们会问，我们什么时候做这些事情？你还记得他的回答吗？我实话告诉你，不管你为我的这些兄弟之一做一点点事情，你就是为我做的（V40）。我永远不会忘记我第一次领悟到这个道理。我暑假时在我家乡的教堂做实习，在去医院看望了一些人之后，牧师告诉我，当他在医院里看访病人时，他常常想起耶稣，因为就像是去看访耶稣一样。耶稣与我们同在是一个非常给人力量和非常独有的体验。在这一段中，保罗帮助我们看到这一点。我们因为跟从耶稣而受到苦难，我们从来不会单独受苦。更重要的是，当我们在遭受苦难时，我们是在帮助完成神的计划。

B. Paul had a special role in God's plan as an appointed leader in the early church. We know that from v. 25. READ V. 25. We share in that commission to go and make disciples. God has entrusted the message about Christ to us and Paul explains this more in the next two verses. READ VV. 26, 27.

B. 保罗在神的计划中，在早期教会的领导中担任着特殊的作用。从第 25 节中，我们一起传扬信息，培育信徒。上帝赋予基督的信息给我们，保罗解释更在接下来的两节经文讲述这一点。阅读 VV。26，27。

1. Part of this may not sound earth-shattering to us. We forget how startling this would be to a faithful Jewish man like Paul. Jewish people grew up with the mindset that they alone could be God's special people. They referred to people like us Gentiles as "dogs". To help us get the feel for this, think about your reaction if you had walked into your kitchen this morning to see a rat. You would want to kill it. It had invaded your space. It's filthy. That's not far from how pious Jewish

people viewed Gentiles. They viewed them as unclean, unwanted. The good news of the gospel is that the door into God's presence now stands open even to the rats. 这部分听起来可能不是惊天动地的事迹。我们却忘记了对于一个忠实的信徒保罗来说，是多么惊人的事。犹太人从小就认为只有他们才是上帝拣选的人。他们提到了我们这样的人—外邦人就像“狗”一样。为了帮助我们了解这样的感觉，想想当你早晨起来走进厨房看到老鼠会有的反应。你会想杀死它。因为它已经侵入到你的空间，而且是肮脏的。这就是虔诚的犹太人如何看待外邦人。他们认为他们是不洁的，不被爱的。福音带来的好消息是，通向神国的门已经打开，甚至对老鼠都会开放的。

2. In fact the rats can be transformed into the very dwelling place of God. Isn't that what it says—*Christ in you*? You become a temple, a dwelling place of God. And you will one day live in the presence of the unfiltered, undiminished glory of God. That's what our ministry offers. You want motivation for ministry? If that doesn't do it, at least a little bit, you're dead on arrival this morning.

2. 事实上，老鼠也可以转化为神的居所。这不正是他所说的，基督在你里面吗？你成为一个殿，神的居所。你总有一天会活在神的未经过滤的，未曾减少的荣耀中。这就是我们的事工所提供的。你要事奉的动机是什么？如果不这样做，哪怕就是一点点，你今天早上在抵达的时候就已经死了。

Verses 28-29 give us

II. WHAT AN AMAZING PURPOSE WE HAVE SERVING THE LORD! (1.28, 29)

II. II. 我们侍奉主，这是一个多么了不起的人生目的啊！

A. Verse 28 describes the way to reach our goal.

A. A.28 节描述了实现我们的目标的方式。

1. READ V. 28A. We need First Free to be about Jesus. We can't focus on programs. We can't focus on activities. We can't focus on buildings. At the heart of true ministry stands the Lord Jesus. We proclaim Him. How? In two ways:

1. 五，阅读 28A。我们需要我们的教会只是关于耶稣。我们不能专注于不同的教会项目。我们不能只是关注教会活动。我们不能只是关注教会的建筑。最重要的教会事工是主耶稣。我们要传扬他。怎么样做呢？有两种方式：

2. Admonishing

2. 诫勉

a. I think of two words—persistent and insistent. We want to break down the inborn resistance that keeps us from pursuing Christ. We could translate this **advising** everyone or **warning** everyone or **spurring on** everyone.

a. 我想到两个词，执着而坚持。我们要打破我们与生俱来的不去寻求基督的天性。我们把这个视为建议或警告或激励。

b. To put it in modern terms, sometimes we need to get in someone's face to get them to follow Christ.

b. 把它用现代术语，有时我们需要在别人的抗议下仍然传扬基督。

Let me show you how Paul did this. ACTS 20.31: *Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears.* NIGHT AND DAY, FOR THREE YEARS--Paul was committed to these people. He poured himself into them. EACH ONE--he cared for them individually. He considered the needs of each person. WITH TEARS--he had a passion for them.

让我来告诉你保罗是如何这样做。ACTS 20.31：请记住，这三年来我从来没有停止过为你们每个人日夜的含泪的警醒祷告。白天和黑夜，持续了三年——保罗一直为这些人而坚持而努力。他关心其中的每一个人。他照看他们中的每个需要。用他的泪水，他表达出对他们的心和迫切。

Let's look at our lives. Do we see these kinds of qualities in our relationships with one another? To the extent this characterizes our church, we will fulfill God's mission. I can tell you that it won't happen by attending one service, once a week. We need to grow beyond that. Everything is at stake here.

让我们审视一下我们的生活。我们是否看到这类特质在我们彼此之间的关系中吗？在某种程度上，这个特点决定着我们的教会，我们将完成神的使命。我可以告诉你，它不会仅仅通过参加一次每周的崇拜就会发生。我们需要在此之外的成长。这一切都是利害攸关的。

2. Teaching

2. 教导

a. This means explaining God's truth and how it applies to us—whether in the easily digestible truths or the ones we have to chew on.

a. 这意味着解释神的真理，以及如何实际的运用在生活中，无论对着简单易懂的真理，或是那些晦涩难懂的道理。

b. Paul won't stop instructing with only a small corps of elite Christians. He wants every Christian to have the opportunity to grow in his or her knowledge of the message of the Bible.

b. 保罗不是只对一小部分的基督徒精英做指导。他希望每一个基督徒能有机会在他或她的圣经信息中成长。

c. That doesn't mean Paul wanted a bunch of theological brains-on-a-stick or spiritual know-it-alls.

c. 这并不意味着保罗想要一堆神学家，或者无所不知的灵学家。

You can see that at the end of v. 28.

你在 28 节的末尾可以看到这一点。

B. The goal itself (1.28c)

B. 目标本身 (1.28c)

READ V. 28C. He wants us mature, fully developed in every way so that we love God passionately, with all our heart and we love others deeply with the sacrificial love of Jesus.

阅读 V28C。他希望我们能够在各方面成熟而全面的成长，能够发自内心的全心的爱上帝，因而我们可以以耶稣牺牲的爱来爱其他人。

Every person is important. Paul uses the phrase, **everyone**, three times in the original language here. Every one of you is important in the ministry of this church and in the scope of God's plan. One of the tendencies, one of the assumptions that can develop in a church the size of First Free goes like this: *This is such a big church. There are so many people here. What I do or don't do doesn't really matter.* NNNNHHH! Wrong answer! Every one here, every one investigating the faith, every believer—from the youngest, babyest Christian, to the saintliest, holiest, most mature Christian—each one matters.

1. 每个人都是很重要的。保罗的原文中三次提到每个人这个词。对这个教会的事工而言，你们每个人都是非常重要的，都在上帝的计划之中。对于像我们教会，其中一个可能的假设是，这是一个多么大的教会。有这么多的人在这里。我做什么或者不做都无所谓。NNNNHHH！错误的答案！在这里的每一个人，每一个寻求的人，每一个信徒，- 从最小的婴儿，到最圣洁的，最成熟的基督徒，每一个都非常重要。

2. God has all of us on a journey to do whatever it takes to grow closer to Christ. Maybe you need to start the process this morning. You haven't even entrusted your life and eternity to Christ. You can do that now. Talk to God now. For you to do that is far more important than anything else I have to say.

2. 上帝对我们所有人的旅程的安排是做一切有可能靠近耶稣基督的事情。也许你需要从今天上午开始这个过程。你也许还没有选耶稣基督做你的生命的主宰。现在你可以做到这一点。与神对话。对你来说，这是比我要说的远远重要的事情。

Can I offer a word of admonition? I find some Christians grow complacent in their faith over time. We reach a level of commitment that suits us and our schedule and our desires, and we park. I hope the Lord is putting some parking tickets under some of the spiritual windshield wipers of people who have put their faith in park. Get back in gear and get on the road of discipleship.

我是否可以提供一个忠告吗？我发现基督徒随着时间的推移会渐渐的自满于自己的信仰。我们在信仰中慢慢成长，成长到一个合乎自己，合乎时间，合

乎我们的期望的高度后，我们就停下来了。我希望上帝给这些人开停车的罚单。希望你们重新上车再次上路。

Where are you in the process of maturity? Where does God want you to grow? When you have identified two or three areas, think about a ministry in the church where you can receive the admonition and teaching you need. Where does God want you to put your God-given talents to work? If you need help, ask. But I can tell you, Sunday morning services alone will not be enough. Sunday-morning-only Christianity is not biblical Christianity. It may be American Christianity, but it is not biblical Christianity. You can barely survive much less thrive on Sunday morning services alone. If that's what you're doing, you need to get more serious about your faith. Jesus created us for Himself, and He wants all of our life, not just part.

你在灵里成长的那个阶段呢？神要你在那个方面成长呢？当你已经确定两个或三个领域，想想在那些教会事工中你可以获得需要的训诫和学习。想想上帝赐予你的天赋在那里可以用到呢？如果您需要帮助，请讲出来。但是，我可以告诉你的是，星期天早晨的崇拜是不够的。只有周日早晨的基督教不是圣经中的基督教。这可能是美国基督教，但它不是圣经基督教。如果只是依靠星期天的崇拜是很难面对生活中的种种挑战而生存下来的。如果这是你正在做的，你需要重视自己的信仰。耶稣创造了我们，他希望我们所有的生活以他为中心，而不仅仅是一部分。

I know it isn't easy. I've said it once, but I'll say it again because Paul does.

我知道这是不容易的。我已经说过了一次，但因为保罗这样做，所以我再说一遍。

C. READ V. 29. It is hard work following and serving Christ. That is the idea behind the phrase translated, **I labor**. It means toil to the point of weariness or exhaustion. At our last elder meeting, one of our elders asked—*Has the glow of sabbatical worn off?* I said, *Yes it has*. He then asked, *What can we do to help with that?* I said, *I'll have to think about that*. This passage gives me part of the answer. By its very nature, following Jesus and helping others follow Jesus is intrinsically exhausting. It's hard. It wears us down. That word, **struggling**, reinforces this—it describes physical conflict or the strain of athletic competition.

C. READ V. 29. 跟从和服务基督是一个艰苦的工作。这就是这句话背后的意思：我艰苦的劳作。这意味着，劳作直到疲倦或精疲力竭的地步。在上次的长老会议上，一位长老问到，有没有感觉休假的作用在逐渐的消失？我说，是的，它有。他接着问，我们能做些什么来帮助呢？我说，我得想想。这段话给了我答案的一部分。就其本质而言，跟随耶稣和帮助他人跟随耶稣就会使人疲

惫不堪。这个一件困难的事情，它让我们疲惫。这个词-挣扎，它更加具体的描述了肢体的冲突和需要像体育比赛的一样的应变能力。

But here's the Good News. Even though our elders can't do anything about it, God can. The strength you and I need to follow Jesus and help others follow Him, comes from the Lord Himself. Imagine being at the helm of a huge ship during a storm. It wears you out fighting the pitch and roll of the storm as you steer the ship through these ever-changing waves. But when you turn the wheel on that ship, it really isn't your power that steers the ship. Yes you're faithfully doing your part but a vast system of hydraulic equipment goes into action to shift the gigantic rudder. All the movement may seem tiring, but the power really comes from the unseen hydraulic equipment located below deck. The same is true to our mission. We labor and toil, but the strength to do so comes from God.

但这里有一个好消息。尽管我们的长老不能做任何事情，但是上帝能。你和我所需要的跟从耶稣和帮助别人跟随他的力量，来自主耶稣他自己。想象一下，在风暴期间为一个巨大的船掌舵。你需要穿过这些不断变化的波浪同时操控船舶的方向，这使得你疲惫不堪。但是，当你转动船的方向轮，它并不是你的力量来引导船。是的，你的工作是转动方向盘，但是是其他的液压设备等的庞大系统带动巨大的舵来改变船的方向。所有运动看起来挺累的，但真正动力来自于位于甲板之下的看不见的液压设备。这就像是我们的使命一样。我们需要劳苦的工作，但这样做的力量却来自上帝。

Why are we here? Has your answer to that question changed? We all need to be reminded from time to time why we do what we do. If you need fresh motivation to follow Christ, if you need a fresh vision of the goal that He has called us to as a part of His church, then you can come back to this passage again and again and again.

我们为什么在这里？你回答这个问题的答案变了吗？我们都不时的需要提醒自己为什么我们做我们要做的。如果你需要新鲜的动力跟随基督，如果你需要的是一个新的视角，新的看见，他招呼我们成为这个教会的一部分，那么你可以一次又一次回到这个经文。

Ten years ago we moved here to serve with a group of God's people who had a commitment to make, mature and multiply fully-committed followers of Jesus Christ. By the grace of God, may that never change about the people of God who are known as First Free.

十年前，我们搬到这里与一群基督徒来造就，培育，壮大跟随主耶稣的信徒。靠着神的恩典，希望这在我们的教会将成为永远不会改变的宗旨。