

Paul's Letter to the

Colossians



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The Apostle Paul's Ministry

1. To the Church (1:24-29)
 - A. His Stewardship
 - B. His Striving
2. To the Colossians (et al) (2:1-5)
 - A. His Struggle
 - B. His Strategy



Paul's Ministry to the Church



A. His Stewardship (1:24-27)

- *Manager, trustee, administrator*
- 1 Cor. 4:1-5; 9:17; Eph. 3:1-2, 9-12
- Apostles were commissioned and gifted to work on Christ's behalf
- 'Grace given to me' (e.g. Rom. 12:3)

Paul's Ministry to the Church

A. His Stewardship (1:24-27)

- Suffering (Afflictions)
 - Lacking in Christ's afflictions??
 - NOT ATONEMENT (see 2:9-15)
 - One time (Heb. 7:27; 9:12; 10:10)
 - Sufficient (Rom. 5:1, 18-19)



Paul's Ministry to the Church

A. His Stewardship (1:24-27)

- Suffering (Afflictions)

- Lacking in Christ's afflictions??

1. There is a fixed amount of suffering that must be completed before Christ's return (e.g. Mark 13:19-24)



Paul's Ministry to the Church



A. His Stewardship (1:24-27)

- Suffering (Afflictions)

- Lacking in Christ's afflictions??

2. Christians will suffer because they are in Christ. Persecution of Christians = persecution of Christ (Acts 9:4-6; 2 Cor. 1:5; cf. John 15:20)

Paul's Ministry to the Church

A. His Stewardship (1:24-27)

- Suffering (Afflictions)

- His attitude: suffering is part of the Christian life (2 Tim. 3:12; Phil. 3:10; Rom. 8:16-18; Acts 14:22)

- It serves a purpose (Rom. 5:3-5)



Paul's Ministry to the Church

A. His Stewardship (1:24-27)

- Preaching the Word
 - The mystery (see Eph. 3:1-13)
 - 'the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel' (6)



Paul's Ministry to the Church

A. His Stewardship (1:24-27)

- Preaching the Word
 - The mystery (see Eph. 3:1-13)
 - Hidden in the past but revealed to the apostles and prophets (5)
 - Paul was to preach it to the Gentiles (8; Romans 15; Acts 22:21)



Paul's Ministry to the Church



A. His Stewardship (1:24-27)

- Preaching the Word
 - The mystery which is 'Christ in you'
 - The Messiah is for everyone!
 - Gentiles do not need to become Jews
 - Acts 10-11 (11:18); Galatians

Paul's Ministry to the Church



B. His Striving (1:28-29)

- Proclaim Christ to every man
- Admonishing every man
 - *Setting the mind in proper order*
 - *Warning, encouraging, confronting*
 - Necessary (Rom. 15:14; Col. 3:16)

Paul's Ministry to the Church



B. His Striving (1:28-29)

- Proclaim Christ to every man
- Teaching every man
 - 'Instruct' (2:7); (2 Tim. 3:16-17)
 - Moral / pastoral (1 Tim. 4:11; 6:2; 2 Tim. 2:2; Titus 1:11)

Paul's Ministry to the Church



B. His Striving (1:28-29)

- Present every man complete in Christ
 - Christ: holy, blameless, beyond reproach positionally (1:22)
 - Paul: perfect, mature in practice (1:9-12) – *conformed to the image of Christ*

Paul's Ministry to the Church



B. His Striving (1:28-29)

- 'I labor' – *toil to weariness; exhaustion*
 - 1 Thess. 2:9; 1 Cor. 15:9-10, 58
- 'striving' – *struggling; fighting; wrestling*
 - Eph. 6:12; 2 Tim. 4:7
- *With the energy He supplies*

Paul's Ministry to the Colossians

A. His Struggle (2:1-3)

- Both proclaiming (1:28-29) and prayer (see 4:12)
- Four results...



Paul's Ministry to the Colossians

A. His Struggle (2:1-3)

1. 'their hearts may be encouraged'

- *Heart* – total inner being (Prov. 4:20-27)
- *Strengthened* (cf. 2 Thess. 2:16-17)
 - To resist being deluded (Col. 2:4)



Paul's Ministry to the Colossians



A. His Struggle (2:1-3)

2. 'having been knit together in love'

- *United; caused to come together*
- Love: 'the perfect bond of unity' (3:14)
 - 1 Cor. 13:4-7; 1 Pet. 4:8 (Prov. 10:12); Gal. 5:13-16 (*walking in the Spirit*)

Paul's Ministry to the Colossians



A. His Struggle (2:1-3)

3. 'and attaining to ...'

- Understanding (*insight*, 1:9) -> full assurance -> wealth (*riches* 1:27)
 - *Treasures* of wisdom & knowledge (3)
 - Spur us on to dig deeper

Paul's Ministry to the Colossians

A. His Struggle (2:1-3)

4. 'resulting in ...'

- True, real, deeper knowledge of Christ
 - Col. 1:15-20; Philippians 3
- Renewing the 'new self' in His image (3:10)



Paul's Ministry to the Colossians

A. His Struggle (2:1-3)

4. 'resulting in ...'

- True, real, deeper knowledge of Christ
 - Wisdom – *skill of living life to the best*
 - Knowledge – of God and His purposes
 - God's will: *holiness* (1:9-12)



Paul's Ministry to the Colossians

A. His Struggle (2:1-3)

- As the body grows in community in the context of love, it will better understand the richness of life to be found in Christ
- Eph. 4:11-16



Paul's Ministry to the Colossians



B. His Strategy (2:4-5)

- 'I say this so that...'
 - Delude: *to reason beside* (faulty logic)
 - "Don't be led astray by bad logic that sounds good"
 - *Cunning, craftiness, trickery, deceit*

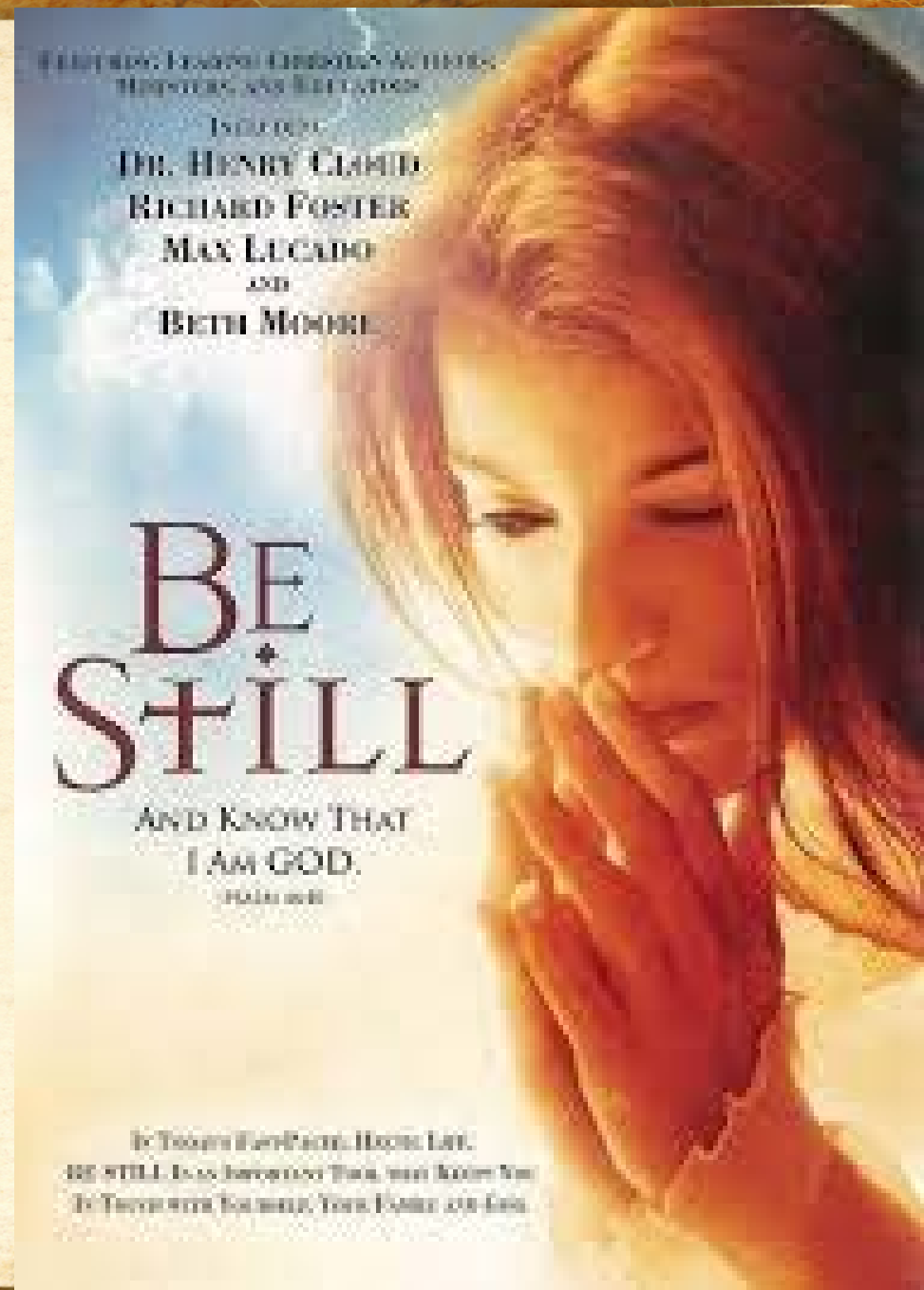
N. T. Wright

Persuasive argument:

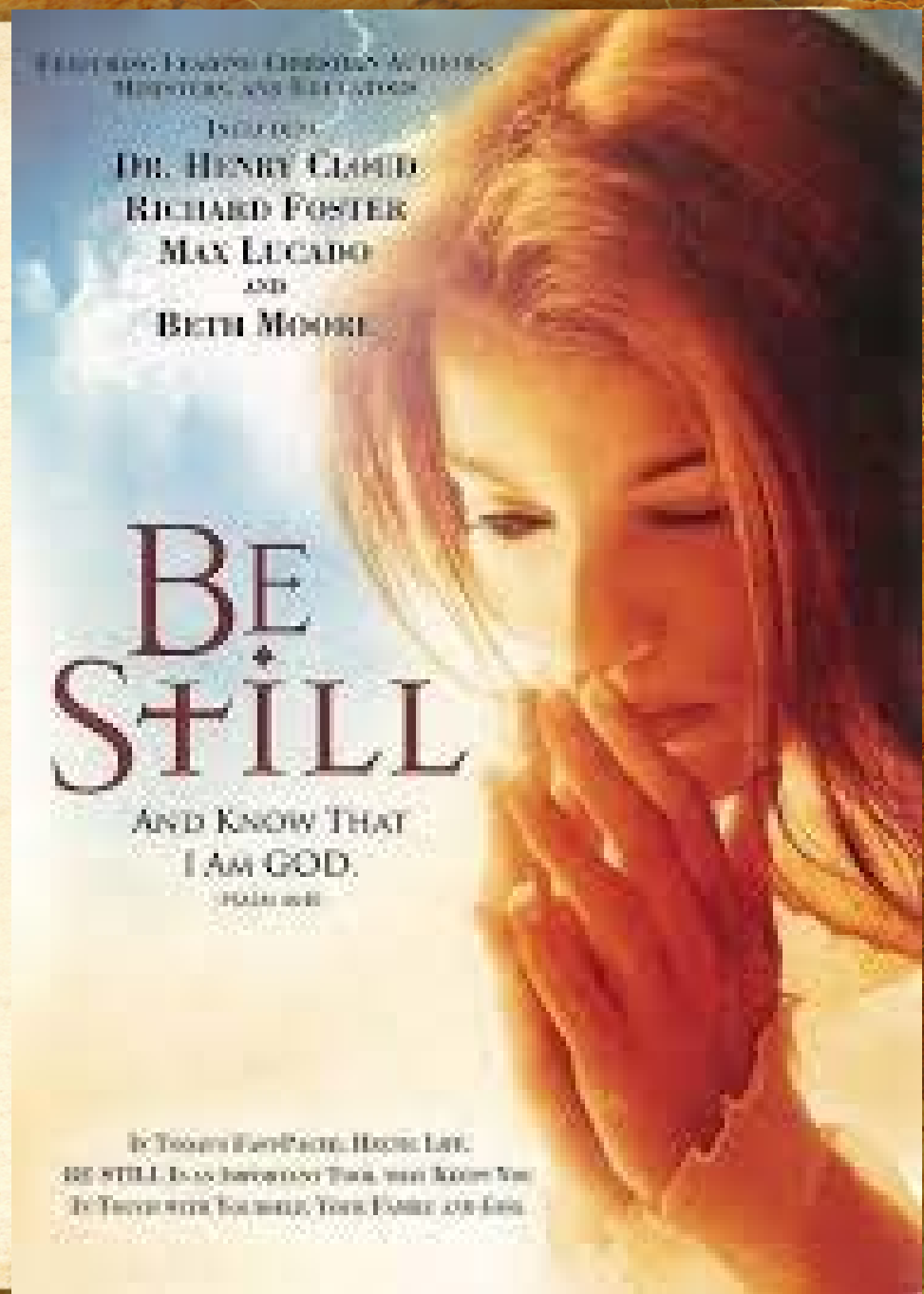
“...the clever plausibility of teaching near enough to the truth to be apparently respectable and far enough away from it to be devastating in its effect on individuals and congregations.”



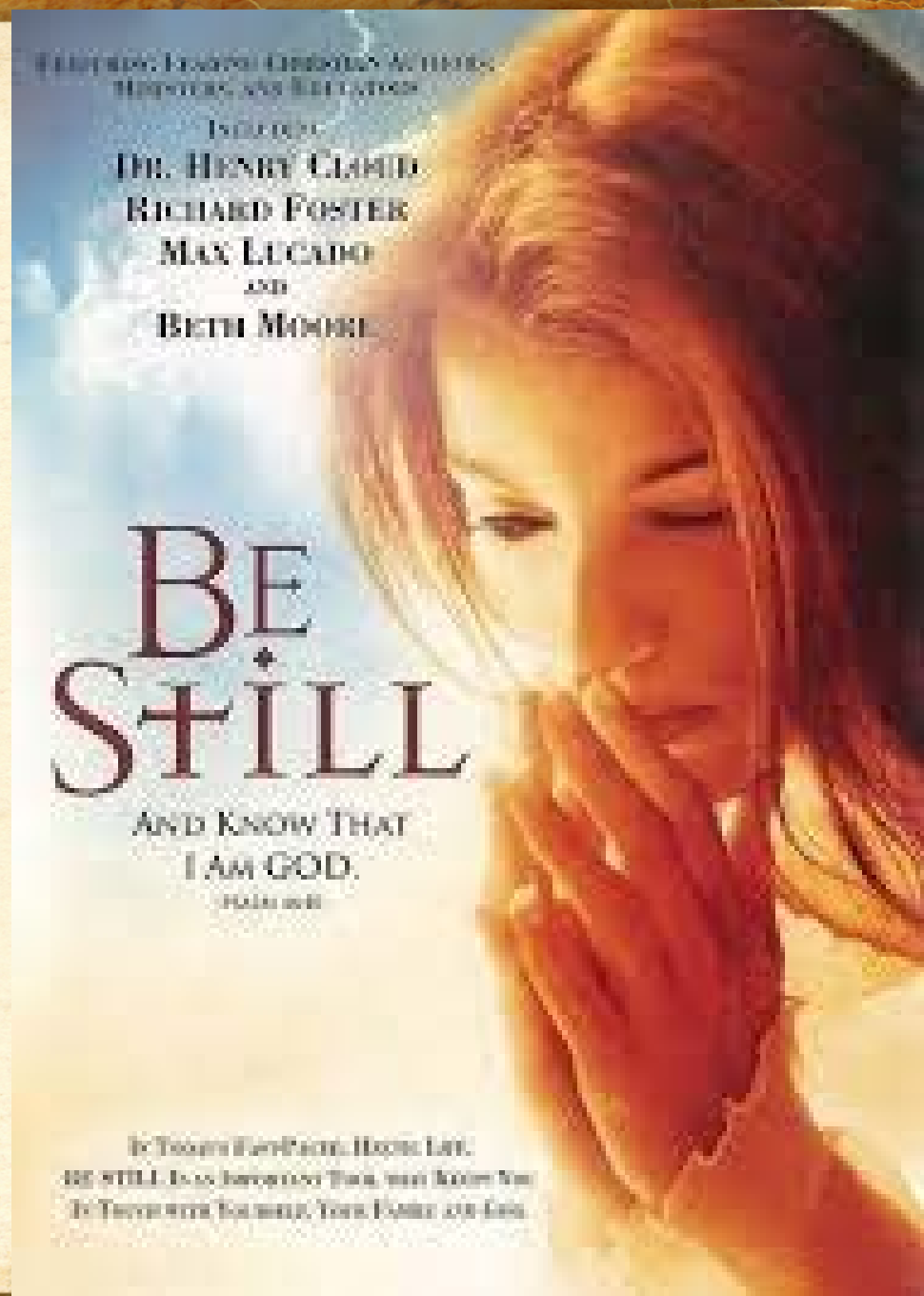
- *Contemplative Prayer*
 - Quiet meditation
 - Focus/empty the mind
 - Listen for God to speak
- *'New Age' Eastern mysticism* repackaged for church consumption



- Ps. 46:10 'Be still, and know that I am God' NIV
- NASB: "Cease striving..."
- YLT: "Desist..."
- Context: 'Hey, Nations! God is bigger than you, so quit fighting and worship to Him.'



- Ps. 46:10 'Be still, and know that I am God' NIV
- This verse is NOT talking about individuals quietly listening for God to speak to them in order to know Him better



Paul's Ministry to the Colossians



B. His Strategy (2:4-5)

- 'I say this so that...'
- The antidote to delusion is knowing sound doctrine
 - 1 Tim. 6:3-5; 2 Tim. 3:10-4:5; 2 Pet. 3:1-2; Jude

Paul's Ministry to the Colossians



B. His Strategy (2:4-5)

- 'I say this so that...'
 - "Even though I'm not there physically, I am concerned for you"
 - Rejoicing in their *orderliness* and the *constancy* of their faith (5)

So What?

- Am I willing to suffer?
- Is my goal to make others holy (mature)?
- Am I willing to test my beliefs/practices?
 - *Deluded by persuasive argument?*
- Will I commit to pursue Christ?

