

No more Chains Pt 2

Colossians 4:7-18

- Paul is putting the finishing touches on his letter to the Colossian church, where he's describing to his readers on how a Christian ought to model and share the gospel with a world that's not only hostile to its message of redemption, but also blind to its need of a Savior. For that to happen he says most people would rather see a sermon than hear one, meaning our actions must line up in order for our words to have any credibility, and once that's been established then our talk should be filled with Grace and also sprinkled with salt, this is very interesting!
- Greek word for **Grace**- gift, were offering the world God's gift of salvation, now they don't want it, but we know how much they need it, so that's where our words come into play, and as we were speaking were also mixing into our conversation a dash of salt, you might ask why salt, because salt does three things > **1st** it adds flavor, **2nd** it preserves, **3rd** it makes you thirsty, hopefully once the conversation is done that's exactly how our listeners will be > (**Thirsty for more truth**) realizing that its added flavor to their lives, having preserved them from the corruption of sin.

V7-18

- **V7-9** Paul chooses two brothers to deliver his letter to the church > Tychicus, and Onesimus, Tychicus was unknown to the Colossian church, and in describing him to them he calls him three things > **1st** a beloved brother- he'll love you just like he loves me, **2nd** a faithful minister- he will properly represent me by speak the truth to you, **3rd** a fellow servant- he will serve and care for you exactly as I would, in other words whatever you expected of me you can expect of him. He sent them for three reasons > **1st** to deliver this letter, **2nd** give a detail description of how Paul was doing, **3rd** to bring word back to Paul about how they were doing.
- Onesimus is another story, he was once a slave owned by a man in Colosse, who ran away from his master but first stole some money from him before taking off, this was a well-known story. In describing him he also calls him a beloved brother and faithful, but he includes he is one of them. Paul wanted them to understand that the Onesimus they once knew had changed, he was no longer a slave to sin or self preservation, he was now free in Christ like them, beloved and faithful, who was deserving of their forgiveness, as he wrote in the letter to Philemon.
- **V10-11** Paul lists three more of his companions which show he wasn't just a soul winner but also a friend maker, people were drawn to him and encouraged to be servants of the gospel. Aristarchus was with Paul when the Ephesian mob seized him in **Acts 19:29**, he also was with him when he set sail for Rome under Roman imprisonment in **Acts 27:2**, now you know you must really be loved when people are willing to go with you to jail, that's why Paul called him his fellow prisoner, as he didn't mind being with Paul during hard times.

- Mark, we know all about the one who caused Paul and Barnabas to split but now he's been forgiven, and proved himself faithful, and instead of being with his cousin Barnabas interestingly he ends up teaming with Paul. This shows how the grace of God had worked in Paul and softened him toward those who'd previously offended him, allowing them who once was a burden to him to now become a blessing for him, only the grace of God can do that. Paul says these are the only three men who are a part of his ministry who were of Jewish heritage.
- **V12-13** speaking of Epaphras who many scholars believe founded the church at Colossae, Paul uses a term that scripture refers to him by "**bondservant**" and tells the church how he labors fervently in prayer for them, the term labor gives the idea of a mother who is giving birth and going through the pain and agony it takes in order for that life to come into being. This shows that consistent faithful praying is hard work, and if you're going to commit to it then it's going to take faithfulness and diligence if we want to see the people were praying for surrender, grow, and mature in the Lord, for just as Epaphras it took a great deal of zeal for him to be like this.
- **V14-16** Paul gives some more shout outs to those who are doing the work of the ministry, this reminds me of > **Heb 6:10**- for even if man forgets what you're doing for and in the ministry, God will never forget, and He will reward us whether you are recognized in this life or not. **V17-18** Paul finishes with a warning to "**pay heed to the ministry you have received from God and fulfill it**" that means we have to be vigilant, alert, fervent in prayer, walking circumspectly, looking and asking God for opportunities to witness, and desire to be in His will always.
- That will keep me free and un-encumbered, to do whatever it is God will ask of me, that my foundation will be firm, unmovable, and thereby remain usable until the day Jesus Christ comes back for us His church Amen!