

7/5/26

Colossians 4:2-18

Paul now comes to a final exhortation for the believer regarding the believer's new life.

Since he is risen with Christ, he is a new man, he has a new home, therefore he should have a new life practice.

In fact the first five verses are commands for what Paul was praying for the Colossians. Col. 1:9-13

4:2-6 The Christian imperatives.

4:2 The command to pray.

- 1) The command, "Continue earnestly in prayer." vs. 2a
 - a) The imperative command has the idea of persistence, in view of what he has just commanded to each family member.
 - b) The verb continue "proskarteio" is the present active imperative and used of a boat that always stands ready for someone. Mk. 3:9
 - c) The picture is of a total dependency on God commanding the entire church as he has just finished mentioning the family.
 - d) The word for prayer" is always used towards God, never man. Acts 6:4

- e) The practice of praying is to be on an ongoing basis, unceasing. 1Thess. 5:17
- 2) The Colossians were to do it "being vigilant in it." vs. 2b
 - a) The word vigilant "gregoreuo" means to give strict attention or caution, on guard and alert mentally.
 - * The word is used of Christ's return. Mk. 13:33; 1Thess. 5:6; Rev. 16:1
 - b) Being aware to God's will and leading.
 - c) Being aware of the enemy.
 - d) Being ready for the Lord's coming for his church. Lk. 21:34-36
- 3) The Colossians were to do it "with thanksgiving." vs. 2b
 - a) This is the seventh times "thanksgiving" is mentioned. Col. 1:3, 12; 2:7; 3:15, 16, 17
 - b) The idea is that of appreciation and gratitude for what God has done and given to be what He alone can make of them.
 - * In everything give thanks. . . 1Thess. 5:18a
- 4:3-4** The prayer request is as intercessors.
 - 1) The prayer was for the preaching of the gospel, "meanwhile praying also for us, that God would open to us a door for the word." vs. 3a-b

- a) The word meanwhile, means at the same time they were praying to pray for them.
- b) That God would open a door “thura” for the word of Gos.
 - * The focus is direction!
- 2)) A door is used as a metaphor for open opportunities to share the word of God. 1Cor. 16:9; 2Cor. 2:12
- 3)) The prayer is for “us”, Paul, Timothy and his companions in ministry.
- c) Paul fits into the missionary minded person, a Philadelphian believing God will open door and shut them. Rev. 3:7
- d) Paul told the Philippians he was in jail at Roman for the furtherance of the gospel by Divine appointment. Phil. 1:12-18
- 2) The specific pray is stated, “to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in chains.” vs. 3c-d
 - a) That they speak, have the fluency of speech clearly regarding the mystery of Christ, hidden in the past but now made known, that Jew and Gentile are one in Christ. Eph. 3:2-6, 9; Col. 1:26, 2:2
 - * The focus is articulation!
 - b) Paul was in chains at Rome for preaching the gospel.
 - * The word for chains “dedemai” meaning to bind or fasten.

- 3) The purpose behind his chains is stated, “that I may make it manifest, as he ought to speak.” vs. 4a
 - a) The word manifest “phaneroo” means to make known, evident.
 - * The idea being of presenting the gospel with clarity and its simplicity.
 - b) The manner is also address, “as he ought to speak”, implying his personal obligation in full confidence, not being intimidated or fearful.
 - 1)) I am not ashamed.... Rom. 1:16-17
 - 2)) I did not come with human wisdom.... 1Cor. 2
 - 3)) He did not teach philosophy. Col. 2:8
 - 4)) To preach Christ to people God brought to him or placed before him while in prison.
 - c) A similar prayer is found in Ephesians. Eph. 6:18-19
 - d) Paul told Timothy that though he was bound, the word of God was not bound. 2Tim. 2:9
 - e) This was the call and commission of Paul, “as I ought to speak” or muat!
 - * The focus is illumination and empowerment!

4:5 The command to walk in wisdom.

- 1) The command, “Walk in wisdom.” vs. 5a

- a) The command is to order one's behavior or conduct in life.
 - 1)) This is an imperative present active command, having the ability by the new nature.
 - 2)) **The** process of wisdom is knowledge with right understanding and comprehension, arriving at the best conclusion.
 - 3)) Literally, in wisdom walk, ordering one's behavior.
- b) The wisdom is divine not human.
 - 1)) The source of this wisdom is heaven, not earth.
 - 2)) This wisdom is available only in Christ. Col. 1:9, 28; 2:3; 3:16
- 2) The directive, "towards those who are outside." vs. 5a
 - a) This identifies those who do not know Christ as their Lord and Savior, though they may be religious, moral and ethical. 1Cor. 5:12, 31; 1Thess. 4:12; 1Tim. 3:7
 - b) This would include both unbelieving Jew and Gentles, who were able to be saved by repenting of their sins, when they heard the gospel preached.
 - * Each person determines where they will spend eternity, heaven or hell, God does not decide this! Rom. 10:17
 - c) Paul told the Philippians that some preached out of a wrong motive and

- others of a right one, either way Christ was being preached and in this he rejoiced! Phil. 1:15-18
- 3) The reason, "redeeming the time." vs. 5b
 - a) The word redeeming "exagorazo" means to buy out of the market or town square.
 - * It is often used for the buying of a slave in the marketplace and applied to sinners. 1Cor. 6:20; Gal. 4:5
 - b) The particular that Paul wants the believers at Colossee to buy up is time, make the most of every opportunity to preach Christ to the lost and unbelieving.
 - 1)) The word for time "karios" means season, set time, a window time that may not be there later and knowing the time is short. 1Cor. 7:29
 - 2)) Time is opportunity when it come to the gospel for once time passes, you never get it back, a window time.
 - 3)) Time is the most valuable thing we possess for the Kingdom of God.
 - * Ephesians says, because the days are evil. Eph. 5:16
- 4:6** The command is to speak with Kingdom quality.
 - 1) The instruments of God are those saved by grace, "Let your speech always be with grace." vs. 6a

- a) Grace “karis” refers to beauty, charm and unmeritted favor.
 - b) Our word should be full of the grace of God for the unbeliever to be attracted to the salvation of God, don’t miss the word “always”, not in a self-righteous way!
 - c) Grace is evidence of one’s own partaking, like all others, having an attitude of humility.
- 2) The believer having partaken of the grace of God is able to present the gospel with all the spiritual benefits salvation offers, “seasoned with salt”. vs. 6b
- a) Salt causes people to thirst, in this case for the things of God through the gospel.
 - b) Salt stops decay, purifies and preserves, so the gospel enables a person to cease and turn from a life of sin.
 - c) Salt seasons food, making it palatable and tasty, so in preaching the gospel of the love of God that would attract them to it.
- * We are the salt of the earth. Matt. 5:13
- 3) The reason, “that you may know how you ought to answer each one.” vs. 6c 1Pet. 3:15
- a) Being full of God’s grace and His word, we can provide the particular answer to the question a person has. Col. 3:16-17
- 1)) The word ought “dei” mean our obligation to be able to present the gospel to the particular individual I am witnessing to.

- 2)) This is a present tense in the middle voice, each person must do this themselves, having the ability through the Holy Spirit and the word of God.
 - b) Being able to dispel many of their misunderstandings or misconceptions about the Scriptures.
- * Verse two to six as we have said is the command regarding Paul’s opening prayer. Col. 1:9-11

4:7-15

The friends of Paul.

4:7

The man Tychicus.

- * Paul had never been to Colosse, yet he knew many people as his letter to the Romans.
- 1) Tychicus is a gentile name “Tuchichos” and means fateful, often with disastrous consequences beyond one’s control.
- a) But now he was under the hand of God!
- b) Nine persons are named. vs. 7-15
- 2) Tychicus’ relationship follows, “a beloved brother.”
- a) One who was appreciated and valued, being in the family of God.
- b) One who could be trusted and depended on.
- 3) Tychicus’ character is declared a “faithful minister.” vs. 7c

- a) He first appeared in Ephesus and was one of the seven to accompany Paul to Macedonia and tarry at Troas. Acts 20:4
- b) He appears to have been in church leadership being sent to Ephesus and summoned to Nicopolis. 2Tim. 4:12; Tit. 3:12
 - 1)) Tychicus is the bearer of the letter. Col., Eph., Phile.; Eph. 6:21-22
 - 2)) “Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.” 1Cor. 4:2

- 4) The heart attitude of Tychicus is stated, “and fellow servant in the Lord, will tell you all the news about me.” vs. 7d-e
 - a) The word is “doulos”, one who serves by choice, a reliable minister, a waiter on tables.
 - b) The sphere of service is “in the Lord”.
 - c) He would go and inform the Colossians about Paul’s affairs.

4:8 The primary purpose of Tychicus being sent.

- 1) To know the Colossians affairs, without doubt regarding the false teaching, “I am sending him to you for this very purpose, that he may know your circumstances.” vs. 8a-b and comfort your hearts.”
- 2) To relieve the Colossians from the infiltration and trouble the false teachers had

brought upon them, “and comfort your hearts.” vs. 8b

- a) The word comfort “parakaleo” means to come along side them, as an agent of the Holy Spirit to encourage and help. vs. 8b
- b) The hearts “kardia” is the center of their spiritual life being heavy and concerned for the saints.

4:9 The man Onesimus.

- 1) His name Onesimus means profitable or useful. vs. 9a
 - * He would be accompanying Tychicus.
- 2) He was, “a faithful and beloved brother.” vs. 9b
 - a) A reliable and trustworthy person.
 - b) One who was loved by Paul and the saints.
- 3) He was a Colossian, “who is one of you.” vs. 9c
 - a) Onesimus was a run away slave of Philemon, who had been unfaithful and robbed him.
 - b) Onesimus had been converted by Paul at Rome, while in prison.
 - c) Onesimus was traveling with Tychicus to return to his Master Philemon, along with a letter interceding for Onesimus. Col. 3:22-4:1; Philemon 1:10
- 4) Tychicus and Onesimus would inform the Colossians about the events at Rome, “They

will make known to you all things which are happening here.” vs. 9d

- a) He had been unprofitable in the past.
- b) He would now live up to his name “profitable or useful”.

4:10 The cellmates of Paul Aristarchis and Mark.

- 1) First, “Aristarchus my fellow prisoner greets you.” vs. 10a
 - a) His name Aristarchus means the best ruler and was a prisoner at Rome with Paul and was sending his greetings to the Colossians.
 - b) He was apprehended by the riotous mob at Ephesus. Acts 19:20
 - c) He was a Thessalonian who sailed ahead with the others to meet Paul at Troas to accompany the collection for the saints in Jerusalem. Acts 20:4
 - d) He was with Paul when he sailed to Rome. Acts 27:2
 - e) He was now a fellow prisoner with Paul at Rome.
- 2) Second, “with Mark the cousin of Barnabas (about whom you received instructions: if he comes to you, welcome him).” vs. 10b-d
 - a) His name Mark means a defense.
 - * The church met in his mother’s house at Jerusalem. Acts 12:12-13, 25
 - b) He was a cousin to Barnabas.

- c) Apparently the Colossians had received instructions regarding Mark and Paul affirms the approval of him by telling them, “If he come to you, welcome him”.
 - 1)) John-Mark had departed in the midst of the First Missionary journey. Acts 12:25; 13:13
 - 2)) At the second journey there occurred a strong disagreement between Paul and Barnabas about taking Mark a second time, so Barnabas took Mark, going to Cypress and Paul took Silas, to see how the brethren were doing. Acts 15:36-40
 - 3)) Mark was now with Paul in Rome.
 - 4)) Mark was a companion of Peter, and it is commonly excepted that he wrote his gospel from Peter’s communication. 1Pet. 5:13
 - 5)) Paul in his last will and testament declared his own personal profit to him in ministry. 2Tim. 4:11

4:11 The man Jesus.

- 1) The next is, “and Jesus who is called Justus.” vs. 11a
 - a) He was named Jesus “Yahweh is salvation”.
 - b) The contraction of Yahweh-shua is the Hebrew name “Joshua” translated to Greek is Jesus.

- 2) He was called Justus, depicting his character being just and equitable, a Greek or Roman name.
- 3) One of the three Jews by birth or proselytizing, Mark, Barnabas and Jesus, “These are my only fellow workers for the kingdom of God who are of the circumcision.” vs. 11b
 - a) The Kingdom of God is the reign of God in the hearts of men and women by the Holy Spirit, the people of God. 1Cor. 6:9; Gal. 5:21
 - b) The kingdom of God is present and yet to come in it’s full sense.
 - c) The church is part of the Kingdom, but not the Kingdom, the church will not bring in the Kingdom, as so many teach today by “Kingdom or Dominion Theology” Christ will set up the Kingdom Age at the Second Coming.
 - d) The affirmation of being Jews, “of the circumcision.”
- 3) The commendable commentary, “They have proven to be a comfort to me.” vs. 11c
 - a) These three men had been a comfort, using a medical term “paregoria”, the word paregoric comes from it, a drug used to relieve pain.
 - b) This is the only time it appears in the New Testament.

4:12 The man Epaphras.

- 1) He was a Colossian, “Epaphras, who is one of you.” vs. 12a-b
 - a) His name means lovely.
 - b) He was the Pastor of Colosse, most likely the founder, who came to Paul at Rome. Col. 1:7-8
 - c) His name is a shortened form Epaphroditus, but not to be confused with Epaphroditus of Philippians.
- 2) His character, “a bondservant of Christ, greets you.” vs. 12c-d
 - a) He is a bondservant “doulos” meaning a bond slave by choice, sent his greetings.
 - a) He most likely came to Ephesus and was converted through Paul’s ministry.
 - b) He had come to Rome to inform Paul of the false teaching at Colosse and receive advice as the Pastor.
 - c) He is called a fellow prisoner by Paul. Phile. 23
- 3) He was a man of prayer, “always laboring fervent in prayers.” vs. 12e
 - a) The phrase laboring fervent “agonizomai” has to do with contending in gymnasium games.
 - b) We get our word agonizing, Epaphras agonized in prayer for the Colossians, always.
- 3) He had a shepherd’s heart by stating the purpose of his prayers for them is stated,

“that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.” vs. 12f

- a) To stand perfect “teleios” means to lack nothing, a mature state.
- b) To stand complete “pleroo” means to be filled up.
* For their maturity spiritually, filled up with “all” of God’s will!

4:13 The commendation of Epaphras by Paul.

- 1) Paul gave witness to Epaphras having a shepherd’s heart, being concerned about the Colossians, “For I bear him witness that he has a great zeal for you.” vs. 13a
- 2) Paul gave witness that Epaphras had a shepherd’s heart for all the people of God and perhaps also a missionaries heart, “and those who are in Laodicea, and those in Hierapolis.” vs. 13b-c
 - a) Epaphras was concerned about the saints in the church of Laodicea and Hierapolis.
 - b) The three churches were in the tri-cities of the Lycus Valley.

4:14 The greeting of Luke and Demas.

- 1) The doctor, “Luke the beloved physician.”
 - a) His name Luke means light giving.
 - b) He is the only Gentile and author of two of the New Testament books, the gospel of Luke and the book of Acts, which

comprises, one third of the New Testament.

- c) He is called by Paul the beloved physician, a term of endearment and affection.
- d) He traveled with Paul in his missionary journeys, joining him at Troas. Acts 16:10
- e) He is called a fellow laborer. Phile. 24
- f) He went with Paul to Rome. Acts 27:3
- g) He is the only one with Paul at the end of his life. 2Tim. 4:11
- 2) The other man, “Demas greet you.”
 - a) Nothing is said about him, but that he greeted the Colossians.
 - b) He is called a fellow worker. Phile. 24
 - c) He is said to have deserted, having forsaken Paul, loving the world and departing to Thessalonica. 2Tim. 4:10
* He is a warning to any Christian who departs from Christ for the world, and he was everywhere with Paul ministering. Col. 4:14; Phile. 1:24; 2Tim. 4:10
 - d) He has been called the fly in the ointment.

4:15 The greetings to those in Laodicea.

- 1) The saints first, “Greet the brethren who are in Laodicea.” vs. 15a

* The brethren identify those born again, yet when John wrote to the church, around 90 A. D., he called them “lukewarm”.

Rev. 3:15

- 2) An individual second, “and Nymphas and the church that is in his house.” vs. 15b
 - a) Nymphas is an individual who had opened his house and the church gathered at Laodicea.
 - b) The New Testament church was made up of house churches. Acts 12:12; 16:40; Rom. 16:5; 1Cor. 16:19; Philem. 2
 - c) There is a possibility that it refers to a woman’s name rather than a man.

4:16-18 The closing exhortations.

4:16 The instructions regarding the epistles.

- 1) The Colossians were to share their epistle with Laodicea, “Now when this epistle is read among you, see that it is read also in the church of the Laodiceans.” vs. 16a-b
- 2) The epistle to Laodicea was to be read at Colosse, “and that you likewise read the epistle from Laodicea.” vs. 16c
 - a) Some believe Ephesians is the Laodicean letter mentioned here, at times called a circular letter.
 - b) I think that the most likely possibility is that this Laodicean letter is lost and we

do not possess it, just like the first one Corinthians letter. 1Cor. 5:9

4:17 The instructions to Archippus.

- 1) The personal responsibility to guard the ministry, “And say to Archippus, “Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord.” vs. 17a-b
 - a) The word ministry “deaconea” he had received of the Lord his call to serve the people of God.
 - * We get our word deacon from it, a waiter on tables!
 - b) Whether he was the Pastor of Laodicea or one left in the ministry at Colosse in the absence of Epaphras, is uncertain.
 - c) The son of Philemon is also Archipus and the church did meet in his house, this most likely is the most profitable conclusion, called a fellow soldier.
 - d) This is a warning in view of high privilege.
 - e) This is accountability in view of enablement for ministry.
 - f) This is responsibility in view of the ministry received of the Lord.
- 2) The personal accountability, “that you may fulfill it.” vs. 17c
 - a) The word fulfill “pleroo” means to fill up, abound or complete his call and work of ministry given to him of the Lord.

- b) In view of quality, dedication.
- c) In view of time, duration.
- d) In view of faithfulness and loyalty.

4:18 The closing salutation.

- 1) Paul signed the letter at this point, “This salutation by my own hand—Paul.” vs. 18a-b
 - a) This was for authenticating the genuineness of his letter, as others. 1Cor. 16:21; 2Thess. 3:17
 - * Sometimes Paul dictated his letters to an amanuensis.
 - a) Some believe Paul had the eye disease called ophthalmia that he contacted through malaria. Acts
 - b) Some point to Galatians where he mentions that they would have given their very eyes to him and the fact that he wrote with a large letter. Gal. 4:15; 6:11
- 2) Paul requested them to remember his imprisonment, “Remember my chains.” vs. 18c
- 3) Paul desires grace to be with the believers at Colosse, “Grace be with you. Amen.” vs. 18d-e
 - a) Paul opened the epistle with gracee and closes with the grace of God. Col. 1:2
 - b) The word Amen at the end of the sentence indicates a confirmation and affirmation of all Paul has written.