

Colossians 4

Further Instructions & Final Greetings

September 25, 2005

Colossians 4: 2 - 6

Further Instructions

² Devote yourselves to prayer; stay alert in it with thanksgiving. ³ At the same time, pray also for us that God may open a door to us for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains, ⁴ so that I may make it known as I should. ⁵ Act wisely toward outsiders, making the most of the time. ⁶ Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you should answer each person.

[Christian Standard Bible](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2020), Col 4:2–18.

Colossians 4:7 - 18

Final Greetings

⁷ Tychicus, our dearly loved brother, faithful minister, and fellow servant in the Lord, will tell you all the news about me. ⁸ I have sent him to you for this very purpose, so that you may know how we are and so that he may encourage your hearts. ⁹ He is coming with Onesimus, a faithful and dearly loved brother, who is one of you. They will tell you about everything here.

¹⁰ Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, sends you greetings, as does Mark, Barnabas's cousin (concerning whom you have received instructions: if he comes to you, welcome him), ¹¹ and so does Jesus who is called Justus. These alone of the circumcised are my coworkers for the kingdom of God, and they have been a comfort to me. ¹² Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ Jesus, sends you greetings. He is always wrestling for you in his prayers, so that you can stand mature and fully assured in everything God wills. ¹³ For I testify about him that he works hard for you, for those in Laodicea, and for those in Hierapolis. ¹⁴ Luke, the dearly loved physician, and Demas send you greetings. ¹⁵ Give my greetings to the brothers and sisters in Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her home. ¹⁶ After this letter has been read at your gathering, have it read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and see that you also read the letter from Laodicea. ¹⁷ And tell Archippus, "Pay attention to the ministry you have received in the Lord, so that you can accomplish it." ¹⁸ I, Paul, am writing this greeting with my own hand. Remember my chains. Grace be with you.

Colossians 4: 2 - 4

Further Instructions

*What does it mean to be “devoted” to prayer?

- Paul, a prisoner, asks for prayer not for his freedom, but for an open door to clearly share the gospel (Colossians 4:3–4).

- What does this reveal about his priorities, and how does his example challenge our own prayer lives? Remember Col. 1:9-12?

- My will or God’s will? Whose kingdom do I want, mine or God’s? (Luke 11:1-4)

- How consistent am I to pray the emailed C.O.D. prayer requests?

Colossians 4: 5 - 6

Further Instructions

- *Act wisely toward outsiders, making the most of the time. ⁶Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you should answer each person. (ESV) (parallel verse, Ephesians 4:29)
- *Verses 5, 6 from The Message - “Use your heads as you live and work among outsiders. Don’t miss a trick. Make the most of every opportunity. Be gracious in your speech. The goal is to bring out the best in others in a conversation, not put them down, not cut them out.”
- *How can we make people want to hear more when we share our faith? What are some phrases or stories you like to share?

Colossians 4: 7 - 18

Final Greetings

- * **TYCHICUS**, had often accompanied Paul's work was frequently sent ahead
- * **ONESIMUS**. The slave of the addressee of the "Epistle to Philemon" (probably Philemon, also possibly Archippus)
- **EPAPHRAS** (Ἐπαφροῆς, Epaphras). A Christian from Colossae and a co-worker of Paul whose evangelistic work helped start the church in Colossae. In his letter to the believers in Colossae, Paul states that Epaphras was responsible for teaching the gospel to the Colossian believers (Col 1:7). Paul describes him as a "faithful minister of Christ" on behalf of the Colossians who brought news of their faith to Paul while he was in prison (Col 1:7–8; Phlm 1:23). Paul's reference to Epaphras' labor among the believers in Laodicea and in Hierapolis suggests that Epaphras either founded or played a key role in establishing other churches in the region

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Final Greetings

LUKE (Λουκᾶς, Loukas). Occasional traveling companion of Paul.

The books of Luke and Acts are attributed to him.

- (Phlm 24)—Paul lists Luke among his coworkers along with Mark, Aristarchus, and Demas.
- (Col 4:14)—Paul sends a greeting to the Colossians from Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas. As the author states that Aristarchus, Mark, and Jesus, who is called Justus, are his only Jewish coworkers, Luke, Epaphras, and Demas are likely Gentiles.
- (2 Tim 4:11)—The author notes that Luke is the only coworker currently with him.

Colossians 4: 7 - 18

Final Greetings

* **DEMÁS** (Δημάς, Dēmas). Paul's companion who later deserted him (2 Tim 4:10; Phlm 24).

- 2 Timothy 4:10 “For Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me...” (If we assume Paul wrote both letters, about 5 years passed between the writing of Colossians and 2 Timothy.)

* **JOHN MARK**. For reasons unknown, he left an earlier missionary journey. This may have been the reason Paul opposed his joining a subsequent journey, causing him and Barnabas to part ways. But here, after being restored, he is a “helper” to Paul and the team.

- Demas's story serves as a contrast to Mark's. With Mark, we do see a fall and restoration. With Demas, we only see the fall — and silence afterward. That silence may be deliberate: it leaves the warning open-ended, a reminder that **EVEN CLOSE CO-WORKERS OF PAUL** are not immune to drifting away.

* What does it mean to “love this present world”?

* How do you guard against or what do you do when tempted to “love this present world”?

Colossians 4: 7 - 18

Final Greetings

1 Cor. 10:12

Therefore, let the one who thinks he stands watch out that he does not fall.

Hebrews 12:1

Therefore, since we also have such a great cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let's rid ourselves of every obstacle and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let's run with endurance the race that is set before us...

Galatians 6:1

Brothers *and sisters*, even if a person is caught in any wrongdoing, you who are spiritual are to restore such a person in a spirit of gentleness; *each one* looking to yourself, so that you are not tempted as well.

Colossians 4: 7 - 18

Final Greetings

1 John 2:15-17

Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. ¹⁷The world is passing away and *also* its lusts...

Proverbs 18: 1

One who separates himself seeks his own desire; He quarrels against all sound wisdom.

The Discipleship “Struggle”

Does anyone know how you are doing? Do you meet with any other Christian man consistently? Is there anyone who will ask you tough questions?

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- * **ARISTARCHUS** (Ἀρίσταρχος, Aristarchos). A “Macedonian traveling companion of Paul”. Aristarchus and Gaius were seized by the Ephesians during the riot of the silversmiths. Aristarchus was a native of Thessalonica and accompanied Paul from Greece and to Rome (Acts 27:2). In Col 4:10, Paul calls him his “fellow prisoner.” Paul mentions him again in the Letter to Philemon. In both of these letters, Aristarchus sends greetings of his own.
- * **JESUS**, called Justus, a Jewish coworker, was present when Paul wrote Colossians.
- * **NYMPHA** (Νύμφαν, Nymphan). A Christian woman whose house was a gathering place for believers to worship, and who is greeted by Paul in his letter to the Colossians. (Col 4:15)
- * **ARCHIPPUS** (Ἀρχιππος, Archippos). A member of the church in Colossae. Paul addresses him as “our fellow soldier” in Philemon 2, ESV. He may have been a member of Philemon’s household and might have held an official position in the church. (Col 4:17)

Colossians 4: 2 - 18

Chapter Summary

Colossians 4 serves as Paul's practical conclusion to his letter, focusing on prayer, conduct, and personal greetings.

The chapter opens with Paul's instructions about prayer - he asks the Colossians to be devoted to prayer with watchfulness and thanksgiving, and specifically requests prayer for his ministry that God would open doors for proclaiming the gospel and that he would declare it clearly, even while imprisoned.

Paul then addresses how believers should conduct themselves toward outsiders, emphasizing wisdom in their interactions and speech that is gracious and "seasoned with salt" - meaning thoughtful and appropriate - so they can respond well to anyone who asks about their faith.

The remainder of the chapter consists of personal greetings and updates. Paul mentions several companions: Tychicus (who will deliver the letter and provide updates), Onesimus (described as a faithful brother), Aristarchus (his fellow prisoner), Mark (Barnabas's cousin), and Jesus called Justus - noting these three as his *only* Jewish fellow workers for God's kingdom who have been a comfort to him. He also sends greetings from Epaphras (who is from Colossae and constantly prays earnestly for them), Luke the physician, and Demas.

Paul closes with instructions to greet the believers in nearby Laodicea, to have his letter read in their church as well, to read the letter he sent to Laodicea, and to tell Archippus to fulfill his ministry. The letter ends with Paul's personal signature and a request to remember his imprisonment, concluding with "Grace be with you."

This final chapter demonstrates Paul's pastoral heart and the interconnected nature of the early Christian communities.