

Colossians 4 – 18 December 2022

“Our Posture Toward People”

Introduction

*Theme: Godhood, centrality, & sufficiency of Jesus

*In Chap 1 Paul established that Jesus Christ is our Creator, Redeemer & Spirit within

*Chap 2 Paul addressed the major heresy of the day in Colossae - That of Gnosticism or personal knowledge

*Paul spent much time in Chap 2 saying that handling the earthly well doesn't make us spiritual

*Chap 3 Paul addressed our day-to-day living; that we're created to live a higher calling w/ new desires & healthy relationships

*Now Paul completes the topic by addressing people

*Christ, then doctrine, then people (always in order)

Today we see our relation to 3 groups of people & how we can seek to build Kingdom of God w/ them

#1: Be ready and winsome toward unbelievers (Vs 2-6)

Read Vs 2

1. Never stop praying and always be ready to live with Christ-like character

Read Vs 3-4

1. But also, be praying together *for us*
2. To what end?
 - a. That God gives them chances to preach even though he's in prison
 - b. That when he speaks of Christ, that it comes out clear and powerful
3. *Opening Doors*: This is a major way God reveals His will to us, opening & closing doors

Read Vs 5

1. Life w/ unbelievers should bring you closer, not further away from giving them God's truth
2. Fewer chances to interaction than we realize

Read Vs 6

1. Read I Peter 3:15 – so we need to read and know God’s mind from the Bible
2. Remember, we’re not trying to win an *argument*, we trying to win the *arguer*
3. People don’t care what you know until they know that you care – so be gracious
4. *Salt*: A seasoning but also a preserving element
 - a. Let our speech build, not break, relationships

#2: Be committed and complimentary toward your circle of believers (Vs 7-14)

Read Vs 7-8

1. They will exchange reports of each other thru Tychicus (of Asia Minor)
2. There is a certain comfort brought by exchanging reports of your service to the Lord
 - a. Like exchanging prayer requests to find out you're in a similar situation as someone else
 - b. You don't have to force a soldier to write home to his bride, he wants to for his love

Read Vs 9

1. Onesimus, the runaway slave, was saved under Paul's ministry and had to make things right with his master Philemon at Colossae
2. W/ this Colossian letter, Tychicus & Onesimus would have carried back the letter to Philemon
 - a. Notice Paul recommends Onesimus to them as a faithful Christian

Read Vs 10-11

1. Aristarchus was in trouble w/ Paul in Ephesus & travelled extensively with him, landing in prison
2. Mark, eventual author of the Gospel, whom lost favor w/ Paul after leaving the 1st Missionary Trip, *has been restored to fellowship* with Paul
 - a. In II Tim 4:11, Paul calls Mark as ‘profitable’
3. Not much is known of Justus but these 3 Jews have been a *comfort* to Paul
 - a. Not the typical *parakaleo* to invite near but *paragoia* to industriously gather like marketplace
 - i. They’ve comforted Paul thru the work

Read Vs 12-13

1. Remember from Chap 1 Epaphras is the Colossian Pastor that is visiting Paul in Rome
2. Ministry of the pastors is the completing of the saints in wisdom and character
 - a. Read Eph 4:12-13

3. Notice vs 13, a pastor doesn't just teach only, he shepherds, he cares for sheep at great expense
 - a. Read I Pet 5:1-4: Pastors = undershepherds
 - b. Not as hireling that flees at trouble (John 10)

Read Vs 14

1. Altogether there are 8 men here with Paul
2. Luke the author of the Gospel
3. Demas who later (II Tim 4:10) forsakes Paul
 - a. Notice there's never judgement on someone's eternal state, that's God's business
 - b. But we judge their fruit – he forsook Paul

#3: Be accepting and open toward many more believers (Vs 15-18)

Read Vs 15-16

1. Salute is to embrace or greet
2. Laodicea is 11 miles down from Colossae, maybe Nymphas' house is outside of town

3. Even then, they were sharing God's Word
 - a. Yes Paul's writing were recognized as God's Word even then
 - b. Read II Pet 1:20-21 & II Pet 3:15-16: Peter knew that Paul was moved by the H.S. to write

Read Vs 17

1. Paul mentions in the letter to Philemon that Archippus has a church in his house also
2. There's no halfway in service to God
 - a. There are lives that have God's will as the aim...and the rest that don't

Read Vs 18

1. Don't forget my state...
 - a. This should complete them to live a worthy life
2. Even in prison, Paul's outward focus is in wanting good things for them

Conclusion

We're here to build the Kingdom of God & for that, we need people. So what's your posture toward people?

1. **Are we ready to be winsome in giving the Gospel to unbelievers?**
 - a. Does our lifestyle & words bring us closer or farther away from showing them Jesus?
 - b. I want to be ready when the chance arises!
2. **Are we committed & complimentary toward our local church?**
 - a. JOKE: What's the difference between the bacon & eggs on your breakfast plate?
 - i. Chicken was involved, pig was committed
 - b. When Jesus splits the sky, I want to be found hard at work w/ my Christian friends!
3. **Are we accepting & open toward many more believers all around?**
 - a. JOKE: Going quietly thru a hall in heaven
 - i. Oh the Baptists are in that room, they think they're the only ones here!
 - b. Many are on mission for God to work with