

A Practical Study of

COLOSSIANS: How Christians Grow

“Christ Is All and in All”

Stage #12 – Colossians 4:7-18

CHRIST IN OTHER PEOPLE

Key Verse: Colossians 4:7

All the things concerning me Tychicus will make known to you, the beloved brother and faithful servant and fellow bonds slave in the Lord;

Text:

v. 7 All the things concerning me Tychicus will make known to you, the beloved brother and faithful servant and fellow bonds slave in the Lord;

v. 8 whom I am sending to you for this purpose, in order that you may know the things concerning us and he may encourage your hearts;

v. 9 with Onesimus, the faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. All things here they will make known to you.

v.10 Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, greets you; and Mark, a cousin of Barnabas, concerning whom you received orders. If he should come to you, receive him.

v.11 And Jesus, the one called Justus, who are of the circumcision; these only are my fellow workers in the kingdom of God; those who have been a comfort to me.

v.12 Epaphras greets you, who is one of you, a bonds slave of Christ Jesus, always wrestling for you in his prayers, in order that you might stand full grown and fully assured in all the will of God.

v.13 For I am bearing witness of him that he has toiled (worked hard) for you and those in Laodicea and those in Hierapolis.

v.14 Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas greet you.

v.15 Greet the brethren in Laodicea and Nymphas and the church in her house.

v.16 And when this letter has been read among you, have it read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and the letter from Laodicea you should also read.

v.17 And say to Archippus, take heed of the ministry (pay attention to your duty) which you received in the Lord, in order that you may perform it (discharge it fully).

v.18 The greeting by my own hand, Paul, be remembering my bonds. Grace be with you.

INTRODUCTION:

(A Cowboy's Forty Years of Gathering by Chet Dawson) Fort Collins, CO:
Cruse Publishing. Copyright– Chet Dawson, 1964.

ALL IN A DAY'S WORK

We're out one time on a wild cow hunt
 An' we manage to tie one down.
 So it falls to me to lead her in
 To the herd that we're takin' to town.
 Now here let me state; a wild range cow
 Don't favor that kind of a play.
 She's born in the open places
 An' there's where she wants to stay.
 I dallys the rope to my saddle
 But just as I gather the slack
 The rope gets under my hoss's tail
 An' he gets a hump in his back.
 He gets all insulted an' boggs his head
 An' starts to turnin' the crank.
 With the cow on the prod, plumb raisin' cain,
 She is sure acting rank.
 My hoss swaps ends a couple of times;
 Gets me wrapped up in the rope.
 I can't get off if I wanted to,
 All I can do is hope.
 So here I'm on top of a buckin' bronc
 Leadin, a fightin' cow.
 Some folks believe right strongly in luck.
 Well, I'm sure needin' some now.
 But I reckon my prayers was answered,
 The rope comes loose from the horn.
 My hoss quits buckin', I gets untangled,
 An' only my shirt is torn.
 After I get untangled
 An' things get some settled down,
 We lead that ol' heifer, still fightin' mad
 To the herd that we're taken to town.
 Some might call that adventure
 While some on the job might shirk.
 But it's the cowboy's job an' he does it,
 'Cause it's all in his every day's work.

p. 27

We have been talking together about **STAGES IN MY RELATIONSHIP TO JESUS CHRIST.**

Now as the Apostle Paul brings this letter to a conclusion, he is going to name a number of **PERSONALITIES** that have crossed his path and have worked with him in the ministry of serving of Lord and preaching the Word.

The writer to the **BOOK OF PROVERBS** is correct:

THERE IS SAFETY IN A MULTITUDE OF COUNSELORS!

I believe it is a part of **SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT** for the Christian to recognize the fact God uses people in our lives in so many different ways:

TO MATURE US SPIRITUALLY and

TEACH US HOW TO WALK.

People—people important to you, people unimportant to you—cross your life, touch it with love and carelessness then move on.

There are people who leave you and **YOU BREATHE A SIGH OF RELIEF** and wonder why you ever came into contact with them.

There are people who leave you and you **BREATH A SIGH OF REMORSE** and wonder why they had to go away and leave such a gaping hole.

Children leave parents,
friends leave friends,
acquaintances move on.

People change homes, people grow apart.

Enemies hate and move on.

Friends love and move on.

You think of the many who have moved into your hazy memory.

You look on those present and wonder. I believe in God's master plan in lives. He moves people in and out of each other's lives and each leaves his mark on the other.

You find you are made up of bits and pieces of all who have ever touched your life and you are more because of it. You would be less if they had not touched you.

Pray God that you will accept the bits and pieces in humility and wonder and never question and never forget.

(Smooth Stones Taken from Ancient Books: Being a collection of sentences, illustrations, and quaint sayings from that renowned Puritan, Thomas Brooks by C.H. Spurgeon) Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust. Copyright– Banner of Truth Trust, 2011.

Let those be thy choicest companions who have made Christ their chief companion.
p. 137

(Chasing Daylight: Seize the Power of Every Moment by Erwin Raphael McManus) Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson. Copyright– Erwin Raphael McManus, 2002.

It was a Saturday morning, and I received an abrupt phone call from one of our elders. Almost immediately into the conversation Robert said something that any pastor would dread: “Erwin, the elders decided to meet without you, and I was selected to call you and tell you the outcome of our meeting.” I could feel my entire body reacting to his statement. Things had been pretty tough, and it looked as though they were about to get worse. . . . I would not have blamed the elders if they had met for the purpose of asking me for my resignation. And then I heard his words, “Enrique, Rick, and I have met, and we want you to know if there are only our three families who are left, we are with you. Do not turn back, do not back down, because what you are doing is right.”

That phone call was like fresh wind to my sail. It was God strengthening the magnetic force of due north. I had a group of men around me who were more committed to doing what was right than doing what was easy. They believed that our suffering would be rewarded by God’s approval. Everything didn’t get better after this conversation. In fact, the conflicts that we faced only accelerated. For six months the weight of my responsibility not only affected my physical health, but also brought great pain to my family. One of the small reminders that even when I felt that I was doing okay I was damaged goods was the twitch in my right eye.

I often wondered whether I would make it through and find the health that I had known before this season in my life, yet the memories of what we went through only add to the incredible joy and fulfillment we experience today. I can’t even imagine leaving Mosaic. The fact that we stayed during the worst of times only reinforces that I’m not about to leave during the best of times. This doesn’t mean that everything is easy, but there are very few things like the initial impact when you first engage a battle that must be fought.
pp. 192-3

What a powerful demonstration is a body of believers—brothers in sisters in Christ, who have a passion to serve the Lord faithfully, to encourage and be a blessing to others.

In reading American Heroes by Oliver North, I was so refreshed by these two examples.

(American Heroes: In The Fight Against Radical Islam by Oliver North)
Nashville, TN.: B&H Publishing Group. Copyright – Oliver L. North, 2008.

“I am continuing to get stronger every day through therapy, and I have especially been encouraged by my improvements in learning to walk again. I have worked harder here than I ever did during my academy days or infantry training, yet I can credit these improvements only to the grace that God provides me each day. God is so good! “I would like to thank all of the individuals, families, and churches that have prayed specifically for me throughout this entire ordeal. I truly believe in the power of prayer, and I am so grateful for the prayers lifted up for my sake. I ask that when you pray for me, please also pray for those wounded veterans that do not know Christ. I don’t know where I’d be without my faith.”

—Lt. Andrew Kinard, 25 June 2007

p. 240

President Bush has never wavered in his support for the troops that he sent off to fight this war. Though he was admonished to “cut our losses” and “get out now,” though his party lost control of the Congress in 2006, he was steadfast in his resolve not to have this war end like Vietnam. And his field commanders were cut from the same tempered steel.

Men like GEN David Petraeus, generals James Mattis, James Conway, and Ray Odierno were pilloried in the press, but they prevailed anyway. They motivated young soldiers and Marines to weather the IEDs, suicide bombers, and mind-numbing fatigue to press on despite criticism on the home front. These leaders ignored the bashing they got for being too aggressive and kept the pressure on the enemy. Leaders do make a difference.

p. 271

(Exploring the Mind & Heart of the Prince of Preachers: Five-thousand illustrations under one-thousand topical headings from the works of C. H. Spurgeon by C. H. Spurgeon) Oswego, IL: Fox River Press. Copyright– Fox River Press, 2005.

To be driven from church to church, as some are, is a wretched business. To be like others, changing their views as often as the moon; happy nowhere, miserable everywhere, agreeing with nobody, not even with themselves, is a poor business. 2064.36
p. 73

One marvels at the little things over which an assembly will waste hours of precious time, contending as if the destiny of the whole world and the fate of the starry heavens depended upon the debate. AM190
p. 80

(Thirsting for God: Spiritual Refreshment for the Sacred Journey by Gary L. Thomas) Eugene, OR: Harvest House. Copyright– Gary Thomas, 1999/2011.

The apostle Paul endorsed the idea of human examples as part of our spiritual training when he wrote, “Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.” Thomas á Kempis honored Paul’s truth when he wrote, “Gather some profit to thy soul wheresoever thou art; so as if thou seest or hearest of any good examples, stir up thyself to the imitation thereof.”²

No one follows Christ’s example absolutely perfectly, but many human lives have elements of inspiration. You’ve probably noticed already that I often mention spiritual encounters from which I’ve learned something, I also regularly feed my soul from written biographies. This book, in fact, is dedicated to Dr. Klaus Bockmuehl, whose example moved me deeply before he died.

While working on *Pure Pleasure*, I traveled up to Regent College in Vancouver, BC, to meet with Dr. J.I. Packer, a seminary mentor of mine more than two decades prior. Dr. Packer, now 82, looked a little frailer, but he was still clearly focused on seeking first the kingdom of God.

On our way back to my car (I gave him a ride home), Dr. Packer confided that he was a little uncomfortable with the title *emeritus*. “I still feel like I have something left to say,” he told me, “and plenty of work to do.”

We talked more on the ride to his house. I assured him I’d send him a copy of my manuscript so he could approve his quotes, but Dr. Packer insisted that wasn’t necessary. “If anything was helpful, put it in your own words.”

He paused. “I just want you to write a *good* book.”

2. Á Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ*, I:25:5.
p. 45

(Radical Together: Unleashing the People of God for the Purpose of God by David Platt) Colorado Springs, CO: Multnomah. Copyright– David Platt, 2011.

Last week a man from another church who is not a big fan of *Radical* said to me, “You just need to leave and go live in another country, and I’d be happy to help you get there.”

p. 126

(A Place of Healing: Wrestling with the Mysteries of Suffering, Pain, and God's Sovereignty by Joni Eareckson Tada) Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook. Copyright– Joni Eareckson Tada, 2010.

Is my life beginning to unravel? Have I reached a limit in what I can endure? Have my friends and coworkers and—God forbid—my husband reached a limit in what *they* can endure for my sake? How much longer can I—can *they*—go on like this? These are the questions that plague me.

Finally, after all these years, I'm honestly beginning to wear people out. These are the people—around eight or so—who graciously offer to get me up in the morning—or in the case of Judy and my husband, Ken, help me through the night. It used to be that only my husband helped me turn in bed in the evening, and often, I didn't need his assistance through the night. He would put me up on my side, tuck my pillows, and then I'd comfortably sleep straight through until morning.

That doesn't work anymore.

p. 27

(Let's Roll! Ordinary People, Extraordinary Courage by Lisa Beamer with Ken Abraham) Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House. Copyright – Lisa Beamer, 2002.

In July of 1993, after Todd had completed his M.B.A., he wrote out a similar list of his goals. In it, he prioritized what he believed would lead him to accomplish success and contentment. At the top of the list was his spiritual life, followed by his relationships, his career, and his desire for continued education. That was the order Todd strove to maintain as he sifted through life's many choices and the voices vying for his attention.

p. 102

(Grace Notes: Daily Readings with a Fellow Pilgrim by Philip Yancey) Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. Copyright– Someone Cares Charitable Trust, 2009.

All too often the church holds up a mirror reflecting back the society around it, rather than a window revealing a different way.

p. 358

(Exploring the Mind & Heart of the Prince of Preachers: Five-thousand illustrations under one-thousand topical headings from the works of C. H. Spurgeon by C. H. Spurgeon) Oswego, IL: Fox River Press. Copyright– Fox River Press, 2005.

Do not come in to weaken us, we are weak enough already. Do not come in to adulterate our purity, we have enough impurity even now. Pray that God may make you a real increase to our prayerfulness, to our holiness, to our earnestness, to our higher life, and then come and welcome, and the Lord be with you! 1167.215

I have observed that churches which do not care for the outlying population speedily suffer from disunion and strife. 1170.244
p. 68

A do-nothing professor is a merely nominal member, and a nominal member is a real hindrance. He neither contributes, nor prays, nor works, nor agonizes for souls, nor takes any part in Christian service, and yet he partakes in all the privileges of the church. Is this fair? 1916.461
p. 68

(The Attentive Life: Discerning God's Presence in All Things by Leighton Ford) Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press. Copyright– Leighton Ford, 2008.

And often I pause to lift this prayer of St. Fursey:

The arms of God be around my shoulders,
The touch of the Holy Spirit upon my head,
The sign of Christ's cross upon my forehead,
The sound of the Holy Spirit in my ears,
The fragrance of the Holy Spirit in my nostrils,
The vision of heaven's company in my eyes,
The conversation of heaven's company on my lips,
The work of God's church in my hands,
The service of God and the neighbor in my feet,
A home for God in my heart,
And to God, the father of all, my entire being.
Amen.

p. 85

In this wonderful passage we are going to be considering together to conclude the **BOOK OF COLOSSIANS** we see:

CHRIST IN OTHER PEOPLE (Colossians 4:7-18)

I have called this passage:

THE FAMILY.

There are actually **TWELVE MEN** involved in this passage. I look at each of them, including the author, the Apostle Paul himself.

Let's begin our meditation by thinking back of the verses in:

Colossians 3:23-24 (NASB)

Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men; knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.

Anders says:

In Colossians 4, we meet some normal people. As the letter closes, Paul introduces us to his partners in ministry. Through these normal heroes God accomplished his work.

p. 343

Anders says:

The truth about spirituality is that it's obedience in the ordinary, by the ordinary. Genuine spiritual living is not for the favored few, as the false teachers would have us believe. What about service for the Christ who has supremacy? Does such a supreme Savior use only "special" people? Of course not. The truth about spirituality and service is that they're both open to ordinary people like you and me.

p. 344

Anders says:

In the concluding verses of the letter to the Colossians, Paul does more than send along personal greetings. He gives us a glimpse into his fellowship of encouragement. Verses 7-18 are more than a mere list of names. They are real, ordinary people, who helped Paul carry out an extraordinary ministry for the sake of an extraordinary Savior. We, too, will need others if we are to maintain the vitality in ministry which Paul exemplifies.
pp. 346-7

Barclay says:

5. *Lastly, it teaches us that we cannot separate the church and the marketplace.* The insistence of Colossians is that the Christian must be a Christian in the world quite as much as in the church. This is something that even yet so many fail to see. Religion, worship, God, are things confined and even imprisoned within the church. Max Warren in *The Christian Imperative* tells how an African headmaster wrote to thank a friend of his for a course of talks he had given in an African school. "We greatly appreciate your helpful talks," he wrote, "on the application of the teaching of Jesus in our agricultural work and hygiene, as well as in spiritual things. Until now we regarded agriculture and hygiene as secular subjects, without any connection with Christianity." The real, acid question is not, What does Christianity make a man within the church? but, What does Christianity make a man in the office, the shop, the factory, the shipyard, the school, the golf course, the dance hall, the home? It is life that Jesus promises, and life cannot be confined to any part of life; life permeates all life. The challenge to the Christian is to make all life one continuous act of worship to God.

Like the rest of the Bible, Colossians has a message that cannot go out of date.
p. 138

Barclay says:

WHEN we read the list of names at the end of this chapter we are reading the names of a list of heroes of the faith. We must remember the circumstances. Paul was in prison awaiting trial; it is always dangerous to be a prisoner's friend, for it is easy for the friend of the prisoner to become involved in the same fate as the prisoner himself. It took courage to declare oneself a friend of Paul, and to visit him in his imprisonment and to show that one was on the same side.

p. 201

Barker & Kohlenberger say:**VI. Conclusion (4:7-18)**

The body of the letter, in which Paul has met head-on the false teachers threatening the church at Colosse, is complete. By a powerful exposition of the sovereign lordship and complete sufficiency of Jesus Christ, Paul has refuted their so-called "philosophy" with all its attendant errors (1:15-2:23); he has set forth the nature of the Christian life, calling attention to its springs of power, its heavenly aspirations, and its distinguishing characteristics (3:1-17); he has shown how the lofty principles of the Gospel must affect relationships within Christian households (3:18-4:2); and he has earnestly exhorted his readers to pray (4:2-4) and given them practical advice for living in the pagan world (4:5-6). Now all that remains are some personal matters.

p. 841

Barton, Fackler, Taylor & Veerman say:

Paul often closed his letters by sending personal greetings from himself and others with him to individuals in the church to whom he wrote. After studying the intricacies of Paul's letters, we come to his final words and remember that he was writing to real people with real struggles. The names of various believers who helped and encouraged Paul give us an outline of Paul's relationships and his widespread ministry. Paul, an energetic and well known as he was, did not operate alone. Many men and women served the Lord by helping Paul in his ministry of spreading the gospel. Do you try to minister alone? How much better to use others' gifts and abilities to help get the job done.

p. 231

Baxter says:

Personal addenda (iv. 7-18).

p. 203

Dunnam says:

Clarence Forsburg tells a story about what it means to be a part of a team. It is a story of Al McGuire and Butch Lee. McGuire was a great basketball coach, who retired from Marquette after winning the NCAA tournament in 1976. Butch Lee was a kind of prima donna player on that team. The story is about McGuire trying to teach Butch Lee about team basketball. This was the coach's word. "Now, Butch, the game is forty minutes long, and if you divide that between the two teams that means there is twenty minutes when one team will have the ball and there's twenty minutes when the other team will have the ball. There are five players on each side. That means each player will have the ball for about four minutes. Now, Butch, I know what you can do with a ball in four minutes. What I want you to show me, is what you can do for the other thirty-six minutes."

There is more than one lesson here and it goes beyond basketball to the whole of life. What do you do when someone else has the ball? When someone else is in the limelight? When you are the supporting member, not star of the game?

p. 395

Dunnam says:

When we read this list of names—Tychicus, Onesimus, Aristarchus, Mark, Justus, Epaphras, Luke, Demas, Nymphas, and Archippus, it is not readily apparent that this is a list of heroes of the faith. Apart from Mark and Luke, how rare it is to hear their names. So it is well that we pause now and then to celebrate the support cast. It is possible for the main character to come through with impact at center stage only if the backup crew are performing well.

p. 396

Garland says:

PAUL'S LIST OF coworkers in his letters reveals several things about his ministry. (1) It was "a team effort." Paul could not possibly do all that he did without the help and support of others, and he is not stingy in giving them credit and thanks. It is striking that two people on the list, Luke and Mark, are considered to be authors of two Gospels . . .

(2) Paul inspired love and loyalty, and any picture of him as an embattled and embittered loner is mistaken. Dunn makes the interesting observation that persons driving by a "burning conviction and sense of destiny" are often "uncomfortable companions." Many may harbor the suspicion that Paul was just such a person. But the long list of Paul's coworkers suggests that he "was evidently able both to retain sufficient equipoise and to inspire tremendous loyalty and commitment on the part of others."¹⁶

16. Dunn, *The Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon*, 264.
pp. 274-5

Garland says:

(3) The early Christians relied much on a network of friends. Without supportive friends and partners throughout the world, Christians could never have succeeded in advancing the gospel across national barriers. All Christians need a community of friends and fellow workers. Maintaining such a network across the empire required much time-consuming, costly, and dangerous travel.

p. 275

Gromacki says:

The Blessing of Friends Colossians 4:7-18

Solomon wrote that “a friend loveth at all times” (Prov. 17:17). Friends encourage and stand by each other in difficult days (Prov. 27:6, 10, 17). A man who has them is rich indeed.

In this closing section, Paul mentioned eleven personal acquaintances who had been a blessing to him.

p. 161

Hughes says:

Myra Brooks Welch tells the story of a battered, scarred violin held up for bid by an auctioneer who hardly thought it worth his time. And it apparently wasn't, for the final bid was a grudging three dollars. But as he was calling, "Three dollars once, three dollars twice, going for three," a gray-haired man came forward and picked up the bow, wiped the dust from the old instrument, tightened the strings, and played the most beautiful melody—"as sweet as an angel sings." When the music ceased, the auctioneer, holding it up with the bow, said in a different tone, "What am I bid for the old violin?" Instead of three dollars, it went for three thousand!

*The people cheered, but some of them cried,
 "We do not quite understand—
 What changed its worth?" The man replied,
 "THE TOUCH OF THE MASTER'S HAND."
 And many a man with a life out of tune,
 And battered and torn with sin,
 Is auctioned cheap to the thoughtless crowd.
 Much like the old violin.
 A "mess of pottage," a glass of wine,
 A game and he travels on.
 He's going once and going twice,
 He's going—and almost gone.
 But the MASTER comes, and the foolish crowd
 Never can quite understand
 The worth of a soul, and the change that's wrought
 By the TOUCH OF THE MASTER'S HAND.*

Such change is incomprehensible for those outside. But all who have experienced that touch *perfectly* understand.

Some who have experienced the Master's touch are mentioned by name in the closing paragraphs of Paul's letter. The study of these ancient lives can bring a transforming touch to our modern lives and thus fullness in everyday service.

pp. 141-2

Ironside says:

This last section, though somewhat lengthy, does not require very much in the way of either exposition or explanation. It is interesting, however, to compare the references to the same person mentioned here with those in other epistles.

pp. 176-7

King says:

**HIS ENCLOSED GROUP PHOTOGRAPH
IV. 7-14**

p. 123

King says:

I DARE say you have had the experience of receiving a letter from a friend, in which he has enclosed a group photograph of friends well-known to you both. Paul seems to have done here, in words, something of the same kind. He has grouped together, in thumbnail sketches, a number of people who are roundabout him in Rome, and who are all well-known to the church members in Colossæ. How interested they will be in these glimpses, on that Sabbath morning, in the Assembly, of their far-off comrades in the Faith, brought so vividly to sight and memory by these spoken miniatures. I dare say that we, too, may gain interest and inspiration from a study of their features, for each has a characteristic profile of his own. Take a good look at them, there in the group, one by one.

p. 123

Laurin says:

There appear now the brief biographies of ten men—companions of the Apostle Paul. Each filled a place and played a part or else his name is used as a warning and a lesson. They are written in a catalogue of remembrance. Not all the places they filled were conspicuous, but they were important. Not all were spectacular but they were remembered.

p. 182

Laurin says:

Here are to be found beautiful examples and friendships. In many cases they were the result of adversity and trouble when these conditions became the womb of birth for a noble and enduring friendship. It has been said that friendship is a sieve through which we sift our acquaintances: those who are too big to pass through are our friends.

p. 183

MacArthur says:**With a Little Help
from My Friends**

p. 189

MacArthur says:

As Paul closes Colossians, he encloses with his letter a verbal group photograph. He includes in it a number of those who helped him in his ministry while he was imprisoned at Rome. He gives recognition to some of the unsung heroes of the New Testament, and by so doing uses them as an encouragement to those who read this letter. This section adds a warm, personal touch to what has been largely a doctrinal letter. It is similar to the personals he adds in chapter 16 of Romans. That many of those mentioned had stuck with Paul for years indicates the tremendous loyalty he inspired.

To Paul, these people were indispensable assets to his ministry. He knew well that he could not do it alone; no one can. God's leaders have always depended on others to support them in their work.

p. 190

McGee says:

FELLOWSHIP OF BELIEVERS IS HEARTY

We come now to a remarkable list of names of people whom Paul knew. They are men and women who lived back there in the first century. They walked down the Roman roads, lived in Roman cities, and were under Roman rule. They were in the midst of paganism, but they were God's children.

Many of these people lived in Ephesus. When I was in Ephesus, I climbed up in the theater there and from that height I could look down that great marble boulevard—I would call it Harbor Boulevard, because it leads right down to where the harbor was in that day. I thought, *This is where one could have seen Paul come walking up the boulevard. There would be Tychicus coming up the way; and there's Onesimus and Aristarchus and Epaphras—all those fellows.* They were all Christians. They were God's men back yonder in the first century.

p. 364

Melick says:

Paul concluded this epistle with a rather extended list of greetings. Since he had never visited Colosse, the people mentioned helped to establish and strengthen a firsthand relationship. Paul wrote another letter to a church he had not met, the Epistle to the Romans, in which he included a similar long list of persons. Both letters provide information on the nature of the Christian community in general and in Rome in particular. The list of names in 4:7-15 includes nine persons. All but one were male. This contrasts the list in Rom. 16:1-16, which possibly includes ten women who labored with Paul. Most of the names in Colossians occur with a lengthy description about the persons named. This, too, differs from most of the other epistles. Some information is disclosed here that is not contained elsewhere in Scripture.

p. 326

O'Brien says:

Having finished dictating the substance of what he wanted to say to the Colossians, Paul sends messages and greetings to various people associated with the congregation. Tychicus and Onesimus will convey Paul's personal news to the Colossians who would naturally be keenly interested to learn how the apostle and Epaphras, the founder of the congregation, were getting on in prison. Much was done in the ancient world by word of mouth so that although a letter would contain the more urgent and doctrinal matters the ordinary remarks would be passed on orally.

p. 246

Parker says:

"We give thanks to god and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you."—(Col. i. 3.)

The Apostle was made rich by his disciples; not by their money, but by their devotedness, their simple piety, their continual service for Christ. As the husbandman gives thanks for abounding crops so the Apostle gives thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, because of souls that were saved, and lives that were consecrated to the Cross. The Apostle did not pray occasionally for his friends, he prayed always for them; that is to say, he always had them in his thoughts, and he always desired for them the highest blessings. The time since the prayer began is indicated in the following verse:—

"Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints."—(Col. i. 4.)

p. 74

Phillips says:

Paul now begins a roll call of his companions and colleagues in the ministry. The cultists at Colosse are now completely ignored. They were way off course. We know from history that Paul's epistle went unheeded by the budding Gnostics. They had their own agenda. Paul leaves them to their apostasy. Rather, he embraces those of like precious faith. The names ring out! Tychicus, Onesimus (yes, even Onesimus, babe in Christ that he was, has his place in this inspired list of names) along with Aristarchus, Marcus, Archippus, and the rest. They stood for the truth, for the apostolic faith. They were by no means all. Doubtless, Paul could have include many more people on his list. The full roll call awaits Judgment Day, when all of those who have marched to the beat of Paul's drum—rank after rank, age after age, members of the true church of God—will be named.
pp. 210-11

Spurgeon says:

To me my text is one of the most joyful sentences from which I have ever preached. “Ye serve the Lord Christ.” What an exaltation for a slave of Satan to become a servant of Christ! With what exultation do I hail permission to do anything for my Lord. To be blessed by Him, to be enriched with priceless gifts from His bounteous hand,—this is lovingkindness; but to be allowed to render tokens of gratitude in return is sweetest of all. Truly, we may say of this condescension, “Thy gentleness hath made me great.” By receiving anything from us the Lord has lifted us as beggars from the dunghill, and set us among princes, even the princes of His people. It is a greater honour to serve Christ in the most menial capacity than to occupy the throne of the Cæsars. I speak of honour, I may also dilate upon the happiness of the service of Jesus! It is the purest of pleasures. We long to express our affection for Jesus by acts of zeal. Love pants for expression, and is not obedience the tongue of love? That love is feigned which does not declare itself in some practical form or other, by deeds of kindness, or gifts, or sacrifices, or patient endurance, or hearty praise. Beloved, let us count it an unrivalled honour and an unsurpassed delight to do anything for Jesus. For this service let us be insatiably ambitious, resolved at all costs to show our loyalty to our Prince. To serve us He laid aside His glorious array, and girt about Him the garments of a servant; for us He took a basin and towel and stooped to wash His disciples’ feet; for us He became obedient to death, even the death of the cross: now, therefore, in our turn, by all the shame He bore, by all the labour He endured, by all the agonies He suffered, let us serve Him and Him alone for ever.

p. 655

Sturz says:

IN THESE LAST 12 verses Paul winds up the letter by explaining the mission of Tychicus and Onesimus and by including greetings sent by his co-workers in Rome. Timothy is excluded because he is listed in 1:1 as co-author with Paul of the whole epistle. After three final personal recommendations Paul closes the letter with his signature.

p. 119

Wiersbe says:

Informing (7-9). Paul did not hesitate to share his needs with others, because he depended on their prayer support (Rom. 15:30; Eph. 6:19; Phil. 1:19; 1 Thess. 5:25; Philem. 22). Do you pray for Christian leaders in places of importance? They need it!
p. 785

Wuest says:

All the things that relate to me, Tychicus will make known to you, the beloved brother and faithful servant and my fellow bondsman in the Lord, whom I am sending to you for this same purpose, in order that you may come to know the things concerning us and in order that he may encourage your hearts; [sending him] with Onesimus the faithful and beloved brother who is one of you. All things to you they will make known, the things here. There greet you Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, and Mark, the cousin of Barnabas, concerning whom you received orders; if he comes to you, receive him, and Joshua, the one called Justus, who are the circumcision. These are my only fellow workers with respect to the kingdom of God who are of such a character as to have become a solace to me.

There greets you Epaphras, the one who is one of your number, a bondsman of Christ Jesus, always contending on your behalf in his prayers, to the effect that you may stand fast, spiritually mature ones, and those who have been brought to the place of full assurance in everything willed by God; for I bear witness to him that he has much toil on your behalf and on behalf of those in Laodicea, and those in Hierapolis. There greet you Luke; the physician, the beloved one, and Demas.

Greet the brethren in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the [local] assembly [which meets] in her home. And when this letter is read in your presence, see to it that also it is read in the assembly of the Laodiceans, and the letter from Laodicea, see to it that you also read it. And say to Archippus, Be ever keeping a watchful eye upon the ministry which you received in the Lord, that you discharge it fully. The greeting by my hand, the hand of Paul. Be remembering my bonds. The grace be with you.
p. 39

Many of the new books that are coming out have one thing in common. That is, they save all the pictures for the middle or the book or at the end.

The Apostle Paul has chosen to give his picture album in the end. The family we are going to be looking at is **TWELVE** in number:

1. **TYCHICUS,**
2. **ONESIMUS,**
3. **ARISTARCHUS,**
4. **MARK,**
5. **BARNABAS,**
6. **JESUS JUSTUS,**
7. **EPAPHRAS,**
8. **LUKE,**
9. **DEMAS,**
10. **NYMPHAS,**
11. **ARCHIPPUS,** and
12. **THE APOSTLE PAUL.**

Stage #12: **Christ in Other People (Colossians 4:7-18)**

Our **KEY VERSE** will be verse 7.

v. 7 All the things concerning me Tychicus will make known to you, the beloved brother and faithful servant and fellow bonds slave in the Lord;

The NET Bible then translates verse 7:

Tychicus, a dear brother, faithful minister, and fellow slave in the Lord, will tell you all the news about me.

Peterson paraphrases verse 7:

My good friend Tychicus will tell you all about me. He's a trusted minister and companion in the service of the Master.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary titles this section and then says:

Perfecting one's personal life (4:7-17).

Paul set an example for mature interpersonal relations. Besides remembering his friends and companions, he expressed genuine concern for them.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says further:

4:7-8. Tychicus (a leader in the church and bearer of this letter) was a **dear brother, a faithful minister . . . and a fellow servant** with Paul in the ministry. He was from the province of Asia . . . and was mentioned by Paul also in 2 Timothy 4:12 and Titus 3:12.

Paul, up to this point, has been speaking primarily about **PRINCIPLES**.

Now he is going to be talking about **PEOPLE**.

Unless a principle can be made to live in a person, it is useless. How thrilling to see in these people that are mentioned that these great principles he has just spelled out for us in the book do really work.

Paul says:

“All of the up-to-date news about me, Tychicus will make known to you.”

Ephesians 6:21 (TLB)

Tychicus, who is a much loved brother and faithful helper in the Lord’s work, will tell you all about how I am getting along.

I have chosen this as the **KEY VERSE** to our study.

We are going to note the people here in **PAUL’S PHOTOGRAPH ALBUM** have Jesus Christ living in their lives. And just like the Apostle, they too become examples to help us know how we ought to live.

Philippians 3:17 (TLB)

Dear brothers, pattern your lives after mine and notice who else lives up to my example.

Dr. Henry Brandt, a Christian psychologist, has said:

We need each other very much. For others see us as we are. We need each other because we choose to go our own way to justify our action and to defend ourselves. We need others to see us as we often do not see ourselves. And who can, in Christian love, help us to see ourselves as others see us, and help us become strong where we are weak.
(source unknown)

When we learn to look on our Christian brothers and sisters as examples, we can then learn from their lives for our own personal benefit.

Every person has a contribution to make to our lives.

TYCHICUS, the man with the message, had a:

SHEPHERD'S HEART and

PROPHET'S SPIRIT.

1 Corinthians 1:26 (TLB)

Notice among yourselves, dear brothers, that few of you who follow Christ have big names or power or wealth.

God often chooses the insignificant person, a nobody, to do His work.

TYCHICUS WAS A LOT LIKE TIMOTHY in that he was willing:

TO GO ANYWHERE,

TO DO ANYTHING,

AT ANY COST

FOR THE GLORY OF GOD.

There are **THREE THINGS** said about **TYCHICUS** in this verse. He is a:

1. **“BELOVED BROTHER”**—because he is a part of the family of God,
2. **“FAITHFUL SERVANT”**—because of his willingness to serve in any capacity, and
3. **“FELLOW BONDSLAVE”**—in that his desire is only to do what God would want him to do.

You will notice he is all these things **“IN THE LORD.”**

If he were not **“IN THE LORD,”** he would **NOT** be a:

“BELOVED BROTHER AND FAITHFUL SERVANT AND FELLOW BONDSLAVE.”

Dr. Edman says of Tychicus:

Tychicus had two pre-eminent qualifications as a Christian: he was a brother beloved, obviously of a loving disposition by the indwelling Spirit. A man considerate of others, courteous, compassionate, and Christlike. A living example of the loving Saviour, who is also a faithful minister.

The word is old fashioned and means a servant. Just as our Lord declared, “whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister. For even the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto but to minister and to give His life a ransom for many.”

The Bible nowhere states that Tychicus, like Apollos, was eloquent in the scriptures, but it repeats that he was faithful, who served with Paul as needed and willing to go anywhere.

Like his master in heaven, Tychicus all his day son earth, was loving and loyal, diligent and dependable, indifferent to self and eager to serve. He preached the gospel as much by his life as by his lips. His conduct corroborated the content of his preaching and his actions spoke as loudly as his words. His commendation can be rightly coveted by each of his, a brother beloved, a faithful minister in the Lord.
(source unknown)

William P. Barker in his book Saints in Aprons and Overalls: Friends of Paul says this of Tychicus:

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY has a little poem about discovering a powerhouse in the middle of the city while on a walk one night. Morley had walked in the area many times but had never noticed it before. The poet then gives a line or two about how this powerhouse had been quietly present all the time, humming with power without which his city could not operate. The poem then concludes simply, "Some people are like that."

One of those like that is Tychicus. He is one of those people who are there all the time, humming with power, but whom you do not notice. He is one of those upon whom the world depends so much, yet he did nothing to call attention to himself. He was no thundering orator. He was no inspired organizer. He plugged away day by day in a quiet but effective way.
p. 61

Anders says:

We might call **Tychicus** the trusted assistant. He is an example of faithfulness in little things which led to greater things. He was sent to inform the Colossians of Paul's **circumstances and encourage [their] hearts**. He was probably the carrier of the letter to the Colossians as well as the letter to the Ephesians (Eph. 6:21). In later years **Tychicus** was a relief minister for Titus (Titus 3:12). As Paul approached death, he sent **Tychicus** to care for the church at Ephesus (2 Tim. 4:12).

p. 347

Barker & Kohlenberger say:

He was a native of the province of Asia and was earlier selected to be one of the two delegates of the churches who were to accompany Paul on his last visit to Jerusalem, probably as a custodian of the offering that was given by the churches for the needy in Jerusalem . . .

p. 841

Barton, Fackler, Taylor & Veerman say:

Paul cited Tychicus for leadership skills, or were they “followship” skills? Tychicus followed well—with love, faithfulness, and a servant’s heart. He was a team player who made an impact, but not by independent action. Like Tychicus, be as eager to follow and to serve as you are to lead.
p. 231

Bruce says:

7 The reference to Tychicus is almost word for word identical with Eph. 6:21-22. He was evidently the bearer of the letter to the Ephesians as well as of this one, and possibly of a letter to Laodicea as well . . . He was himself a native of the province of Asia, as we learn from Acts 20:4, where he is named in the list of Paul’s fellow-travelers on his last journey to Jerusalem. The evidence of Paul’s letters indicates that those fellow-travelers were delegates from Gentile churches, bearing those churches’ gifts for their brethren in Jerusalem; Tychicus was therefore, in all probability, commissioned on that occasion to carry the contributions from one or more of the churches of Asia.
p. 176

C. Henry says:

This letter has been taken up with weighty and practical affairs. Paul has been concerned with great spiritual truths and their application to the situation at Colosse. He has said little about personal concerns, but he realizes that the Colossians will want to know about these. He accordingly sends to them Tychicus (evidently the carrier of the epistle) for the twofold purpose of bearing all the personal news and of giving the Colossians encouragement. With him Paul has sent Onesimus . . .
p. 330

Calvin says:

That the Colossians may know what concern he has for them, he confirms them, by giving them, in a manner, a pledge. For although he was in prison, and was in danger of his life, making care for himself a secondary matter, he consults for their interests by sending Tychicus to them.
p. 226

Carson says:

The three-fold description is closely knit together, and it would therefore seem best to take the phrase *in the Lord* as qualifying all three expressions. It is because of his union with Christ that he has these other relationships. He is a *brother* to them all, and by his character has merited the title *beloved*. He is a servant of the church, and he is a *fellow-servant* (lit. ‘a fellow slave’)—the link envisaged being doubtless with Paul himself.
p. 98

Eadie says:

. . . “Of all that concerns me Tychicus shall inform you—the beloved brother and faithful minister and fellow-servant in the Lord.”
p. 284

Fergusson says:

In the second part of the chapter, the apostle (having commended Tychicus from the esteem which he had of him, and from his ministerial calling,) showeth, he had sent him to them, to give them certain information concerning his own case, and to return unto him certain information concerning theirs; and that he might prove comfortable unto them by his presence, preaching, and otherwise, ver. 7, 8. And joineth Onesimus with him in the commission, whom he also commendeth as a faithful Christian, beloved of Paul, and, as it would seem, their own countryman, ver. 9.
p. 371

Gaebelein says:

The words which follow these exhortations bring out the fellowship of Saints and their different services. Tychicus is mentioned first. We find his name also in Acts xx:4; Ephes. vi:21; 2 Tim. iv:12 and Titus iii:12. With Onesimus he was bearer of this epistle, as well as the epistle to the Ephesians, while Onesimus carried also the letter to Philemon.

p. 83

Gromacki says:

His name means “fortuitous” or “fortunate.” He is mentioned five times in the New Testament. A native of the Roman province of Asia, Tychicus accompanied Paul into that region at the end of the apostle’s third journey (Acts 20:4). He was with the apostle during the latter’s first Roman imprisonment . . . He was given the responsibility of delivering three of Paul’s prison epistles (Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon). Since he was from Asia, he was a logical choice for this task.

p. 161

Gromacki says:

Three positive commendations are stated. *First*, Tychicus was “beloved brother.” He was a spiritual brother, both to Paul and the members of the Colossian church. They and all the other believers loved him.

Second, Tychicus was a “faithful minister.” He served as Paul’s apostolic representative several times and executed his responsibilities well. Paul could count on him without question. Nothing negative about Tychicus is stated in Scripture.

Third, he was a “fellowservant.” Paul, Timothy, and Tychicus were joined together in loving service to their heavenly master, the Lord Jesus Christ. As spiritual slaves, they submitted their wills and ambitions to Him.

p. 162

Henry says:

I. Concerning Tychicus, v. 7. By him this epistle was sent. He knew they would be glad to hear how it fared with him. The churches cannot but be concerned for good ministers and desirous to know their state.

p. 1874

Henry says:

A beloved brother and faithful minister. Faithfulness in any one is truly lovely, and renders him worthy our affection and esteem. *And a fellow-servant in the Lord.* It adds much to the beauty and strength of the gospel ministry when ministers are thus loving one to another.

pp. 1874-5

Hughes says:

From the beautiful teamwork of Paul and Tychicus we learn some great truths about fullness in service. *There is greatness in the smallest things done for Christ.* What would be the use of Paul's writing a letter if it did not get delivered? What would be the use of his towering thought in the opening chapters of Colossians and its compelling application if no one ever read it? "For the loss of a nail, lose a horseshoe; for the loss of a horseshoe, lose a horse; for the loss of a horse, lose a soldier; for the loss of a soldier, lose a battle; for the loss of a battle, lose a kingdom."

pp. 143-4

Ironside says:

We do not know much about Tychicus, mentioned in verse 7, expecting that in Ephesians 6: 21, 22, he is again spoken of in almost the same terms. It is evident that he was one in whom the apostle had implicit confidence. He speaks of him in each passage as a beloved brother and faithful minister, adding here a third expression—"fellow-servant in the Lord." Beloved and yet faithful! What a rare but blessed combination is this!

p. 177

King says:

It is often said that “no man is a hero to his own valet”: but I fancy we have an exception in this man. Paul thought highly of him, and I suspect that he thought much of his master. Paul certainly trusted him implicitly, and now that this important letter has to be delivered to Colossæ, he chose Tychicus to be his postman. I should imagine that he was in no sense a significant-looking man; but you would be wrong if you passed him on the road thinking him as of no importance—he was a man with a message. He carried this Epistle, a part of the very Word of GOD. We also, if we are Christians, bear in our person the message of CHRIST. Paul goes further when he says, in 2 Corinthians iii. 3, “Ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of CHRIST . . . written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living GOD.”

p. 124

Laurin says:

To most of us Tychicus is just a name but to Paul he was a man of great importance. He is described by the adjectives “beloved” and “faithful.” He speaks to us of the greatness of small service rendered for Christ.

pp. 183-4

Lenski says:

Therefore Paul sends no information about his present situation. The Colossians will want to know everything; Tychicus will give them all the information they desire. See the close parallel in Eph. 6:21, etc. See this passage regarding Tychicus. He was to take the three letters (Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon) to their respective destinations; we think he was also to deliver the letter to the Laodiceans.

p. 195

Lightfoot says:

7-9. 'You will learn everything about me from Tychicus, the beloved brother who has ministered to me and served with me faithfully in the Lord. This indeed was my purpose in sending him to you: that you might be informed how matters stand with me, and that he might cheer your hearts and strengthen your resolves by the tidings. Onesimus will accompany him—a faithful and beloved brother, who is one of yourselves, a Colossian. These two will inform you of all that is going on here'

p. 233

MacArthur says:

Tychicus. The name means “fortuitous” or “fortunate.” He was one of the Gentile converts Paul took to Jerusalem as a representative of the Gentile churches . . . He was a reliable companion of Paul and a capable leader, since he was considered as a replacement for Titus and Timothy on separate occasions . . . He had the responsibility to deliver Paul’s letters to the Colossians, the Ephesians . . . and Philemon . . .

p. 1745

McGee says:

“Tychicus” was the pastor of the church in Ephesus. He is mentioned in Ephesians 6:21, Acts 20:4, and 2 Timothy 4:12. He was a wonderful brother in the Lord.

p. 364

Melick says:

Paul describes him with three attributes of ministry: a loved brother, a faithful minister, and a fellow-servant. Paul used the same terminology in Eph. 6:21-22, with the exception of “fellow-servant.” Likewise, he identified the same mission in both epistles. Tychicus traveled to both churches with news of Paul. This suggests that he had a special relationship with the churches of Asia.

p. 327

Patrick & Lowth say:

That this epistle was written at the same time with that to the Ephesians, is pleaded from this, that it was sent by the same person Tychicus, with the very same words contained in this and the following verses, Eph. vi. 21, 22.

p. 794

Patzia says:

Paul dispatches Tychicus to Colossae as a personal messenger and probably as the bearer of this letter and anticipates that his coming will encourage their hearts. The word for **encourage** is *parakaleō*, which conveys a sense of comfort in this context. As a “paraclete,” Tychicus is a personal agent of the Holy Spirit to this congregation (John 14:16, 26; 16:7).

p. 99

Pickell says:

Before concluding his letter Paul pauses to express commendation of his co-laborers and greetings from them. Tychicus, who was probably a citizen of Ephesus, had been a close associate of the Apostle for several years and was with him during the second missionary journey (Acts 20:4). Paul calls him a “beloved brother, and a faithful minister, and a fellow servant in the Lord” (vs. 7), and tells the Colossians he would inform them about conditions in Rome. Tychicus would also encourage the Colossians as they sought to overcome the heretical teaching and influence of the Gnostics in their midst.

p. 66

Radmacher, Allen & House say:

4:7, 8 Tychicus was an intimate friend of Paul’s who came from the province of Asia. He had accompanied Paul on part of the third missionary journey. He probably delivered this letter and answered questions about Paul’s condition in prison.

p. 1569

Simpson & Bruce say:

The reference to Tychicus is almost word for word identical with Eph. 6:21 f. Evidently he was the bearer of the Epistle to the Ephesians as well as of this one, and possibly of a letter to Laodicea as well (see v. 16). Tychicus was probably Paul's special envoy on this occasion to the churches of provincial Asia which had been founded in the course of the apostle's Ephesian ministry. He was himself a native of the province of Asia, as we learn from Acts 20:4, where he appears in the list of delegates from Gentile churches who accompanied Paul to Palestine in A.D. 57 with those churches' gifts for their brethren in Jerusalem.

p. 301

Sturz says:

Paul had many enemies and a few so-called friends who deserted him. He was also surrounded by some close and true friends. *Tychicus, beloved brother and faithful minister and co-slave in the Lord.* Like Timothy and Titus, Tychicus was one of Paul's trusted lieutenants. He carried not only this letter but the Ephesian one also. Long after others had deserted him, Tychicus remained faithful (Titus 3:12). Though born and reared in the area around Ephesus (Acts 20:4), he was evidently not from Colosse (cp. 4:9). All of us are beloved of God (3:12), though often our manners and methods make us unlovable to our brethren. This was not so of Tychicus.

p. 119

Trentham says:

Paul brings his epistle to the Colossians to a close with many personal references to his friends in the church, men whom he says "have been a comfort unto me" (Col. 4:11). Paul trusted his friends implicitly to make his personal needs known to the Christian congregations. He chose not to write about these needs. Instead, he wrote, "Tychicus [beloved brother, faithful minister, and my fellow slave in Christ] will tell you all about my affairs" (Col. 4:7, RSV).

pp. 168-9

Wuest says:

(4:7-9) Lightfoot says: “Tychicus was charged by Paul at the same time with a more extended mission. He was entrusted with copies of the circular letter, which he was enjoined to deliver in the principal churches of proconsular Asia. This mission would bring him to Laodicea, which was one of these great centers of Christianity, and, as Colossae was only a few miles distant, the apostle would naturally engage him to pay a visit to the Colossians.”

p. 235

Since this section is primarily biographical, don't you think it would be good for each of us to stop and pay tribute to Christ in other people who bring such blessing to our lives? When I start doing this I think of:

1. Each member of the Bible Teaching Resources **BOARD**,
 Barney and Sandy **Allen**
 Jimmy and Sonia **Bilderback**
 Tom and Joan **Cochran**
 Pat and Cindy **Hawkins**
 Dick and Ethel **Knarr**
 Ronnie and Carol **Marroquin**
 Don and Lillie **McWhinney**
 John and Loretta **Miller**
 Brian and Karen **Mills**
 Garner and Melodye **Roberts**
 Mike and Jane **Rodgers**
 Don and Fran **Saddoris**
 Tres and Julia **Ward**
 Larry and JoAnn **Watkins**
 Barry and Julia **Watts**
 Clyde and Kathy **Womack**
2. **BILLY AND GENEVIEVE MARTIN**—the heavy load they carry to keep us going,
3. **MIKE AND JANE RODGERS**,
4. **KEITH YATES** at Dallas Seminary,
5. **CHIP ALLEN** in Waco,
6. all the wonderful people on our **EMAIL MAILING LIST** who pray faithfully for us week after week, and
7. my wife **PEARL**—my soul-mate, best-friend, and partner in ministry—how grateful I am to the Lord for her.

Why don't you follow my example and do the same in your own life and perhaps it will even precipitate sending a card or note of encouragement and appreciation for the contribution they are making in your life.

(Exploring the Mind & Heart of the Prince of Preachers: Five-thousand illustrations under one-thousand topical headings from the works of C. H. Spurgeon by C. H. Spurgeon) Oswego, IL: Fox River Press. Copyright– Fox River Press, 2005.

Know your work, and bend over it, throwing your heart and soul into it; for, be it great or small, you will have to praise God to all eternity if you are found faithful in it. AM71
p. M-516

Brothers, we need not ask for more talents, we have quite as many as we shall be able to answer for. Preachers need not seek for larger spheres: let them be faithful in those which they now occupy. 1960.246
p. M-516

We have learned **THREE THINGS** about Tychicus in verse 7. He is a:

1. **“BELOVED BROTHER,”**
2. **“FAITHFUL SERVANT,”** and
3. **“FELLOW BONDSLAVE IN THE LORD.”**

Now when we get to verse 8 we are going to find out about **HIS MISSION**, the one Paul sends him on.

v. 8 whom I am sending to you for this purpose, in order that you may know the things concerning us and he may encourage your hearts;

The NET Bible then translates verse 8:

I sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are doing and that he may encourage your hearts.

Peterson paraphrases verse 8:

I've sent him to you so that you would know how things are with us, and so he could encourage you in your faith.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

Paul sent him to Colosse **for the express purpose** of informing them about his state of affairs to **encourage** them.

In this verse we get the **REASON** Paul is sending Tychicus to them at this time.

There are **TWO PURPOSES** in his coming to them:

1. **"IN ORDER THAT [THEY] MAY KNOW"** what is happening to the Apostle and how he is getting along and
2. **"IN ORDER . . . HE MAY ENCOURAGE [THEIR] HEARTS."**

The mission is **TWO-FOLD**:

1. **UPDATED INFORMATION** about the Apostle and
2. to **ENCOURAGE THE HEARTS** of those believers in Colosse.

Barker & Kohlenberger say:

Paul explains a twofold purpose he had in sending Tychicus to the Colossians: (1) “that you may know about our circumstances,” and (2) “that he may encourage your hearts.”

p. 841

Barton, Fackler, Taylor & Veerman say:

ENCOURAGEMENT

Nobody moves an inch by standing still and pondering the future. Life offers opportunities, risks, and challenges—but if you’re too afraid of losing or getting hurt, you’ll probably never get in the game.

Encouragement, which seems to be the chief mission of Paul’s emissary Tychicus, requires a leader willing to say, “Get going! Get moving! Follow me! Follow Christ! Kept it up! You’re doing a great job! Don’t lose heart!”

People all around you have potential to do more, and to be more, than they are. In Christ, who can set the limits? Perhaps your encouragement will fuel them with courage to try.

p. 232

Bruce says:

Tychicus, it appears, had paid Paul and Timothy a visit in Rome, and was now on his way back to his native province. It was convenient, then, to entrust him with this and other letters intended for recipients in that province. He would be able to give the recipients further information about Paul and his companions. Moreover, if the variant reading were to be followed, he would be able to find out the present state of affairs in the Colossian church, and no doubt find means of sending a message to Paul to give him the latest news.

p. 176

Henry says:

He was as willing to hear from them as they could be to hear from him. It is a great comfort to have the mutual concern of fellow-christians.
p. 1875

Hughes says:

When Tychicus was doing the smallest thing, he was serving Christ. We moderns run the danger of dichotomizing our lives into religious/non-religious, sacred/secular, great/small. But our Lord said and did otherwise: "I always do what pleases him" (John 8:29). Jesus, living in a human body for thirty-three years, never once performed a nonsacred act. God is in all our little deeds, and we ought to ask him to keep reminding us that it is so. We need to pray for this in our regular prayer times as well as in a thousand brief sighs. How liberated our lives will then be.

We must realize that momentary things done for Christ are eternal. The letters which Tychicus bore to Asia would outlast the Roman Empire! Tychicus's name would be known until the end of time. The world may not see our part (rarely does it), but God does, and God says, "I will never forget their works."
p. 144

Ironside says:

Tychicus evidently went to neither extreme. He was undoubtedly a lovable man because of his gracious demeanor and his tender solicitude for the welfare of the saints, but at the same time he was faithful in ministering the Word of God, rebuking iniquity and also comforting the penitent. Such men are rarer than we realize. In them we see the delightful combination of the shepherd's heart and the prophet's spirit. One cannot but think how alike in character were Timothy and Tychicus. Both were loyal to the word of God, and both sought the comfort and blessing of the people of God.
p. 178

Jamieson, Fausset & Brown say:

Paul was the more anxious to know the state of the Colossians, on account of the seductions to which they were exposed from false teachers; owing to which he had “great conflict for” them (ch. 2:1).

p. 1327

MacArthur says:

At the very end of Paul’s life, during his second Roman imprisonment, Tychicus was still with him. Facing imminent execution, Paul desired to see Timothy one last time. Because Timothy could not leave his congregation at Ephesus without a replacement, Paul sent Tychicus (2 Tim. 4:12). Once again, Tychicus’s name comes up as a replacement for one of Paul’s prominent associates. That speaks highly of his character.

pp. 192-3

We read William Barker’s conclusion about Tychicus in Saints in Aprons and Overalls: Friends of Paul:

Tychicus’ name has an unusual meaning in Greek. It means “fortunate.” For us, it suggests also that anyone bearing God’s good news and anyone bearing comfort will find himself *fortunate*. Anyone being a comfort finds that God’s presence and power becomes so real that he knows he is fortunate! Perhaps more important, how *fortunate* for others when you are a Tychicus, a bearer of good news and a bringer of comfort.

pp. 68-69

v. 9 with Onesimus, the faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. All things here they will make known to you.

The NET Bible then translates verse 9:

I sent him with Onesimus, the faithful and dear brother, who is one of you. They will tell you about everything here.

Peterson paraphrases verse 9:

And I've sent Onesimus with him. Onesimus is one of you, and has become such a trusted and dear brother! Together they'll bring you up-to-date on everything that has been going on here.

We now come to **PERSON #2 IN PAUL'S FAMILY**, mentioned here in verse 9:

2. **ONESIMUS.**

There are **THREE THINGS** Paul says about Onesimus here in verse 9. He is:

1. **"THE FAITHFUL,"**
2. **"BELOVED BROTHER,"** and
3. **"WHO IS ONE OF YOU."**

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

4:9. Onesimus (a converted runaway slave of Philemon) was also a **faithful and dear brother** (cf. Phile. 16) to Paul and a fellow Colossian: **one of you . . .** He would accompany Tychicus and also report on Paul's circumstances.

Onesimus is coming with Tychicus. Onesimus is the slave who ran away from Philemon and went to Rome. While in Rome, Paul had the privilege of leading him to Jesus Christ. Now Onesimus is going back to Philemon in Colosse with a letter of recommendation from the Apostle Paul. This letter of recommendation is the little **BOOK OF PHILEMON**. It is the hope and prayer of the Apostle Paul that Philemon will receive Onesimus back and will believe the word of the Apostle that Onesimus has definitely become a Christian.

Paul calls Onesimus a **“FAITHFUL AND BELOVED BROTHER, WHO IS ONE OF YOU”**—referring to the saints there in Colosse.

The Apostle Paul had already had experiences of witnessing Onesimus’ faith in action and he is able to call him a **“FAITHFUL BROTHER.”** Because of the tremendous change in his life since he has become a Christian, he is now a **“BELOVED BROTHER.”** He is a member of the **FAMILY OF GOD** by means of the new birth.

Onesimus is on his way back to make things right for the past wrongs which he has committed.

The Apostle called him **“ONE OF YOU”**—referring to the saints in Colosse—simply because there would be a number of them that would probably question his spiritual experience at the outset so he speaks of this identification with them as part of the body of Christ.

This is exactly what **BARNABAS** had to do when **SAUL OF TARSUS** became a believer.

It would be well for us to notice that Paul always says the best things that he can say about someone.

“ALL THINGS HERE THEY WILL MAKE KNOWN TO YOU.”

Onesimus will share with Tychicus in the ministry of making known the affairs of the Apostle to the folks in the churches in the Lycus Valley, and especially to the church there in Colosse.

Abbott says:

It deserves notice how St. Paul assumes that Onesimus will be welcomed as such by his former master and by the Church.

p. 299

Barker & Kohlenberger say:

. . . Onesimus, the runaway slave who in the providence of God had met Paul in Rome and had apparently been led to Christ by him . . . Paul is now sending Onesimus back to Colosse—with no mention of his past, but with the heart-warming phrase that he is now “one of you.”

p. 841

Barton, Fackler, Taylor & Veerman say:

GRACE UNDER FIRE

Strength and loyalty are the virtues behind this quick greeting from Aristarchus. He had gone to jail with Paul for Christ’s sake, had stood up under the danger of riot at Ephesus, and had sailed with Paul to Rome to face imprisonment. Others might plea-bargain or claim that they acted under duress. Aristarchus would bear the cost of discipleship with cheerfulness and hope.

Faith that cares for others, that greets people never met, that sticks close to friends in trouble—because of Jesus—is worth finding, a treasure brighter than diamonds and just as tough. Jesus promises that we’ll find faith that stands firm under riots and threat of prison when we give him our whole heart.

p. 233

Bruce says:

Onesimus, unlike Tychicus, is not mentioned in the letter to the Ephesians; he was bound for Colossae in circumstances of which further information is supplied in the letter to Philemon. Onesimus was a member of the household of Philemon, a Colossian Christian, and therefore the Colossian church would feel some responsibility for him. During his absence from Colossae Onesimus came somehow into touch with Paul in his place of custody and through his ministry became a believer. He quickly proved himself a devoted attendant and friend to the apostle while he remained with him, but when Tychicus's journey to Asia proved a suitable opportunity, Paul sent Onesimus along with him so that he might return to Philemon on a new footing. It was necessary that the difference which had parted two men who were now fellow-Christians should be resolved in reconciliation.

p. 177

Carson says:

It is a striking comment on how the apostle's thought has leapt across the barriers of social distinction, that he can describe the runaway slave as *one of you*, a phrase which he will use presently of the highly honoured Epaphras.

p. 99

Eadie says:

. . . "Along with Onesimus, the faithful and beloved brother." Onesimus carried with him another and more special testimonial and introduction to his master, Philemon.

p. 286

Hendriksen says:

By calling Onesimus “the faithful and beloved brother” the apostle underscores before the entire church verse 16 of his personal letter to Philemon. by permitting Onesimus to stand at the side of Tychicus as an informant regarding everything pertaining to Paul and the church in Rome the apostle is telling the Colossians, including Philemon, that he regards the man who by God’s transforming grace is now living up [to] the meaning of his name—Onesimus: *profitable, helpful*—to be also *wholly reliable*.
p. 185

Henry says:

This was he whom Paul had begotten in his bonds, Philem. 10. He was converted at Rome, whither he had fled from his master’s service. Though he was a poor servant, and had been a bad man, yet, being now a convert, Paul calls him a *faithful and beloved brother*. The meanest circumstance of life, and greatest wickedness of former life, make no difference in the spiritual relation among sincere Christians.
p. 1875

Hughes says:

Their emptiness became an opportunity for his fullness, their weakness for his strength, their thirst for his filling, their misery for his joy, their meaninglessness for his purpose.

*A man with a life out of tune
And battered and torn with sin,
Is auctioned cheap to the thoughtless crowd,
Much like the old violin.*

*But the MASTER comes, and the foolish crowd
Never can quite understand
The worth of a soul, and the change that's wrought
By the TOUCH OF THE MASTER'S HAND.*

Some may feel like their lives are “going once, going twice, going—almost gone.” If so, what is needed is the touch of the Master’s hand.

Edith Schaeffer tells the story of how the girl doing the cooking for L’Abri was supposed to be making the cakes, but made some errors until all she had left was an amorphous mess of goo. The logical thing was to throw it out. But the Schaeffers did not have extra money, and had learned to be very economical in the kitchen. So Mrs. Schaeffer sat down with the girl, figured out what was in the goey mess, and by adding an extra ingredient was able to make what her husband described as “the most marvelous noodles you have tasted in your life.” If we place ourselves in the Lord’s hands, he can shape us into something which has both usefulness and beauty.

Full transformation awaits those who invite the Master’s touch. Full, overflowing service is the characteristic of life in Christ.

p. 146

Ironside says:

After Onesimus was brought to Christ, Paul sent him back to his master, offering himself to become his surety in the tender words, “If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself. If he hath wronged thee or oweth thee aught, put that to my account; I, Paul, have written it with mine own hand. I will repay it.” What a gospel picture is this! It is Christ Himself who has assumed the responsibilities of the penitent sinner. “We are all God’s Onesimuses” said Luther. Christ paid our debt that we might be accepted in Him before God.

p. 179

Jamieson, Fausset & Brown say:

Onesimus—the slave mentioned in the Epistle to Philemon 10, 16, “a brother beloved.” **a faithful . . . brother**—rather, “the faithful brother,” he being known to the Colossians as the slave of Philemon, their fellow townsman and fellow Christian. **one to you**—belonging to your city.

p. 1327

King says:

All that past is now forgiven, as, bless GOD, any man’s past may be, however wicked. Paul is a true and faithful pastor; and he knows that if this man is to grow in grace, and have the joy of full salvation, he must, now that he is at peace with GOD, go and put things right with the one he has wronged. Be it borne in mind that restitution is a first principle of the spiritual life. “If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift,” Matthew v. 23-4. Any reparation that is in our power to make must be undertaken. This is going to be a most difficult thing for Onesimus, for his erst-while employer, under the Law of the time, has powers of severest punishment. It turns out that this Philemon is another of Paul’s converts—“thou owest unto me even thine own self”, Philemon 19; and so the apostle writes him the personal letter, beseeching his favour for his returned slave. It is a beautiful letter, which will surely melt the heart of the recipient, and secure the boon of mercy for the renegade. Onesimus is to take it, and present it personally.

p. 125

Lange says:

[He who had been a fraudulent runaway slave is restored as “one of themselves,” commended thus in an Epistle to be read publicly in Colosse and elsewhere (ver. 16). “How much native truth, courage, and beauty is there in Christianity, which enabled the Apostle to speak thus of a runaway slave, to the inhabitants of that city from which he had fled! What other religion in the world could have done this?” (WORDSWORTH).—R.]
p. 83

Lange says:

STARKE:—A Christian must not regard the former faults of his neighbor, occurring before his conversion, still less reproach him with them, rather praise and esteem the virtues, which God has granted him since.
p. 83

Lange says:

The meanest circumstance of life, and greatest wickedness of former life, make no difference in the spiritual relation among sincere Christians: they partake of the same privileges, and are entitled to the same regards.—R
p. 83

Lenski says:

The implication that the Colossians will receive Onesimus as a brother lies in the last brief addition: “They shall make known to you everything here,” a quiet but significant plural. Onesimus is to help Tychicus tell what the congregation will want to know. They will receive him in the congregation, will accept him as a brother, one of Paul’s own converts who was brought to Christ in such a strange way.
p. 197

McGee says:

“Onesimus” was a slave of Philemon in Colosse. He had run away from his master, had been led to the Lord through the ministry of Paul, and was now being sent back to his master by him. Paul wrote a letter to Philemon when he sent Onesimus back, and he tells Philemon that Onesimus is his “beloved brother.” You can see from this that there is a new relationship in Christ. Master and slave are now brothers in Christ Jesus.
p. 364

Melick says:

Onesimus accompanied Tychicus. Paul made two significant statements about Onesimus. First, he was a “faithful and dear brother.” In this, Paul described Onesimus with the same terms used of the others in the group. Second, he was “one of you.” Onesimus came from Colosse. Whether Paul meant he came from the church or simply was returning to it as a new Christian is not clear. Obviously, however, Onesimus belonged in the church fellowship at the time of writing. According to Phlm 10, Onesimus was a runaway slave. In Rome, that meant that he lost whatever respect he may have had previously and could have been severely punished by Roman law. For that reason, Paul urged the church to accept Onesimus. This became a test case for the instructions Paul issued regarding slaves and masters (3:22-4:1) and of whether Christianity could triumph over social and economic distinctions. The response Paul desired also included forgiveness of Onesimus’s personal sin against Philemon. Paul expected Philemon to respond positively; apparently he did.
p. 327

Radmacher, Allen & House say:

The slave **Onesimus** probably accompanied Tychicus to Colosse. Paul’s letter to Philemon would have been carried along with the letter to the Colossians. It dealt with a personal situation between Philemon and his slave Onesimus, so Paul wrote a separate letter to him.
p. 1569

Robertson says:

Co-bearer of the letter with Tychicus and praised on a par with him, runaway slave though he is. *Who is one of you . . .* Said not as reproach to Colossae for having such a man, but as a privilege to the church in Colossae to give a proper welcome to this returning converted slave and to treat him as a brother as Paul argues to Philemon.
pp. 510-11

Robertson says:

“Together with Onesimus, the faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you.” Onesimus went along with Tychicus and bore the Epistle to Philemon, who lived in Colossae and whose slave Onesimus still was. It is a wonderful story of the redemption of this runaway slave, whom he is now sending back to Philemon but with a skillful and irresistible plea for the freedom of Onesimus and treatment as a brother beloved in Christ and friend of Paul. He is here boldly bracketed by Paul with Tychicus and is delicately described as “one of you” and also as “the faithful and beloved brother,” language of the same flavor as that employed about Tychicus in Colossians 4:7 and Ephesians 6:21.
p. 134

Simpson & Bruce say:

Onesimus, unlike Tychicus, is not mentioned in Ephesians; he was bound for Colossae under the circumstances which we may learn in detail from the Epistle of Philemon. Onesimus was a slave of Philemon, who was a member of the Colossian church. He had run away from his master, and in Rome he came somehow into touch with Paul and through his ministry became a Christian. He quickly proved himself a devoted attendant and friend to the apostle while he remained with him, but when Tychicus’ journey to Asia provide a suitable opportunity, Paul sent Onesimus along with him, so that he might return to Philemon “no longer as a slave but more than a slave, as a beloved brother” (Philem. 16). It was necessary that the difference which had parted two men who were now fellow-Christians should be resolved in reconciliation.
p. 302

Sturz says:

Onesimus was a runaway slave on the way back to his master, Philemon. Conversion changed him from a useless slave into a faithful and beloved brother. In order to exalt him in the eyes of his master and the local church Paul uses almost the same description that he does of Tychicus (v. 7) and Epaphras (1:7). Even so, he deserved the praise of Paul; do we? Have we been faithful to God and man in all that we know and with which we have been entrusted?

pp. 120-1

Trentham says:

Onesimus was a native of Colossae and is called also “a faithful and beloved brother” (v. 9). He was the runaway slave whose story is recorded in Philemon. Calvin insisted that this could not be the same Onesimus because he was a fugitive and a thief. Yet, this background stands as strong evidence of the transforming grace of God. He has been forgiven now and is under no reproach. His past has been forgotten.

p. 169

(Exploring the Mind & Heart of the Prince of Preachers: Five-thousand illustrations under one-thousand topical headings from the works of C. H. Spurgeon by C. H. Spurgeon) Oswego, IL: Fox River Press. Copyright– Fox River Press, 2005.

A very hell of corruption lies within the nest saint; and if the grace of God did not restrain it, he would soon be found among the chief of sinners. 1639.33

If any man could see his own heart as it is by nature, he would be driven mad: the sight of our disease is not to be borne unless we also see the remedy.

2097.153

p. 117

(The Five Languages of Apology: How to Experience Healing in All Your Relationships by Gary Chapman & Jennifer Thomas) Chicago, IL: Northfield. Copyright – Gary Chapman & Jennifer Thomas, 2006.

AVOIDING THE ‘BUT . . .’

Sincere regret also needs to stand alone. It should not be followed with “But . . .” Rodney, who has been married three years to his second wife, says, “I know that my wife’s apology is sincere when she says, ‘I’m sorry. I know that I hurt you by yelling at you.’ Then she does not go on to accuse me of causing her to get upset. My first wife always blamed me for everything.”

Numerous individuals in our research made statements similar to this. “She apologizes, then blames her actions on something I did to provoke her. Blaming me does little to make the apology sincere.”

Brenda remembers well one of her husband’s failed attempts at apologizing—it happened the night before they would attend one of my marriage seminars. Her husband went to a coworker’s fiftieth birthday party, leaving Brenda at home with their four children. Because her husband normally worked a 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. shift, she had hoped for valuable evening time together.

“Even though I was angry, he left and said that he would be back in an hour,” Brenda recalls. “Two and one-half hours later when we were all in bed, he shows up. He apologized but added that I was acting like a baby and he has a right to go out.

“So whatever words he was saying to apologize weren’t helping, since he was putting me down. I also prayed that when he got home, I wouldn’t have a bad attitude. But I was so filled with anger that it didn’t work.”

Anytime we verbally shift the blame to the other person, we have moved from an apology to an attack. Attacks never lead to forgiveness and reconciliation.

p. 30

There are **THREE THINGS** Paul makes very clear about Onesimus. He is:

1. **“THE FAITHFUL,”**
2. **“BELOVED BROTHER,”** and
3. **“WHO IS ONE OF YOU”**—He is one of the local folks.

v.10 Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, greets you; and Mark, a cousin of Barnabas, concerning whom you received orders. If he should come to you, receive him.

The NET Bible then translates verse 10:

Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, sends you greetings, as does Mark, the cousin of Barnabas (about whom you received instructions; if he comes to you, welcome him).

Peterson paraphrases verse 10:

Aristarchus, who is in jail here with me, sends greetings; also Mark, cousin of Barnabas (you received a letter regarding him; if he shows up, welcome him);

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

4:10. Aristarchus was a Thessalonian who accompanied Paul on his third missionary journey . . . Being Paul's **fellow prisoner** meant either that Aristarchus attended Paul, or more likely, that he was incarcerated with Paul (probably also for preaching the gospel). Paul also called him a fellow worker (Phile. 24).

Mark, the cousin of Barnabas, was a companion on Paul's first missionary journey . . . He was later Peter's associate . . . Though Mark deserted Paul on the first missionary journey . . . Paul here commended him . . . as he did later (2 Tim 4:11).

We are pursuing the **BIOGRAPHIES** of the **TWELVE** folks that are mentioned here in these concluding verses of Colossians. We have looked at:

1. **TYCHICUS** and
2. **ONESIMUS**—the first two of the family.

Now we are going to see **THREE MORE FAMILY MEMBERS** here in verse 10:

3. **ARISTARCHUS,**
 4. **MARK,** and
 5. **BARNABAS.**
3. **ARISTARCHUS**—he was a real **SOLDIER OF THE CROSS.**

He was a Macedonian who traveled with Paul and faced the persecution in Ephesus.

2 Timothy 2:3-4 (KJV)

Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.

4. **MARK** comes to our attention here.

He was the one who got **HOMESICK** when traveling with the Apostle and Barnabas on their **FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY** and went back home again. Paul didn't have much use for him for some time after that. In the end, the Apostle was convinced that he had made good.

When it came time to go on the **SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY**:

PAUL chose **SILAS** because

BARNABAS had chosen **JOHN MARK**.

2 Timothy 4:11 (TLB)

Only Luke is with me. Bring Mark with you when you come, for I need him.

Just because Mark had a bad lap in the race of life, doesn't mean he can't make a go of it. He might have been **KNOCKED DOWN**, but certainly **NOT KNOCKED OUT**.

You see a similar situation in many of the **BIBLICAL CHARACTERS**:

ABRAHAM,

ISAAC,

JACOB,

ELIJAH, and

MOSES.

PETER, after his denial, was mightily used of God.

JONAH was likewise wonderfully used after running away.

DAVID finished strong in his life and his kingship, even though he paid a horrible price in his own family.

William Barker says of John in Saints in Aprons and Overalls: Friends of Paul:

John was a failure. He could not take it. He deserted and went home. It is bad to know in your own mind that you are a coward, and it is even more painful to know it is public information. When you are a deserter in the eyes of the world as well as in your own eyes, you do not have much self-respect left. It was as if John had *reject* or *unfit* or *unworthy* stamped on him. Everyone soon knew he was a failure and a disgrace. He was probably pointed at and laughed at as the kid who could not take it. John found himself left with a reputation to live down.

A man is not worth much, however, until he has been beaten to his knees by life and finds he cannot take it. A man never knows much until he knows how weak he is and how little he can do and how much he needs help. Only then is he in a position to know how much he needs God. Only when a man is beaten down to his knees is he in a position to know how much God can do.

p. 38

Philippians 3:13-14 could well be the verses that became **MARK'S MOTTO**.

Philippians 3:13-14 (TLB)

No, dear brothers, I am still not all I should be but I am bringing all my energies to bear on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I strain to reach the end of the race and receive the prize for which God is calling us up to heaven because of what Christ Jesus did for us.

When Paul and Barnabas returned to Jerusalem after their first missionary journey, Barnabas felt like John Mark had learned his lesson and wanted to take him with them on the next journey. Paul would have nothing to do with him. It was at this point Barnabas took Mark and went on their own journey and Paul picked up Silas as a traveling partner.

(The Five Languages of Apology: How to Experience Healing in All Your Relationships by Gary Chapman & Jennifer Thomas) Chicago, IL: Northfield. Copyright – Gary Chapman & Jennifer Thomas, 2006.

When in our efforts to change we “fall off the wagon,” we must admit our failure as quickly as possible. Get up and try again. This is one of the reasons why Alcoholics Anonymous has been so successful in helping people overcome addiction to alcohol. One of the twelve steps is: “Admit to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.”¹ Admitting wrong and confessing that wrong to God and another trusted person does require both humility and honesty but gives the opportunity to begin anew.

1. “How It Works,” *Alcoholics Anonymous* (New York: Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc., 1976), 59.
p. 83

Verse 10 concludes with the following words:

“CONCERNING WHOM YOU RECEIVED ORDERS. IF HE SHOULD COME TO YOU, RECEIVE HIM.”

Paul is making sure here that Mark’s past won’t stand in his way of an effective ministry.

William Barker says in *Saints in Aprons and Overalls: Friends of Paul*:

Although he had fizzled initially, John Mark later burned with a constant, intense glow. It was he who first gathered up all the reminiscences of Peter and all the eyewitness stories of Jesus he could remember. Today we call that masterpiece of reporting, “The Gospel According to St. Mark.”

Many years after that, even Paul, who had been so disgusted with John Mark when he flinched, wrote to a friend asking him to bring John Mark with him, adding the words, “for he is useful . . .” Even tough, crusty old Paul willingly admitted in the end that John Mark had found a purpose and was no longer a religious bum.

p. 42

Barclay says of Aristarchus:

He is a good man in a tight corner. He was man on the spot when things were the grimmest. Whenever Paul was in bad trouble, Aristarchus was always there.

(source unknown)

5. **BARNABAS**—he was an uncle to John Mark.

While we are pursuing all in the family, we have looked at:

1. **TYCHICUS,**
2. **ONESIMUS,**
3. **ARISTARCHUS,** and
4. **MARK.**

Now let's take just a brief moment to look at:

5. **BARNABAS**—the son of encouragement.

Barnabas certainly lived up to his name. When Saul of Tarsus, who became Paul, came to Jerusalem after his experience with the Lord in Damascus, he wanted to associate with the believers in Jerusalem. They were scared and suspicious of him. Barnabas would be the one who would build the bridge of relationship. The new convert was introduced to these fellow believers by Barnabas.

Barnabas was sent by the church to Antioch. The scripture says in:

Acts 11:24 (NASB)

for he was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. . . .

The Lord prospered his ministry there in Antioch and so he left to find the Apostle Paul in Tarsus and brought him back to have an effective and faithful ministry in Antioch.

Because of a famine in Judea, Paul and Barnabas were picked to carry the offering to Jerusalem.

The church in Antioch commissioned Paul, Barnabas, and John Mark to go on the first missionary journey.

Part way through that journey, John Mark left Paul and Barnabas to carry on the ministry and complete that first journey.

While back in the church in Antioch reporting of the results of their first journey, there was a huge contention between those who believed you had to be circumcised and keep parts of the law in order to be a believer if you were a Gentile. This resulted in the church in Antioch sending Paul, Barnabas and Titus (a Gentile believer) to the Jerusalem council.

Paul and Barnabas were extended the right hand of Christian fellowship by the church in Jerusalem and went back with the good news to the Gentiles that it is Jesus and Jesus only that provides eternal salvation.

Peter was so impressed with the church in Antioch he wanted to see it firsthand. When he arrived there, he chose to eat with the Jewish believers rather than the Gentiles. His influence even affected Barnabas who withdrew from the Gentiles. Paul confronted them with Gospel of the grace of God.

I think it was probably that failure on Barnabas' part that caused the conflict that took place when it was time to go on the second missionary journey. Barnabas was desirous of taking John Mark on the journey and Paul would have nothing to do with it. There was a sharp contention between them.

Paul and Silas went on their own journey. Barnabas and John Mark went on their own journey as well.

We don't have anything else Biblically that would tell us of the future of Barnabas other than we know for certain that his nephew was profitable to ministry. I'm sure he and uncle Barnabas spent a lot of time talking and praying about their future and how the Lord is going to use them.

In my mind's eye I see once again a man who had a bad lap, but by the grace of God he finished strong.

MacArthur says:

4:10 *Aristarchus*. The Greek name of a Jewish . . . native of Thessalonica . . . He was one of Paul's companions who was seized by a rioting mob in Ephesus . . . and also accompanied Paul on his trip to Jerusalem and his voyage to Rome . . .

p. 1746

Barker & Kohlenberger say:

10-11 In vv. 10-15 six persons join in sending greetings to the Colossian church.

p. 841

Bruce says:

Greetings are now sent to the Colossian church from six of Paul's friends who are in his company while this letter is being written: three of Jewish birth (Aristarchus, Mark, and Jesus Justus) and three of Gentile birth (Epaphras, Luke, and Demas).

p. 178

Bruce says:

Greetings are sent also from Mark, another of Paul's companions at the time. It is from this reference alone that we learn that Mark was Barnabas's cousin—a piece of information which throws light on the special consideration which Barnabas gives to Mark in the narrative of Acts. Between twelve and fourteen years previously Mark had disgraced himself in Paul's eyes by deserting him and Barnabas at Perga instead of going up-country with them to evangelize the cities of South Galatia. By this time, however (no doubt in great measure owing to the kindly tutelage of Barnabas, the "son of encouragement," as the Jerusalem apostles called him), he had redeemed his reputation.

p. 179

Henry says:

Paul had a quarrel with Barnabas upon the account of this Mark, yet Paul is not only reconciled to him himself, but recommends him to the respect of the churches. If men have been guilty of a fault, it must not be always remembered against them. We must forget as well as forgive.

p. 1875

Ironside says:

Of Aristarchus, whom Paul here calls his fellow-prisoner, we read in Acts 19 that he was a Macedonian travelling with Paul, and endangered his very life on behalf of the gospel at the time of the uproar in Ephesus. He is also mentioned again in Philemon 24 as a fellow-laborer with the apostle. His name would imply that he was of the so-called upper classes, an aristocrat of Macedonia, who for the sake of the kingdom of God had renounced his place of prominence in the world to become a bondman of Jesus Christ.
pp. 179-80

Ironside says:

We are glad to see the affectionate way in which Paul here writes of Marcus, the nephew of Barnabas. Years before, this young man had been the cause of serious contention between these two devoted men of God. Paul had lost confidence in John Mark because of his leaving the work and returning to his mother in Jerusalem, upon the completion of the evangelistic tour in Cyprus. Barnabas, kindly in spirit and evidently moved by natural affection, wanted to give the unfaithful helper a second chance, but Paul was obdurate. He felt he could not afford to jeopardize the success of their work by again taking with them one who had proved himself a weakling. Which one really had the mind of God, we are not told; but we are thankful indeed to find that Mark “made good” as we say, and became a trusted and honored man of God; companion to Peter . . . and dear to Paul as well as to his uncle Barnabas. He is again mentioned in Philemon 24 as a fellow-laborer, and Paul requests Timothy to bring Mark with him, in 2 Timothy 4:11.
p. 180

Jamieson, Fausset & Brown say:

10. Aristarchus—a Macedonian of Thessalonica (Acts 27:2), who was dragged into the theater at Ephesus, during the tumult with Gaius, they being “Paul’s companions in travel.” He accompanied Paul to Asia (Acts 20:4), and subsequently (Acts 27:2) to Rome.
p. 1327

Jamieson, Fausset & Brown say:

The substance of them was, "If he come unto you, receive him." Paul's rejection of him on his second missionary journey, because he had turned back at Perga on the first journey (Acts 13:13; 15:37-39), had caused an alienation between himself and Barnabas. Christian love soon healed the breach; for here he implies his restored confidence in Mark, makes honorable allusion to Barnabas, and desires that those at Colosse who had regarded Mark in consequence of that past error with suspicion, should now "receive" him with kindness.

p. 1328

Lange says:

"Touching whom," Mark, not Barnabas (THEOPHYLACT): "ye received commandments" refers to a fact of earlier date, of which they are reminded. What, from whom, when and how? is and remains undetermined.

p. 84

Lightfoot says:

10-14. 'I send you greeting from Aristarchus who is a fellow-prisoner with me; from Marcus, Barnabas' cousin, concerning whom I have already sent you directions, that you welcome him heartily, if he pays you a visit; and from Jesus, surnamed Justus; all three Hebrew converts. They alone of their fellow-countrymen have worked loyally with me in spreading the kingdom of God; and their stedfastness has indeed been a comfort to me in the hour of trial.

Greeting also from Epaphras, your fellow-townsmen, a true servant of Christ, who is ever wrestling in his prayers on your behalf, that ye may stand firm in the faith, perfectly instructed and fully convinced in every will and purpose of God. I bear testimony to the earnestness with which he labours for you and the brethren of Laodicea and those of Hieropolis. Greeting also from Luke the physican, my very dear friend, and from Demas.'

pp. 235-6

MacArthur says:

After having fallen out of favor with Paul for some time, Mark is seen here as one of Paul's key helpers . . .
p. 1746

MacArthur says:

We might also call Mark the man with a second chance. His life was a testimony to God's ability to use failures. In fact, he later received a privilege shared by only three other men in history: writing one of the gospels.
p. 195

McGee says:

"Marcus" is John Mark, the nephew of Barnabas—the son of his sister. He is the writer of the Gospel of Mark. You will remember that Mark left Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey, and because of this Paul didn't want to take him along on the second missionary journey. Paul was wrong in his judgment of John Mark. The boy made good, and Paul acknowledges that here. Paul gives the Colossians instructions, "Don't reject him like I did. You folks receive him." Paul mentions John Mark again in his second letter to Timothy: ". . . Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry" (2 Tim. 4:11).
p. 364

Melick says:

Paul continued the closing by sending greetings from five men who were with him in Rome. They obviously had a close relationship with both Paul and the church. In some cases, the connection with Paul is clear, but history is silent on the connection with the church.
p. 328

O'Brien says:

10. Greetings are now sent to the Colossian congregation by six of Paul's companions who are with him at the time of writing: three are of Jewish birth (Aristarchus, Mark and Jesus Justus) and three of Gentile birth (Epaphras, Luke and Demas). This list of greetings is surprisingly long and should be compared with Romans 16, although in the latter passage the greetings are, in the main, mostly from Paul to various individuals at Rome . . .
p. 248

Patrick & Lowth say:

6 Ver. 10 . . . It seems evident hence, that Paul's displeasure against him, mentioned Acts xv. 38, lasted not long; for he desires Timothy to bring him with him, as being "profitable to him for the ministry," 2 Tim. iv. 11, and styles him his "fellow-labourer," Philem. 24.
p. 794

Patzia says:

Aristarchus . . . Mark . . . and Justus . . . are identified by Paul as **the only Jews among my fellow workers for the kingdom of God**. One can almost detect a note of pathos in Paul's statement, since he must have expected a larger number of Jewish Christians to become his co-workers. Nevertheless, he is deeply appreciative for the personal assistance that they have given to him. **Comfort . . .** may best express the feeling of gratitude that Paul has for these three individuals.
p. 99

Pickell says:

The Apostle now sends greetings from Aristarchus, Mark, and Justus, who were apparently the only Jewish Christians willing to support his labors. As such they were particularly dear to him and a source of great comfort.
p. 67

Radmacher, Allen & House say:

Aristarchus, a Jew from Thessalonica, had been traveling with Paul since the riot that occurred in Ephesus on his third missionary journey (Acts 19:29; 20:4). Evidently he remained with Paul even when he was imprisoned in Rome (27:2).

p. 1569

Simpson & Bruce say:

Greetings are now sent to the Colossian church from six Christian men who are in Paul's company while he is writing—three of Jewish birth (Aristarchus, Mark and Jesus Justus) and three of Gentile birth (Epaphras, Luke and Demas).

p. 304

Trentham says:

Aristarchus was a native of Thessalonica and a Jew by birth. He is called the "fellow captive," which meant he willingly shared the bondage of all believers in Christ. The conquering Christ had laid claim to him.

Three times Aristarchus stood out in the New Testament. The first was during the riot in Ephesus in the Temple of Diana when he was captured by the mob (Acts 19:29). The second was when Paul set sail as a prisoner for Rome (Acts 27:2). Finally, he was found with Paul in Rome. It seemed that he was the stalwart friend in the time of crisis, a man upon whom Paul could count in his hour of need, a strong defender of the faith, always on hand when he was needed.

p. 169

Trentham says:

Then Paul mentions Mark, the cousin of Barnabas, who deserted Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey. Paul was so distressed that he refused to take him on his second missionary journey. Clearly, however, the intervening years have healed the rift. Mark now is the quitter who quit quitting. He is with Paul in his first imprisonment. Paul, therefore, instructs the congregation to welcome Mark. This may mean that the churches now were reluctant to receive him because of his previous desertion.
pp. 169-70

Wiersbe says:

Serving (10-18). Paul names six men who were working at his side and encouraging him in the Lord. Even an apostle cannot get the job done alone, and how grateful he was for the saints serving faithfully in Colosse!
p. 786

(Thirsting for God: Spiritual Refreshment for the Sacred Journey by Gary L. Thomas) Eugene, OR: Harvest House. Copyright– Gary Thomas, 1999/2011.

Surprisingly enough, Christian writers from centuries past found some measure of comfort in the difficulty of satanic opposition. Climacus, who warned of the reality of demonic opposition, also reminded us that being shot at is evidence that we are fighting. The Christian should not fear this difficulty—it is a sign of progress. Instead, we should fear the lack of opposition, for its absence means the enemy has found us unworthy of opposition.
p. 203

(Voices from the Past: Puritan Devotional Readings edited by Richard Rushing) Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust. Copyright– Richard Rushing, 2009.

Blessed is that man, though attacked on all sides, that has maintained his ground with firmness. He has exhausted the devil’s quiver of all its arrows and yet exhibits no symptoms of surrendering.
p. 180

(Thirsting for God: Spiritual Refreshment for the Sacred Journey by Gary L. Thomas) Eugene, OR: Harvest House. Copyright– Gary Thomas, 1999/2011.

The Twin Pillars of Humility: Our Lowliness and God’s Greatness

According to the great Reformed theologian John Owen, the twin pillars of a truly Christian spirituality are rooted in humility: “Two things are needed to humble us. First, let us consider God in His greatness, glory, holiness, power, majesty, and authority. Then, let us consider ourselves in our mean, abject, and sinful condition.”¹ The spiritual writers speak with virtual unanimity on the need to be shaken in the depths of our being by God’s grandeur and our poverty. These twin pillars can be combined into one word: *humility*.

Fénelon wrote, “All the saints are convinced that sincere humility is the foundation of all virtues. This is because humility is the daughter of pure charity, and humility is nothing else but truth. There are only two truths in the world, that God is all, and the creature is nothing.”²

1. John Owen, *Sin and Temptation* (Portland: Multnomah, 1983), 28.
 2. Francois Fénelon, *Christian Perfection*, (1704-1717) 205.
- p. 132

v.11 And Jesus, the one called Justus, who are of the circumcision; these only are my fellow workers in the kingdom of God; those who have been a comfort to me.

The NET Bible then translates verse 11:

And Jesus who is called Justus also sends greetings. In terms of Jewish converts, these are the only fellow workers for the kingdom of God, and they have been a comfort to me.

Peterson paraphrases verse 11:

and also Jesus, the one they call Justus. These are the only ones left from the old crowd who have stuck with me in working for God's kingdom. Don't think they haven't been a big help!

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

4:11. **Jesus** was a common Jewish name. This companion of Paul's was also called **Justus** ("righteous"), also a common name (Acts 1:23; 18:7). These three—Aristarchus, Mark, and Justus— were **Jews** (lit., "of the circumcision") by either birth or conversion (proselytism). These three **fellow workers for the kingdom of God** comforted or consoled Paul by their loving loyalty to him. **Comfort** is the unusual word *parēgoria* ("relief, consolation"), found only here in the New Testament.

The **SIXTH MEMBER OF THE FAMILY** now appears:

6. **JESUS JUSTUS.**

We know very little of him. It is mentioned he was a great **“COMFORT”** along with Aristarchus and Mark.

The **THREE OF THEM** were:

“OF THE CIRCUMCISION; THESE ONLY ARE MY FELLOW WORKERS IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD; THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN A COMFORT TO ME.”

We don't know anything about **JESUS JUSTUS**, only that he was one of Paul's associates.

He certainly had a **NOBLE NAME**. We, too, have a noble name in that we are called **CHRISTIANS**.

James 2:7 (TLB)

And all too often they are the ones who laugh at Jesus Christ, whose noble name you bear.

As far as the **“CIRCUMCISION”** is concerned, they are the only ones **“WHO HAS BEEN A COMFORT TO ME”** because they have found Christ to be sufficient to meet all of their needs and they haven't had to pursue any performance of the law for their salvation.

Barker & Kohlenberger say:

There is a note of pathos in Paul's remark about these three: "These are the only Jews among my fellow workers for the kingdom of God." Paul felt keenly his alienation from his countrymen . . . But these three, he adds, "have proved a comfort to me," perhaps in a particular time of crisis when they stood by Paul.

p. 841

Bruce says:

These three men—Aristarchus, Mark, and Jesus Justus—were the only Christians of Jewish birth who were actively cooperating with Paul in his gospel witness at this time: "my fellow-workers for the kingdom of God," he calls them.

p. 180

Carson says:

Paul obviously does not mean by *these only* that the Gentile believers, whose names will follow, were not also fellow-workers (see Phm. 24). He is rather singling out these Jewish Christians from the rest of the circumcision party from whom he always met opposition. There is an incidental reference to Paul's affectionate nature as he speaks of the help of those who had been *a comfort* to him in his affliction.

p. 99

Henry says:

Here is one who is called *Jesus*, which is the Greek name for the Hebrew *Joshua*. *Who is called Justus*. *These are my fellow-labourers unto the kingdom of God, who have been a comfort unto me*. One is his fellow-servant, another his fellow-prisoner, and all his fellow-workers.

p. 1875

Lange says:

These three were Jews, who were attached to the Apostle to the Gentiles.—**Only these are my fellow workers unto the kingdom of God.**—He thus gives a motive for the last clause; Jewish Christian teachers were mostly anti-Pauline in their labors (Phil. i. 15, 17), hence he adds as a result for himself, and to distinguish them from such as were indeed fellow laborers for the kingdom of God, but not such as he could find comfort in: **which have been a comfort unto me.**

p. 84

O'Brien says:

These three men are said to be the only Jewish Christians who have remained faithful fellow-workers of Paul for the kingdom of God (the expression . . . “those of the circumcision,” is best connected with what follows . . . “these alone,” so Abbott, 301, and Meyer, 473; note Moule’s discussion, 137). The expression . . . “those of the circumcision,” is normally taken to refer to Jewish Christians generally . . .

p. 251

Simpson & Bruce say:

These three men—Aristarchus, Mark and Jesus Justus—were the only Christians of Jewish birth who were actively cooperating with Paul in his gospel witness at this time. “Fellow-workers for the kingdom of God,” he called them. When Paul speaks of the kingdom of God he usually thinks of its future manifestation, retaining such an expression as “the kingdom of Christ” for its present aspect.

p. 306

v.12 Epaphras greets you, who is one of you, a bonds slave of Christ Jesus, always wrestling for you in his prayers, in order that you might stand full grown and fully assured in all the will of God.

The NET Bible then translates verse 12:

Epaphras, who is one of you and a slave of Christ, greets you. He is always struggling in prayer on your behalf, so that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God.

Peterson paraphrases verse 12:

Epaphras, who is one of you, says hello. What a trooper he has been! He's been tireless in his prayers for you, praying that you'll stand firm, mature and confident in everything God wants you to do.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

4:12-13. Epaphras, like Onesimus (v. 9), was a Colossian (**one of you**) whom Paul depicted as **a servant of Christ Jesus** who was **always wrestling** (agōnizomenos; cf. 1:29) **in prayer** (as Jacob did with the angel; Gen. 32) **for the Colossians**. His concern was that the Colossians would **stand firm in God's will . . . mature** (*teleioi*, "perfected") **and fully assured . . .** or fulfilled. This fits the overall theme of Colossians: that believers be mature, perfected in Christ.

The next person in the family is:

7. **EPAPHRAS**

Paul identifies him as **ONE OF THE COLOSSIANS**. He also identifies him as:

“A BONDSLAVE OF CHRIST JESUS, ALWAYS WRESTLING FOR YOU IN HIS PRAYERS.”

The **PURPOSE** of his prayers for the Colossian saints:

“IN ORDER THAT YOU MIGHT STAND FULL GROWN AND FULLY ASSURED IN ALL THE WILL OF GOD.”

We met **EPAPHRAS** in:

Colossians 1:7 (DAV)

even as you learned from Epaphras, the beloved, our fellow bond-slave, who is faithful on your behalf as a servant of Christ,

Epaphras is the minister of the church in Colosse. He has gone to Rome to fill Paul in on the problem in Colosse and to seek his help and advice on how to handle the heresy of **GNOSTICISM**.

Notice Paul says he **“IS ONE OF YOU”** here again, like he said of Onesimus.

Epaphras is likewise a part of the body of Christ and is a part of their group there in Colosse.

The **PRAYER LIFE** of Epaphras comes up here for recognition as he is **“ALWAYS WRESTLING FOR YOU IN HIS PRAYERS.”**

I am sure that Epaphras is following the example of the great Apostle in this area as the Apostle was a real man of prayer.

Colossians 1:29 (DAV)

For which also I am toiling, striving according to (controlled by) His energy, which energy is operating in me in power.

How little do we know of agonizing wrestling with the Lord in prayer?

This certainly is a wonderful verse upon which to build our prayer lives.

The **PURPOSE** in his prayer is:

“IN ORDER THAT YOU MIGHT STAND FULL GROWN AND FULLY ASSURED IN ALL THE WILL OF GOD.”

This sounds like the Apostle Paul’s prayer in:

Colossians 1:9 (DAV)

. . . in order that you might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding,

Chrysostom said:

It is not enough simply to do his will. He that is filled suffereth not any other will to be within him. For if so, he is not wholly filled.
(source unknown)

He is praying that they might go on to maturity in Christ and become **“FULL GROWN” SPIRITUALLY**. Then that will have confidence and assurance they are performing the Lord’s will in their lives.

Colossians 1:28 (DAV)

. . . in order that we may present every man mature in Christ.

In his legacy, Epaphras has **FOUR THINGS**:

1. **FAITHFUL MINISTER,**
2. **FELLOW PRISONER,**
3. **WRESTLER IN PRAYER,** and
4. **SERVANT OF CHRIST JESUS.**

Barker & Kohlenberger say:

Paul reminds the Colossians that Epaphras was continually “wrestling” . . . for them in his prayers. He was concerned that they stand firm, mature, and fully convinced in relation to everything God wills. Undoubtedly he had in mind the possibility of their wavering under the influence of the heretical teaching at Colosse.
p. 842

Barton, Fackler, Taylor & Veerman say:

PRAYER WARRIOR

If you think prayer is too passive for such an energetic person as yourself, think of Epaphras, the prayer warrior.

If you think prayer is too isolated and individualistic for such a social creature as yourself, think of Epaphras.

If you think prayer accomplishes little more than venting frustrations to some cosmic ear, think of Epaphras, who wrestled in prayer.

This strong leader spent energy in prayer for people he loved, and God enriched their lives as a result.

Your prayers count. Don't ignore the Christian's unique invitation to address the heart of almighty God to prayer for others. Pray often. Pray with passion.

p. 236

Calvin says:

Here we have an example of a good pastor, whom distance of place cannot induce to forget the Church, so as to prevent him from taking the care of it with him beyond the sea. We must notice, also, the strength of entreaty that is expressed in the word *striving*. For although the Apostle had it in view here to express intensity of affection, he at the same time admonishes the Colossians not to look upon the prayers of their pastor as useless, but, on the contrary, to reckon that they would afford them no small assistance. Lastly, let us infer from Paul's words, that the *perfection* of Christians is, when they *stand complete in the will of God*, that they may not suspend their scheme of life upon anything else.

p. 229

Henry says:

Epaphras has learned of Paul to be much in prayer for his friends. We must be earnest in prayer, not only for ourselves, but for others also. *That you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.* To stand perfect and complete in the will of God is what we should earnestly desire both for ourselves and others. He had a great zeal for them: *"I bear him record."* And his zeal extended to all about them: to *those who are in Laodicea and Hieropolis.*

p. 1875

Ironside says:

Of Epaphras we have already had the apostle's estimate in chapter 1:7. Here he draws special attention to this man's fervency in prayer. It was he who had come from Colosse to visit Paul and to acquaint him with the conditions that called forth this letter. That he had some ability as a preacher and teacher we know, for it was through his ministry these Colossians had been won to Christ and the assembly formed there; but his greatest ministry was evidently one of prayer. In that he labored fervently, striving earnestly in supplication before God, so deeply concerned was he for the saints that they might enter into the truth in all its fulness and thus in practical experience stand as full-grown and filled full, or complete, in all the will of God. In this prayer Paul joined, as we have seen in chap. 1:9. This earnest apostle of prayer, Epaphras, had not confined his ministry or interest in Colosse, but he bore in his heart, in the same intense zeal, the neighboring assemblies of Laodicea and Hieropolis.

p. 182

Melick says:

In 1:7 Paul mentioned Epaphras as the one who brought greetings from the church to Paul. There Paul identified him as the one who brought them the gospel, a fellow-servant, and a faithful minister. In 4:12 Paul added that he was "one of them," a prayer warrior, and a diligent worker on their behalf. Epaphras's name occurs in Philemon as well. There Paul stated that he was a fellow-prisoner (Phlm 23).

Epaphras brought the gospel to Colosse. No doubt he was at least one of the evangelists of the Lycus valley. No one knows how or where he met Paul, but a strong friendship developed. Most likely, he met Paul while Paul taught at Ephesus, some one hundred miles west of Colosse, and returned home with the good news. At some point, he left Colosse and joined Paul in order to help him in his difficulties. The church probably sent him on its behalf since Paul inferred as much in Col 4:13. Since he worked diligently for three Christian communities (Colosse, Laodicea, and Hierapolis), they may have joined together to sponsor him as a tangible support for Paul.

p. 329

Wuest says:

“Laboring fervently” is . . . “to contend in the gymnastic games, to contend with adversaries,” figuratively, “to contend, struggle with difficulties and dangers antagonistic to the gospel.” Lightfoot translates, “wrestling,” Vincent, “striving.” “Stand” is . . . “to stand fast.” “Perfect” is . . . “complete, spiritually mature, full-grown.” The word does not mean “sinless.” “Complete” is the perfect participle of . . . “to bear or bring to the full, to carry through to the end, to make full, to persuade, fully convince.” Lightfoot translates, “fully persuaded.” Vincent quotes the Revision, “fully assured.” pp. 237-8

(Exploring the Mind & Heart of the Prince of Preachers: Five-thousand illustrations under one-thousand topical headings from the works of C. H. Spurgeon by C. H. Spurgeon) Oswego, IL: Fox River Press. Copyright– Fox River Press, 2005.

Early rising has the example of Old Testament saints to recommend it, and many modern saints having conscientiously practised it, have been loud in its praise. It is an economy of time, and an assistance to health, and thus it doubly lengthens life. Late rising is too often the token of indolence, and the cause of disorder throughout the whole day. 996.337

The old proverb declares that they who would be rich must rise early; surely those who would be rich towards God must do so. 1138.592

A child of God should not leave his bedroom in the morning without being on good terms with his God. 2090.335
p. 128

(Exploring the Mind & Heart of the Prince of Preachers: Five-thousand illustrations under one-thousand topical headings from the works of C. H. Spurgeon by C. H. Spurgeon) Oswego, IL: Fox River Press. Copyright– Fox River Press, 2005.

Our first word should be with our heavenly Father. It is good for the soul's health to begin the day by taking a satisfying draught from the river of the water of life. Very much more depends upon beginnings than some men think. How you go to bed to-night may be determined by your getting up this morning. If you get out of bed on the wrong side, you may keep on the wrong side all the day. Of your heart be right in the walking, it will be a help towards its being right till sleeping. Go not forth into a dry world till the morning dew lies on thy branch. Baptize thy heart in devotion ere thou wade into the stream of daily care. See not the face of man until thou hast first seen the face of God. Let thy first thoughts fly heavenward, and let thy first breathings be prayer. 2150.340
pp. 128-9

(Smooth Stones Taken from Ancient Books: Being a collection of sentences, illustrations, and quaint sayings from that renowned Puritan, Thomas Brooks by C.H. Spurgeon) Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust. Copyright– Banner of Truth Trust, 2011.

Oh, the power of private prayer! it hath, a kind of omnipotency in it, it takes God captive, it holds him as a prisoner, it binds the hands of the Almighty, yea, it will ring a mercy, a blessing out of the hand of Heaven itself.
p. 143

God lades the wings of private prayer with the sweetest, choicest, and chiefest blessings. Ah! how often hath God kissed the poor Christian at the beginning of private prayer, spoken peace to him in the midst of his prayer, and filled him with light, joy, and assurance upon its close!
p. 194

(Exploring the Mind & Heart of the Prince of Preachers: Five-thousand illustrations under one-thousand topical headings from the works of C. H. Spurgeon by C. H. Spurgeon) Oswego, IL: Fox River Press. Copyright– Fox River Press, 2005.

We are not what we might be, we are not what we should be, we are not what we shall be, we are not what we wish to be. 793.61
p. 295

I would be nothing but what he makes me, I would have nothing but what he gives me, I would ask nothing but what he promises me, I would trust in nothing but what he has done for me, and I would desire nothing but what he has prepared for me. 1015.574
p. 295

We cannot all argue, but we can all pray; we cannot all be leaders, but we can all be pleaders; we cannot all be mighty in rhetoric, but we can all be prevalent in prayer. AM314
p. 357

Prayer irrigates the fields of life with the waters which are stored up in the reservoirs of promise. AP59
p. 357

(Voices from the Past: Puritan Devotional Readings edited by Richard Rushing) Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust. Copyright– Richard Rushing, 2009.

The pious desires still more. A drop of water is not enough for thirsty travellers. We are thankful for grace received, but desire more: more knowledge, purity, and more of Christ's presence. We long to see him face to face, and be perfected in glory; to plunge into his sweetness and be swallowed up in him; and to bathe ourselves in the perfumed waters of his pleasures. At first, faith is small. It is full of doubts and fears. As it grows, it will trust God to work a miracle rather than to allow his promises to fail.
p. 251

(Life on the Highest Plane: A Study of the Spiritual Nature and Needs of Man by Ruth Paxson) Chicago, IL: Moody Press. Copyright—The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago, 1928.

The Holy Spirit working within the believer enables the risen Lord to continue from the throne the work of sanctification begun in the believer at the cross. The spiritual man yields unconditionally to the Spirit's power as He works out God's full purpose in him.

God, the Father, works through His Son, by the Holy Spirit, to carry out His will of complete sanctification.

p. 287

Do you desire to see a manifestation of first-century power in your church? If so, are you willing to return to first-century methods which will mean the revival of corporate intercession in your church?

p. 400

(Life on the Highest Plane: A Study of the Spiritual Nature and Needs of Man by Ruth Paxson) Chicago, IL: Moody Press. Copyright—The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago, 1928.

Has my prayer life been *powerless* because of some besetting sin?

Has my prayer life been *hindered* by haste, irregularity, indefiniteness, insufficient preparation, unbelief, neglect of Bible study?

Has my prayer life been *fruitless*? Have I had such power with God that I have had power with people? Have I had definite answers to prayer week by week?

Has my prayer life been *restricted* merely to short, stated seasons of prayer or have I come to know what it is to “pray without ceasing?”

Has my prayer life been *limited* to prayer for myself? My family? My work? My church? My mission? Or have I taken the world into my heart and into my prayers?

Has my prayer life been *starved*? Or have I devoted time to the study of God’s Word about prayer? Do I know His precepts and promises?

Has my prayer life been *joyless*? Do I love to pray? Or is prayer more of a duty than a delight?

Has my prayer life been *growing*? Do I daily know more of the meaning and power of prayer?

Has my prayer life been *sacrificial*? Has it cost me anything in time, strength, vitality, love?

“Lord, teach us to pray.”

p. 413

v.13 For I am bearing witness of him that he has toiled (worked hard) for you and those in Laodicea and those in Hierapolis.

The NET Bible then translates verse 13:

For I can testify that he has worked hard for you and for those in Laodicea and Hierapolis.

Peterson paraphrases verse 13:

I've watched him closely, and can report on how hard he has worked for you and for those in Laodicea and Hierapolis.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

Epaphras' prayerful concern went to the point of **working hard** (lit., "has much pain"; *ponon*, "pain or distress," is used only here and in Rev. 16:10-11). His painful labor was for all the believers in the Lycus Valley—those in Colosse, **Laodicea, and Hierapolis** (see the location of these three on the map between Acts and Rom.).

He is still speaking of **EPAPHRAS** here and says that he is a **HARD WORKER**. He is just not concerned about Colosse, but for the other two cities in the Lycus Valley as well:

“LAODICEA” and

“HIERAPOLIS.”

The Lord has given him a real burden and vision for these other cities that are close by that have not had an opportunity to hear about the Lord Jesus.

He is following the plan for **EVANGELISM** of the Lord Jesus Christ that he outlined in his final words in:

Acts 1:8 (KJV)

But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem [which was the hometown for these folks], and in all Judaea [which was the surrounding county], and in Samaria [which was a city to the north], and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Epaphras was not just content to minister and labor and pray for the work of the Lord to be accomplished in Colosse, but also he had a burden for these other cities.

Lovett says:

HIEROPOLIS. Hieropolis and Laodicea were about six miles apart facing each other across the Lycus River. Colosse was another ten miles upstream. Hieropolis means “sacred city,” and as such was the center of worship for the Phrygian goddess Cybelle. However, it owed its fame to its mineral baths. Dr. Luke, it is believed, served his profession in this area around the time Paul became sick. Consequently it would be in order to refer to his medical profession in writing to men of that region.
p. 197

(Smooth Stones Taken from Ancient Books: Being a collection of sentences, illustrations, and quaint sayings from that renowned Puritan, Thomas Brooks by C.H. Spurgeon) Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust. Copyright– Banner of Truth Trust, 2011.

Perseverance is not a particular distinct grace of itself, but such a virtue as crowns all virtue; it is such a grace as casts a general beauty and glory upon every grace; it is a grace that leads every grace on to perfection.
p. 77

A lazy Christian will always want four things—comfort, contentment, confidence, and assurance. Assurance and joy are choice donatives that Christ gives to laborious Christians only. The lazy Christian has his mouth full of complaints, when the active Christian has his heart full of comforts.
p. 83

Epaphras, as a result of his “wrestling . . . in his prayers” had a passion for the tri-cities in the Lycus Valley—not only Colosse but also Hierapolis and Laodicea.

v.14 Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas greet you.

The NET Bible then translates verse 14:

Our dear friend Luke the physician and Demas greet you.

Peterson paraphrases verse 14:

Luke, good friend and physician, and Demas both send greetings.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

4:14. Luke, Paul's **dear friend** and **doctor**, stood firm not only in this earlier imprisonment but also in Paul's latter imprisonment, by which time **Demas** (here with Paul) had forsaken him (2 Tim. 4:10). Luke is the author of the Third Gospel and of Acts . . . By tradition he was one of the 72 . . . Some also suggest he was the anonymous disciple on the Emmaus Road . . . Since the only men with Paul who were "of the circumcision" were Aristarchus, Mark, and Jesus (Justus), Luke may have been a Gentile.

In verse 14 we get **TWO MORE FAMILY NAMES**. We have looked together at **SEVEN** of them so far. We now have:

8. **DOCTOR LUKE** and
9. **DEMAS.**

Here are two more of the Apostle Paul's **"fellow workers"**:

8. **"LUKE, THE BELOVED PHYSICIAN"**

He was certainly a close companion to the Apostle Paul and ministered to his physical needs for the sake of the Gospel. He also traveled with Paul on some of his trips. He is the one who is responsible for writing the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts under divine inspiration.

Doctor Luke stayed with the Apostle right up until the end.

2 Timothy 4:11 (NASB)

Only Luke is with me. Pick up Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for service.

9. **“DEMAS”****“AND DEMAS GREET YOU.”****DEMAS THE DESERTER.**

We read in:

2 Timothy 4:10 (DAV)

For Demas deserted me, having loved this present world, and gone to Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia; Titus to Dalmatia.

Demas will never be able to hear from the Lord:

“Well done thou good and faithful servant. Enter into the joys I have prepared for you.”

Nor will he ever be able to have someone say at his funeral:

“He fought a good fight. He finished the course. He kept the faith.”

One translator translates:

2 Timothy 4:10

For Demas has left me. He loved the good things of this life and went to Thessalonica. He got side tracked by the temporary and made a choice because he loved the things of this world more than he did being faithful in service to the Lord.

You are writing a gospel, a chapter each day;
 By things that you do; By things you say.
 Others read that gospel, whether faithless or true!
 Say! What is the Gospel According To You?
 Leroy Brownlow

<http://www.poetry-inspirational.org/TheGospelAccordingToYou.htm>

1 Timothy 6:11-12 (TLB)

Oh, Timothy, you are God's man. Run from all these evil things and work instead at what is right and good, learning to trust him and love others, and to be patient and gentle. Fight on for God. Hold tightly to the eternal life which God has given you, and which you have confessed with such a ringing confession before many witnesses.

Just like **JUDAS ISCARIOT**, Demas was successfully tempted by the temporary. He couldn't stand the heat so he had to get out of the kitchen.

Ironside says:

Demas and Luke seem to have been intimately associated, for both here and in Philemon 24 the two names are found together, but upon the occasion of Paul's second imprisonment we learn that the love of the world had been too much for Demas. He found the itinerant preacher's lot too hard, and he left the apostle in his hour of need and went off to Thessalonica. There is no hint that he plunged into a life of sin. He may have gone into some respectable business; but the Holy Ghost relentlessly exposes the hidden springs of his changed behavior. He loved this present world. No longer are he and Luke joined in devoted service. Demas had chosen an easier path.
 p. 183

MacArthur says:

4:14 *Luke*. Paul's personal physician and close friend who traveled frequently with him on his missionary journeys and wrote the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts . . .

p. 1746

MacArthur says:

***Demas*.** A man who demonstrated substantial commitment to the Lord's work before the attraction of the world led him to abandon Paul and the ministry . . .

p. 1746

Melick says:

Demas is mentioned only three times in Scripture, here, 2 Tim. 4:10, and Phlm 24. Although he accompanied Paul to Rome, later he "loved the world" and return to Thessalonica, which may have been his home. No doubt Paul was saddened by this departure not only because of the loss to the gospel but also because of the loss of a personal friend and supporter. Paul's statement that Demas "loved this world" apparently means the pressures of Paul's situation and the lure of an easier life caused him to forsake the Lord.

p. 331

Wiersbe says:

Servants of the Lord

Years before, Paul had refused to serve with John Mark (Acts 15:36-41) because Mark had left the work (Acts 13:5-13); but now Paul and John Mark were friends and colaborers. Luke had been a part of Paul's team since their ministry at Philippi (Acts 16:10). Alas, Demas would eventually forsake Paul and the Lord (Philem. 24; 2 Tim. 4:10). Do you pray for the men and women who serve with Christian leaders, that they might be faithful to the Lord?

p. 786

(Exploring the Mind & Heart of the Prince of Preachers: Five-thousand illustrations under one-thousand topical headings from the works of C. H. Spurgeon by C. H. Spurgeon) Oswego, IL: Fox River Press. Copyright– Fox River Press, 2005.

It is to be feared that many give their force to their worldly pursuits, and their feebleness to their religion. GS281
p. 498

(Set Apart: Calling a Worldly Church to a Godly Life by R. Kent Hughes) Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books. Copyright – R. Kent Hughes, 2003.

Christians cannot exempt themselves from the general culture of materialism. The statistics will not allow us, because the spending habits of most Christians are indistinguishable from those of other Americans. Do we give? On the average it isn't much—less than 3 percent. Tellingly, only 8 percent of born-again Christian adults tithe their income to their church.⁴ Christians spend seven times more on entertainment than they do on spiritual activities.⁵

Setting ourselves apart from materialism has everything to do with the spread of the Gospel among the nations. We cannot be *like* the nations and at the same time a *light* to the nations. A worldly church will not reach the world. If our materialistic pursuits are no different from those of general culture, we will have little to say to culture. If the Gospel has not set us free from the gravity of materialism, if we do not soar above the culture of materialism, what can we have to say to the earthbound people of this world? If we live for the things of Sodom, how will we point others to hills of salvation?

4. Barna Research Online, “The Year’s Most Intriguing Findings.” From Barna Research Studies, December 12, 2000.

5. Ibid.

p. 27

The important principle is this: *Those in the clutches of consumerism cannot practice stewardship.* To practice Christian stewardship means resisting the seductive voices of Victor Lebow’s disciples, who tell us that we have to have everything *new* and *now*. It means cultivating the Christian virtues of contentment, self-denial, and generosity. The spiritual dividend is that untold resources will be freed for local ministry and world missions. Imagine what such giving would do for your church and the world!
pp. 34-35

When I think of these **TWO CHARACTERS—DOCTOR LUKE** and **DEMAS**—I think of a wonderful story in Gary’s Thomas book:

(Sacred Marriage: What if God Designed Marriage to Make Us Holy More than to Make Us Happy? by Gary Thomas) Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. Copyright –Gary L. Thomas, 2000.

Marti subconsciously slipped back into feelings that were born out of her earlier failed relationship. Because she still hurt over the dissolution of that bond, she experienced acute anxiety over whether her marriage could survive this challenge. In her past, unresolved issues meant an inevitable breakup, so she secretly began mourning a relationship that had not yet died.

Then one night, after yet another vigorous and ultimately unresolved discussion, Marti’s husband did something so wonderfully prophetic and profound that Marti will never forget it as long as she lives. You could see the joy of her husband’s tender care reflected in her eyes as she told the story:

“He wrapped his arms around me and said, ‘Marti, you need to know that no matter what we decide or don’t decide, I’m never going to quit on this marriage. Even if we have to live with this tension for the rest of our lives, *I will never leave you.*”

Marti burst into tears as she shared this story. Even though there was nearly constant contention in her marriage, she didn’t want this relationship to end, and now her husband had promised that it wouldn’t.
p. 104

(Smooth Stones Taken from Ancient Books: Being a collection of sentences, illustrations, and quaint sayings from that renowned Puritan, Thomas Brooks by C.H. Spurgeon) Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust. Copyright– Banner of Truth Trust, 2011.

Surely they do not truly love Christ who love any thing more than Christ.
p. 111

To run from Christ is to run from all life, peace and joy. It is to run from our strength, our shelter, our security, our safety, our crown, our glory. Crabs, that go backward, are reckoned among unclean creatures (*Lev. 11:10*). The application is easy.
p. 142

(Exploring the Mind & Heart of the Prince of Preachers: Five-thousand illustrations under one-thousand topical headings from the works of C. H. Spurgeon by C. H. Spurgeon) Oswego, IL: Fox River Press. Copyright– Fox River Press, 2005.

This is the one easily besetting sin of our nature—to turn aside from the living God and to make unto ourselves idols in some fashion or another; for the essence of idolatry is this—to love anything better than God, to trust anything more than God, to wish to have a God other than we have, or to have some signs and wonders by which we may see him, some outward symbol or manifestation that can be seen with the eye or heard with the ear rather than to rest in an invisible God and believe the faithful promise of Him whom eye hath not seen nor ear heard. 1339.97

p. 240

DISTRACTION 15

To have a great many aims and objects is much the same thing as having no aim at all; for if a man shoots at many things he will hit none, or none worth the hitting. GS303

p. 122

See how the bulk of them hurry on with their eyes tightly shut, rushing fast and yet faster still down to destruction. You cannot make them stop and think. There are thousands of men who would almost sooner be whipped than be made to think. 2404.122

p. 122

(My Utmost For His Highest by Oswald Chambers) Grand Rapids, MI: Discovery House. Copyright– Oswald Chambers Publications Association, 1992.

What is it that blinds you to the peace of God “in this *your* day”? Do you have a strange god—not a disgusting monster but perhaps an unholy nature that controls your life? More than once God has brought me face to face with a strange god in my life, and I knew that I should have given it up, but I didn’t do it. I got through the crisis “by the skin of my teeth,” only to find myself still under the control of that strange god. I am blind to the very things that make for my own peace. It is a shocking thing that we can be in the exact place where the Spirit of God should be having His completely unhindered way with us, and yet we only make matters worse, increasing our blame in God’s eyes.

“If you had known” God’s words here cut directly to the heart, with the tears of Jesus behind them. These words imply responsibility for our own faults. God holds us accountable for what we refuse to see or are unable to see because of our sin. And “now they are hidden from your eyes” because you have never completely yielded your nature to Him. Oh, the deep, unending sadness for what might have been? God never again opens the doors that have been closed. He opens other doors, but He reminds us that there are doors which we have shut—doors which had no need to be shut. Never be afraid when God brings back your past. Let your memory have its way with you. It is a minister of God bringing its rebuke and sorrow to you. God will turn what might have been into a wonderful lesson of growth for the future.
(April 3)

v.15 Greet the brethren in Laodicea and Nymphas and the church in her house.

The NET Bible then translates verse 15:

Give my greetings to the brothers and sisters who are in Laodicea and to Nympha and the church that meets in her house.

Peterson paraphrases verse 15:

Say hello to our friends in Laodicea; also to Nympha and the church that meets in her house.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

4:15. Paul asked that his **greetings** be given **to the brothers at Laodicea and to Nympha** in whose **house** the **church** met. Churches meeting in homes was a common practice then before there were church buildings . . .

The Apostle Paul now comes to his **CLOSING GREETINGS**.

He is giving **TWO GREETINGS** in this verse:

1. **“[TO] THE BRETHERN IN LAODICEA”**—these are Christian brothers and sisters who have formed a church in Laodicea but Paul had never seen them nor had the opportunity to visit them, although his ministry had been indirectly responsible for the founding of a group of Christians there.
2. **“[TO] NYMPHAS AND THE CHURCH IN HER HOUSE”**—this could possibly be reference to another branch work in the city of Hierapolis, rounding out this tri-cities ministry.

We now have the next member of the **FAMILY**:

10. **NYMPHAS**

We know nothing of **NYMPHAS** but thank God her name was written in the **LAMB'S BOOK OF LIFE**. Because she has come to know Christ as Savior, she has allowed her home to be a place of hospitality and a place for people to come and share together in the Word of God and the communion of the saints.

Lightfoot says:

15-17. ‘Greet from me the brethren who are in Laodicea, especially Nymphas, and the church which assembles in their house. And when this letter has been read among you, take care that it is read also in the Church of the Laodiceans, and be sure that ye also read the letter which I have sent to Laodicea, and which ye will get from them. Moreover give this message from me to Archippus; Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received from me in Christ, and discharge it fully and faithfully.’

p. 242

Simpson & Bruce say:

Paul now asks the Colossian Christians to convey his greetings to their fellow-Christians in the neighbouring city of Laodicea, which lay about ten miles to the north-west. One member of the Laodicean church is mentioned specially—Nympha (for the name should probably be read as feminine)—perhaps because it was in her house that the local church, or part of it, met. House-churches are frequently referred to in the NT epistles.
p. 309

v.16 And when this letter has been read among you, have it read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and the letter from Laodicea you should also read.

The NET Bible then translates verse 16:

And after you have read this letter, have it read to the church of Laodicea. In turn, read the letter from Laodicea as well.

Peterson paraphrases verse 16:

After this letter has been read to you, make sure it gets read also in Laodicea. And get the letter that went to Laodicea and have it read to you.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

4:16. Paul urged an exchange of epistles; once they had read Colossians they should send it to Laodicea and **read the letter** (coming) **from Laodicea**. This “Laodicean letter” may be the letter to the Ephesians, which was written about that time, and sent to the same general vicinity.

After you have read it, see that the folks in Laodicea get a chance to read it.

You read the letter written to the church at Laodicea. This refers to the **BOOK OF EPHESIANS** which was probably a circular letter.

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It is an idle attempt to heal those who are not wounded, to attempt to clothe those who have never been stripped, and to make those rich who have never realized their poverty. 2586.421
p. 131

In the **LETTERS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES** in Revelation 2 & 3, the Lord Jesus speaks very strongly to the seventh and final church, **THE CHURCH AT LAODICEA.**

Revelation 3:15-17 (NASB)

‘I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I would that you were cold or hot. So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth. Because you say, “I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing,” and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked,

Revelation 3:19 (NASB)

‘Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; be zealous therefore, and repent.

v.17 And say to Archippus, take heed of the ministry (pay attention to your duty) which you received in the Lord, in order that you may perform it (discharge it fully).

The NET Bible then translates verse 17:

And tell Archippus, “See to it that you complete the ministry you received in the Lord.”

Peterson paraphrases verse 17:

And, oh, yes, tell Archippus, “Do your best in the job you received from the Master. Do your very best.”

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

4:17. Archippus, probably the son of Philemon . . . was ministering in Colosse, possibly in Epaphras’ absence. Paul exhorted his readers to **tell** Archippus to **see to** (*blepe*, “look out” for dangers in) **it that he complete the work** (lit., “the ministry”) God had given him. Whatever his problem, he was not fulfilling (completing) his work. This was another example of Paul’s concern that the Colossians be complete in Christ.

We now have the next member of the **FAMILY**:

11. **ARCHIPPUS**

ARCHIPPUS was probably the **SON OF PHILEMON AND APPHIA** and was serving as an interim pastor while Epaphras was in Rome.

Evidently he had the tendency to settle down and to take things easy. Promptness and energy are important items in the Lord's work.

Perhaps Archippus was just a little bit lazy or unmotivated and he was putting off the whole business of getting after it and getting it done.

He was one of those leaders that liked to watch and wait and then wonder when it happens. Or like the leader who is waiting for his ship to come in but he never sent one out.

Archippus probably lacked in the area of administration and things probably piled up on him and he became a procrastinator with regard to his ministry.

I don't think Paul is torching him for deliberate neglect in the situation but challenging him to ministry, similar to the way he challenged Timothy in:

2 Timothy 2:3-4 (DAV)

Suffer hardships with me as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No one engaging in military service is allowing himself to become entangled in civilian pursuits in order that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier.

While in pursuit of the **TWELVE MEMBER FAMILY** described in these verses, Archippus becomes member:

11. **ARCHIPPUS**

General Robert E. Lee once sent word to General Stonewall Jackson that he would be glad to talk with him at his convenience on some matter of no great urgency. General Jackson instantly rode to headquarters through most inclement weather. When General Lee expressed surprise at seeing him, Jackson exclaimed, "General Lee's slightest wish is a supreme command to me, and I always take pleasure in prompt obedience."
(source unknown)

This is a gentle but firm admonition to Archippus to be busy about the Father's business.

It is interesting when you see the same urgency in the life of the Lord Jesus in view of the fact he said in:

John 9:4 (KJV)

I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

John 4:35-36 (KJV)

Say not ye, There are yet four months, and *then* cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.

You also see this in the Apostle Paul when he says:

Philippians 3:14 (KJV)

I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Because death is certain and the coming of Christ is certain, it behooves us be diligent to buy up every opportunity.

He who bids you onward go,
will not fail the way to show.
(source unknown)

Ephesians 4:1 (TLB)

I beg you—I, a prisoner here in jail for serving the Lord—to live and act in a way worthy of those who have been chosen for such wonderful blessings as these.

The admonition is from someone who has suffered and sacrificed for Christ. My only right to speak is that I, too, have carried the cross with Christ.

2 Timothy 4:5 (version unknown)

You must stay awake and watch out for all these dangers, and don't be afraid of suffering for the Lord. Bring others to Christ.

Leave nothing undone that you ought to do.

Richard Cecil said:

A minister of Christ is often in highest honor with men for the performance of half of his work, while God is regarding him with displeasure for the neglect of the other half.
(source unknown)

The **PURPOSE** in the **WARNING** is:

“IN ORDER THAT YOU MAY . . . DISCHARGE IT FULLY)—your responsibilities.

Paul is reminding Archippus that he has been given a ministry from the Lord.

This **TAKES US BACK** to:

Colossians 3:23 (DAV)

Whatever you are doing, be working from the heart, as to the Lord and not to men;

The Apostle is charging this fellow brother to love so that he will be not having need to shrink away in shame from the Lord in His coming because he has been unfaithful in his service. That he will hear “Well done thou good and faithful servant, enter into the joys that I have prepared for you.”

Abbott says:

The admonition reminds us, indeed, of the admonitions to Timothy and Titus. If Archippus was a young man, and recently appointed to his office, it would be a natural reminder of its greatness and its difficulty; and there is no need to suppose that greatness and its difficulty; and there is no need to suppose that a covert censure on his previous laxity is implied.

p. 307

Barker & Kohlenberger say:

17 Archippus, to whom Paul sends a special message, appears again in Phm. 2. From the context there some think he was a member of Philemon's household, perhaps even Philemon's son. The present verse implies that he had some ministerial responsibility in the Colossian church, though Paul gives no definite information about it. Perhaps he was serving as pastor in the absence of Epaphras. Paul tells the Colossian church to instruct him. Whether this implies a degree of failure on the part of Archippus or is written only to indicate Paul's full support of this man, we do not know.
p. 842

Barton, Fackler, Taylor & Veerman say:

GET IT DONE

Paul encouraged Archippus to make sure that he completed the work he had received in the Lord. There are many ways for us to leave our work unfinished. We can easily get sidetracked morally, we can become exhausted and stop, we can get mad and quit, or we can let it slide and leave it up to others. We should see to it that we finish God's assignments, completing the work we have received.
p. 238

Henry says:

Concerning *Archippus*. They are bidden to admonish him to mind his work as a minister, to *take heed to it, and to fulfill it*. The ministry we have received is a great honour; for it is *received in the Lord*, and is by his appointment. The people may put their ministers in mind of their duty, and excite them to it: *Say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry*.
p. 1875

Hughes says:

Third, in verse 17 he encouraged a young leader in the Colossian church: “Tell Archippus, ‘See to it that you complete the work you have received in the Lord.’” From Philemon 2 many deduce that Archippus was the son of Philemon and Apphia. Perhaps Epaphras told the apostle of Archippus’s budding spiritual life and potential. At any rate, Paul reminded him that his ministry originated “in the Lord.” It was divinely given and must be treated as such. Paul told him that he must “complete” it, calling to mind for the final time the grand theme of fullness.

p. 158

Ironside says:

In verse 17 Paul gives a special admonition to Archippus, also mentioned in the letter to Philemon, who was apparently a servant of Christ ministering the Word at Colosse, but had a tendency not uncommon in some young preachers to settle down comfortably and take things easily. To him the apostle sends the message, “Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord that thou fulfill it.” Promptness and energy are as important in spiritual service as in anything else.

p. 184

Lenski says:

We think that Archippus was a member of the family of Philemon (Philemon 2), perhaps his son. We think that the ministry he had received was the service committed to him when Epaphras left for Rome. We see no reason for thinking of general evangelistic service. Why should Paul feel it necessary to refer to diligent execution of such service? With this injunction we should combine the honorable epithet found in Philemon 2 where Paul calls Archippus his fellow soldier. Epaphras had left Archippus in charge of the three places. Paul seconds the appointment, but not by way of his apostolic authority, but only by way of the Colossian congregation which is to tell Archippus to carry out his ministry as this had been received. The appointment was made with the consent of the congregations before Epaphras left for Rome. The injunction which Paul wants delivered to Archippus resembles the one given to Timothy (I Tim. 4:16), neither of which implies that the persons concerned had been dilatory and needed prodding. The point has been noted that a congregation is asked to tell a minister to take heed to his work. The congregation is as much concerned as the minister.

pp. 206-7

Lovett says:

ARCHIPPUS. When Epaphras departed from Colosse to visit Paul at Rome, someone had to be left in charge. Likely it was Archippus, who had also been schooled under Paul at Ephesus. If so, these words would have great meaning for him, though perhaps veiled to others. Since this is a public letter, read before the church, the phrase would have its own personal meaning to Archippus. Armed with its authority, the letter could amount to credentials signifying he was the one to lead the faithful away from the false teachers. With Epaphras still in prison with Paul, unable to return to his church and do the job himself, the task appears to have fallen on Archippus. In that case, he would understand the phrase to mean, “You’re the only one there I can count on to protect the people from the false teachers. It would be disastrous for them if you fail to accept the responsibility.”

p. 198

MacArthur says:

4:17 Archippus. Most likely the son of Philemon . . . Paul’s message to him to fulfill his ministry is similar to the exhortation to Timothy . . .
p. 1746

MacArthur says:

Archippus appears only here and in Philemon 2. He is commanded to **take heed** to his **ministry** that he might **fulfill** it. The examples of Paul’s co-workers in the preceding verses would be a powerful incentive for him to do that. To fulfill our ministry is what the Lord expects of all of us.
p. 199

McGee says:

“Archippus” is another man on Paul’s list in this letter. We do not know anything more about him than is mentioned here. he is a man who had a gift, and Paul is urging him to use that gift.
p. 365

Moule says:

And say to Archippus, See to the ministry which you received, . . . received in transmission in the Lord, in union with Him for His work, that you fill it full. Take it as it were a vessel into which is to be poured all your life, all your powers. Act up to it all round. In private conduct, in public diligence and fidelity, in witnessing, teaching, everything, let the circle of your “works” be “found perfect before God” (see Rev. iii. 2).

“A minister of Christ,” says that pregnant Christian thinker, Richard Cecil, “is often in highest honour with men for the performance of one half of his work, while God is regarding him with displeasure for the neglect of the other half.”

“Enter not into judgment with Thy servant, O Lord.” “Take heed to thy ministry, O Archippus, to fill it full.”
pp. 270-1

Radmacher, Allen & House say:

And say to Archippus: He is mentioned in Philem. 2 in such a way as to suggest that he was a member of Philemon's household, probably his son. **Take heed:** Keep an eye on. **you have received in the Lord:** Archippus was called of the Lord, and most probably had some ministerial responsibility in the church at Colosse. **that you may fulfill it:** That you keep on filling to the full, discharge fully. This is a lifetime job. God does not discharge His servants.
p. 1569

Robertson says:

Clearly Archippus had a call "in the Lord" as every preacher should have. That thou fulfill it . . . *Present active subjective of plēroō, "that thou keep on filling it full." It is a life-time job.*
p. 513

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Give your second best *never*. AM393

Let me be as the bullock which stands between the plough and the altar, to work or to be sacrificed; and let my motto be, "Ready for either." ME14

Jesus gave both his hands to the nails, how can I keep back one of mine from His blessed work? ME529
pp. 88-89

v.18 The greeting by my own hand, Paul, be remembering my bonds. Grace be with you.

The NET Bible then translates verse 18:

I, Paul, write this greeting by my own hand. Remember my chains. Grace be with you.

Peterson paraphrases verse 18:

I'm signing off in my own handwriting—Paul. Remember to pray for me in this jail. Grace be with you.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary titles this last verse and then says:

Salutation (4:18).

4:18. As was Paul's custom and sign of authenticity, he signed a **greeting** with his **own hand** . . . He then asked that his readers **remember** (in prayerful support) his imprisonment . . . As with so many of his epistles, his closing was a benediction, a prayer that God's **grace** . . . **be with** them . . .

We have come to the end of our letter and also the **TWELFTH MEMBER OF THE FAMILY** we have been considering in these verses:

12. **APOSTLE PAUL**

There are a couple of verses I would like to remind you of when I am thinking of the Apostle Paul.

In the **OLD TESTAMENT**:

Proverbs 17:17 (NIV)

A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.

The verses in the **NEW TESTAMENT** are some of his final verses before he gave his life:

2 Timothy 4:6-8 (NASB)

For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.

The **COMMAND** from the pen of the Apostle is a **PRESENT IMPERATIVE**.

We could translate it:

“KEEP ON REMEMBERING MY BONDS.”

In other words:

“Keep me ever before the throne and my imprisonment.”

Paul signs the letter with his **CHAINED HAND** and once again asks them to be:

“REMEMBERING MY BONDS.”

He **BEGINS** and **ENDS** with:

GRACE.

We begin with **GRACE** in our relationship to God and we are kept by grace. It is grace that will bring us home at last.

Grace is the sweetest sound
That ever reached our ears:
When conscience charged and justice frowned,
‘Twas grace removed our fears.

http://preceptaustin.org/new_page_58.htm

All the stages we have been through in this particular epistle and the lessons which we have learned are summed up in the **GRACE OF GOD.**

Phillip Doddridge said:

'Twas grace that wrote my name
in life's eternal book.
'Twas grace that gave me to the hand
where all my sorrows took.

Grace taught my wandering feet to tread
the heavenly road
and new supplies each hour I meet
while pressing on to God.

Grace taught my soul to pray
and made my eyes o'er flow.
This grace has kept me to this day,
and will not let me go.

Grace all the works shall crown
through everlasting days.
It lays in heaven the top-most stone
and well deserves the praise.

Oh let that grace inspire my soul
with strength divine.
May all my powers to thee aspire
and all my days be thine.
(source unknown)

C. Henry says:

It was Paul's custom to write a few words in his own handwriting at the end of an epistle. This authenticated it and showed to all that the letter was genuine. So here Paul takes the pen and writes his greeting. He calls on his friends to remember his fetters and concludes, as is his custom, with a prayer that grace be with them.

p. 331

(Smooth Stones Taken from Ancient Books: Being a collection of sentences, illustrations, and quaint sayings from that renowned Puritan, Thomas Brooks by C.H. Spurgeon) Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust. Copyright– Banner of Truth Trust, 2011.

‘Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might’ (Eccles. 9:10). Mark, the Scripture does not say, what thy *head* finds to do; that may find a thousand things: nor what thy *heart* finds to do, for that may find ten thousand things: but what *thy hand findeth to do*; that is, look what work God cuts out to thy hand to do; that do with all thy might, for there is no working in the grave. We are to do much good in a little time. Our time is short, our task is great.

p. 99

(Voices from the Past: Puritan Devotional Readings edited by Richard Rushing) Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust. Copyright– Richard Rushing, 2009.

The humble soul endeavours more how to glorify God in afflictions, than how to get out of them.

p. 69

(Finish Strong: Amazing Stories of Courage and Inspiration by Dan Green)
 Naperville, IL: Simple Truths, LLC. Copyright– Simple Truths, LLC,
 2008.

For most of the champions, their great accomplishment was not the end of their greatness; rather it was the beginning of greater things to come. Each used their moment in time to propel them forward in life.

Bethany Hamilton would survive the shark attack to become a world-class surfer and become an inspiration to thousands of people around the world. After he achieved his success in boxing, Jim Braddock repaid the government aid money that he was given during his hard times and went on to live a full and prosperous life. John Baker’s commitment to give his best effort lives on at the elementary school bearing his name. After her Olympic glory, Wilma Rudolph would champion civil rights causes and inspire thousands of children as a teacher. Ray Kroc’s belief in himself would ultimately lead to the creation of the Ronald McDonald House charity—a place dedicated to helping cancer victims and their families find peace during difficult times.

The Finish strong attitude is grounded in the principle that you never “get there” in life and that you should always keep moving forward. I love the way that John Naber, the four-time gold medal winning Olympic swimming champion, characterizes his achievement. When asked if winning four Olympic gold medals was the highlight of his life, he replied, “I hope not. I’ve still got a lot of living left to do and I hope that my greatest achievement is still in front of me.”

May your greatest achievements
 be in front of you and may you always
Finish Strong.

“Effort only
 fully releases
 its reward
 after a person
 refuses to
 quit”

— NAPOLEON HILL

pp. 117-19

CONCLUSION:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: I believe it is a part of spiritual development for the Christian to recognize the fact that God uses people in our lives in so many different ways to mature us spiritually and teach us how to walk.

LESSON #2: There is safety in a multitude of counselors.

LESSON #3: All these people in Paul's photograph album have Jesus Christ living in their lives. Just like the Apostle, they too become examples to help us know how we ought to live.

LESSON #4: Philippians 3:17: "Dear brothers, pattern your lives after mine and notice who else lives up to my example" (TLB).

LESSON #5: Every person has a contribution to make to our lives.

LESSON #6: "Onesimus the faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you" (verse 9). What an illustration he is of the dramatic change that took place in his life when he received Christ as Savior.

LESSON #7: Onesimus is on his way back to make things right for the past wrongs which he has committed.

LESSON #8: Epaphras, the pastor in Colossae, is praying that they "might stand full grown and fully assured in all the will of God" (verse 12).

LESSON #9: Luke is the beloved, faithful doctor who stood by Paul's side until death. Demas left him because he had a greater love for this present world. You win some and you lose some.

LESSON #10: Archippus was probably the son of Philemon and Apphia and was serving as interim pastor while Epaphras was in Rome. He seems to manifest a lazy, unmotivated, put-off getting after it mentality. Paul has to challenge him.

LESSON #11: The purpose of this admonishment is in that last phrase: “in order that you might fully discharge your responsibilities” (verse 17).

LESSON #12: John 9:4: “I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day, for the night is coming when no man can work.”

LESSON #13: “Christ is all and in all” (Col. 3:11b). He is totally adequate for every situation.

We have been looking together at several of the friends and fellow-laborers of the Apostle in these verses.

A vital part of our Christian experience is to fellowship with other folks who in turn make a contribution to our lives by our witnessing the work of God in their lives.

We have come to the conclusion of our study of the Colossian Epistle. We have been discerning **STAGES IN MY RELATIONSHIP TO JESUS CHRIST.**

We have noticed together:

- Stage #1:** **Christ Changed My Life (1:1-8)**
The first stage of any person's development in a relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ is to come to the Jesus Christ and allow Him to come into our lives.
- Stage #2:** **The Will, Walk, and Work of Christ (1:9-14)**
- Stage #3:** **Christ in First Place (1:15-20)**
- Stage #4:** **Maturing in Christ (1:21-2:3)**
- Stage #5:** **Living in Christ (2:4-8)**
- Stage #6:** **Christ Living in Me (2:9-15)**
- Stage #7:** **Christ, Not Legalism (2:16-23)**
- Stage #8:** **Christ in My Mind (3:1-11)**
- Stage #9:** **Christ in the Word (3:12-17)**
- Stage #10:** **Christ in My Family (3:18-4:1)**
- Stage #11:** **Christ in My Witness (4:2-6)**
- Stage #12:** **Christ in Other People (4:7-18)**

We can truly say that:

“CHRIST IS ALL AND IN ALL.”

Because He is who He is, and what He has done for us, let us give ourselves to Him in **COMPLETE COMMITMENT**, even as the pilgrims did in the establishment of America.

These words on the Plymouth Rock express these thoughts:

This spot marks the final resting place of the Pilgrims of the Mayflower. In weariness and hunger and in cold, fighting the wilderness and burying their dead in common graves that the Indians should not know how many had perished, they here laid the foundations of a state in which all men for countless ages should have liberty to worship God in their own way. All ye who pass by and see this stone remember, and dedicate yourselves anew to the resolution that you will not rest until this lofty ideal shall have been realized throughout the earth.

(source unknown)

It is my prayer that your lofty ideal might be to be presented mature in Christ and as you move through these various stages of Spiritual development, that we have discerned together in our study of the Colossian Epistle, you might truly find that “Christ is all and in all.” That He is totally adequate for every need.

I find myself singing Bill Gaither's wonderful song:

The Family of God

You will notice we say brother and sister 'round here.
It's because we're a family and these folks are so near.
When one has a heartache we all share the tears,
And rejoice in each vict'ry in this fam'ly so dear.

From the door of an orph'nage to the house of the King,
No longer an outcast, a new song I sing;
From rags unto riches, from the weak to the strong,
I'm not worthy to be here, but praise God I belong!

Refrain

I'm so glad I'm a part of the fam'ly of God;
I've been washed in the fountain, Cleansed by His blood!
Joint heirs with Jesus as we travel this sod,
For I'm part of the fam'ly, the fam'ly of God.

(“The Family of God” by Gloria & William Gaither. *The New Church Hymnal*,
Lexicon Music, Inc., 1976. #246)