

# A Practical Study of COLOSSIANS

## How Christians Grow

### “Christ is All and in All”

Key verse 3:11b — *“Christ is all and in all.”*

### Study Number Twelve – Christ in Other People – Colossians 4:7-18

We’re talking about the stages of relationship—what God uses to make us more like His Son.

Our KEY VERSE is e verse 7—the very first verse.

Paul in his letters always takes time to run the credits after the book. We’re going to go through TWELVE PEOPLE in this study. It’s like walking through the 12 disciples.

We’re going to capsule every one of their stories and it help us understand that God brings into our lives people and takes out of our lives people after they’ve accomplished the purpose that God has for them.

Think of your friends and the people that are around you. God has sovereignly put those people in your life at this particular time for some purpose. It’s our responsibility as believers—brothers and sisters in Christ—to discover what it is that we

need to learn from that relationship to grow and mature.

So as we look at these personalities, don't just think that we're going back and dusting off the history books. God puts these people in Paul's life and he's going to show us why and how as we look at this last stage in our relationship.

The book of Proverbs says:

“There is safety in a multitude of counselors.” (ref. Proverbs 11:14)

It is part of the SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT for the Christian to recognize that God uses people in our lives in so many different ways. Here are two:

1. God gives us people to mature us SPIRITUALLY.
2. He puts people in our life to teach us how to WALK in spiritual ways.

Now some people come into your life and they're important. Some stay forever and you love those friends because they've walked and made their footprints on your heart. You would hate to ever have to be separated from those people.

Some people come into your life and you breathe a sigh of RELIEF because they've been a pain. They've been a challenge, they've been difficult. You just don't understand why they're there.

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Others come into your life and you breathe a sigh of REMORSE. You really hurt and feel the loss.

Friends leave friends. Acquaintances move on. People change homes. People grow apart. Enemies hate and move on. Friends love and move on.

Just stop and think about the people who have come into your life and then out of it and the feelings that you have about the contribution they made to your life while they were there and prominent.

This story appeared in *Our Daily Bread*:

## **A Man of Warmth and Wisdom**

When Dr. Vernon Grounds, former president and chancellor of Denver Seminary, went to be with the Lord at age 96, tributes and remembrances poured in from former students, colleagues, and friends. Almost everyone recalled a time when Dr. Grounds had personally encouraged them through his teaching, his counsel, or simply his warm smile. He believed in the value of training pastors, teachers, and counselors who had a vital relationship with Christ and a willingness to serve others.

A vivid portrait of Vernon Grounds is seen in a selection of verses from Proverbs 15: “A man of understanding walks uprightly” (v. 21). “A word spoken in due season, how good it is!” (v. 23). “The words of the pure are pleasant” (v. 26). “The

heart of the righteous studies how to answer” (v. 28). “The fear of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom” (v. 33).

*(Our Daily Bread, February 28, 2012)*

We realize why Paul is so adamant about saying thanks to these people who’ve made the ministry in the Lycus Valley possible. He has never been there, he’s writing to people to who he has known and trained that have gone and carried on that ministry.

This comes from Thomas Brooks in *Smooth Stones*:

(Smooth Stones Taken from Ancient Brooks: Being a collection of sentences, illustrations, and quaint sayings from that renowned Puritan, Thomas Brooks by C.H. Spurgeon)

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

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In other words, realize that as you pick your friends, find those who really put Christ first in their lives.

Listen to Erwin McManus’ experience as a pastor when he gets that fatal call from his board:

(Chasing Daylight: Seize the Power of Every Moment by Erwin Raphael McManus)

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.” ...  
pp. 192-3

Out of that came the most incredible church. He goes on to say: “You know I would not even think of resigning from such a successful church.”

See what people can do in your life. There’s going to be some really sad times in glory when people have to face what they did to men of the cloth who had good purpose and good desire, but because their personalities locked they were broken and devastated.

As we look at these human examples, realize that Paul said it back in the book of Philippians:

“Imitate Me just as I also imitate Christ.” (ref. Philippians 4:9)

In other words, “I would like you to walk in my steps and follow my example.”

God has greatly used David Platt as a one-rail preacher. He teaches the Word everywhere he goes.

He met a guy in Birmingham where he has his pastorate who really wasn't all that excited about *Radical* because a lot of people were going to the mission field and leaving for distant places to teach the Word. The book *Radical* is named radical for that very reason. He says this:

(Radical Together: Unleashing the People of God for the Purpose of God by David Platt)

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.”  
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Too many times that's the normal response isn't it?

You go to those places in your life where you wonder if you've worn out the people who are supporting you and helping you.

Joni Eareckson Tada has lived with the support of so many people who surround her to free her for her worldwide ministry. Listen to what she says:

(A Place of Healing: Wrestling with the Mysteries of Suffering,

## Pain, and God's Sovereignty by Joni Eareckson Tada)

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.

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Don't you think Paul probably feels that a little bit in prison? When he realizes he's incarcerated, he's never been here but he's writing a letter to try to help people to grow and mature.

We're going to see **TWELVE PEOPLE**—we've called them the **FAMILY** of the apostle. They are the staff.

### Colossians 3:23-24

Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men; knowing that for the Lord you will receive the

ward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.

What a difference the Lord Jesus makes when He comes into our lives and we begin to recognize the contribution that we can make in other people's lives.

One commentator makes reference to an auctioneer who stood up with a dusty old violin. At the auction he asked how many dollars they would bid. They ended up with a \$3 bid and then an old gentleman got up, picked up the bow, tightened it and played one of the most beautiful hymns. Then the bidding started at a \$1,000, \$2,000, \$3,000. What changed the price of the old violin?

That's the potential contribution we have in the lives of other people. People who are going down for the last time, but we can make a contribution.

There are actually 11 guys here but we added the apostle there because he's the last one.

1. TYCHICUS,
2. ONESIMUS,
3. ARISTARCHUS,
4. MARK,
5. BARNABAS,



6. JESUS JUSTUS,
7. EPAPHRAS,
8. DR. LUKE,
9. DEMAS,
10. NYMPHAS,
11. ARCHIPPUS, and
12. THE APOSTLE PAUL.

Our KEY VERSE is verse 7 because we're starting with the very first person right out of the box.

**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;**

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

## 1. TYCHICUS

“Tychicus” means FORTUNATE.

When we see a person with the name “fortunate” we are fortunate to get to meet him because he’s going to come into our life and make a contribution. Certainly this guy has been around the apostle and has had a tremendous ministry with the apostle.

All of Colossians chapters 1 and 2 are PRINCIPLES.

In chapters 3 and 4 we talk about PEOPLE.

It’s how principles work in people’s lives.

Tychicus is going to come and give the church in the Lycus Valley a report on what has happened to the apostle.

This has to be a report from a man who’s had an impact on people that live in the Lycus Valley but he’s never been there himself. So it’s important for Tychicus to come.

### Ephesians 6:21

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

That’s really the reason that he’s going on the trip.

### Philippians 3:17

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

Here is a Christian brother and a man with a SHEPHERD'S HEART and a PROPHET'S SPIRIT. He's a man who's a lot like Timothy.

Timothy was his young understudy. He wrote the last two letters before he died to Timothy.

One thing about Timothy and also Tychicus:

“I will go ANYWHERE,  
do ANYTHING,  
at ANY COST,  
for the GLORY OF GOD.”

That was his mission statement. Timothy was exactly the same way.

These guys would go when they were called and do anything.

What he's being called to do is to go to the Lycus Valley. He has two partners with him. He's going to have along with him Epaphras, the pastor of the Colossian church, and Onesimus, a runaway slave.

So Tychicus is our man. Notice **THREE THINGS** that are said about him:

1. He's a "beloved brother"—that means he knows Christ. He's part of the body of Christ and Paul has found him as a "brother" in Christ.
2. He's a "faithful servant"—he will do anything to promote the cause of Christ.

Even while Paul is incarcerated, in his freedom, he will take Paul's place and do those acts of servicing as the Lord would direct.

3. He's a "fellow bonds slave"—that means he sold out to the Lord.

"I want to do what the Lord wants me to do. And as a fellow bonds slave I'm ready for assignments whenever."

Notice the little word "in the Lord."

It's not "beloved brother and faithful servant and fellow bonds slave" just because I want to be. It's because I'm "in the Lord" and these are the things that the Lord has led me to.

Now if you took those three things and you tried to homilitize them to give you something to remember, you could say:

He's COURTEOUS,

He's COMPASSIONATE, and

He's CHRISTLIKE.

All three of those would summarize the picture of Tychicus. He is a person willing to do whatever needs to be done to get it done.

Take time to make a list of people in your life that are an encouragement. Make your own personal list and you'll soon see you're not alone and there are a lot of people that believe in what you're doing and they love you.

It's a miracle when you see how God begins to move because you are aware of the people. This is an experience for Paul sitting right there in the cell writing and coming up with this text.

Spurgeon said:

(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)

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

“Tychicus...beloved brother...faithful servant...fellow bonds slave in the Lord.”

The MISSION that he's going on right now is in the next verse.

**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;**

“whom I am sending to you for this purpose,”— PURPOSE—  
“in order that you may know the things concerning us and he may encourage your hearts;”

“So I'm sending him along so that you'll get additional information. You'll know how it's going here. Whether I'm going to get out or not—I'll give you the latest information that we've gotten from the authorities and I'll also give you the information about where other guys are logistically in the ministry.”

“I just want him to come and encourage your hearts. He's going to SPEAK POSITIVELY. He's going to tell you things that will encourage you.”

Updated information is the first part of the mission and then encourage the hearts of those in the Lycus Valley to respond to his letter and to do what he's asking them to do.

Is he named well? Fortunate.

Paul and others are fortunate to have him in the family

album.

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

“with Onesimus,”—and notice what it says about him—“the faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. All things here they will make known to you.”

Onesimus is traveling with him.

## 2. ONESIMUS

There are **THREE THINGS** that are said about him:

1. He’s “faithful,”
2. he’s a “beloved brother,” and
3. he “is one of you.”

He is from the Lycus Valley, he’s ended up in Rome and he is a “beloved brother” because the apostle Paul led him to Christ when he got to Rome.

Do you want to hear the rest of Onesimus’ story?

Onesimus was a runaway slave. He stole whatever he could get from Philemon, his owner, and he fled to Rome because

there were 50 million slaves there. He figured that he could be absorbed into the culture. But he ended up in prison right next to the apostle Paul providentially and Paul led him to Christ.

Paul was one of these people that when you had a past that affected some brother or somebody hurt, you go and reconcile with that person after you have become a believer.

So Paul wrote a little letter of 20-something verses called the book of Philemon. It is the letter of recommendation by Paul to Philemon to receive him back into the family as a brother in Christ rather than a runaway slave.

See what God providentially did? When Paul was having a Bible class in Ephesus, somebody from the Lycus Valley invited Philemon to come over and hear this guy speak. Philemon received Christ at that luncheon when Paul preached there in Ephesus.

Out of that, Philemon went home and led his wife Apphia and his son Archippus to the Lord. The church in the Lycus Valley started meeting in their home.

Here comes a runaway slave all the way to Rome and who does he meet but the guy who led his owner to the Lord. Say that isn't providential circumstance.

The more you get into this business of God moving people in and out of your life, the more aware you are of what God is



doing to mature you by the people that are in our lives.

That's the beautiful story.

Here comes Tychicus and Onesimus and then the pastor from the Lycus Valley Epaphras. So the three of them are heading back to the Lycus Valley with this letter and Onesimus has his tucked into his bag because he has to give it to his master. That's going to be a shaky deal if you can imagine.

Can you imagine him sitting in the congregation listening to this letter being read? What a tribute's being paid to him, as the letter comes to a conclusion. His name is mentioned as a faithful brother, a beloved brother and he's one of you. He's a local yokel from the Lycus Valley. What a beautiful picture.

“All things here they will make known to you.”

In other words, Onesimus is going to have some things he has to say and get settled. And as far as we know, that got done.

“faithful”—he was willing to serve right from the beginning and he was a beloved brother. Paul saw that it really took. He became a Christian and he's also 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.**

“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.”

We’ve had Tychicus and Onesimus. Now here come three more family members in the next verse.

### 3. ARISTARCHUS

We can call him the **SOLDIER OF THE CROSS**.

Whenever there’s a rumble or a war, Aristarchus is right in the middle of it. He’s the one that almost got killed in the riot in Ephesus.

Aristarchus was caught in the middle of all of that. He was a native of Thessalonica. Paul met him when he left Philippi and got to Thessalonica. Aristarchus’s life was touched and so he went right along with Paul.

This guy not only stayed with the apostle through the journey but he was the one who went to Jerusalem with him when the riot was stirred up and he was arrested and imprisoned. He went with him through the imprisonment. He went with him through the shipwreck and the voyage to Rome. He stayed with him and probably could have very well walked the road that spring morning when he was beheaded.

This is the kind of guy:

## 2 Timothy 2:3, 4

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

### 3. Soldier of the Cross—ARISTARCHUS

### 4. JOHN MARK

Do you remember John Mark? He's the one that wrote the Gospel of Mark. He had tremendous ministry in the life of Paul—not that it ended well. He also had a great ministry in the life of Peter. He used all of Peter's notes and collections to write the Gospel of Mark. He was a very prominent figure.

This is the way it happened:

John Mark is a nephew to Barnabas and they're getting ready to go on a missionary journey. John Mark wants to go along so that would mean Paul, Barnabas and John Mark. About half way through the first trip, John Mark got homesick and went back to Jerusalem.

This really ticked Paul off. He felt like the guy came out, signed up for the battle and then he flicked it in and headed to the house.

That created some real stress. Now understand, uncle

Barnabas has a different feeling about his nephew than Paul does because Paul's looking at it from the WORK and Barnabas is looking at it from the FAMILY point of view. So it's different.

What happened was that when they got ready for the second missionary journey, they came back to Antioch, gave their witness, went down to the Jerusalem council where they declared the Gospel—the grace of God is totally adequate plus nothing—no Law.

Then they got ready on the second missionary journey and Barnabas wanted to take John. Paul just said “No way. He isn't going. He's a loser.”

So Barnabas just—sparks flew—they split. And Barnabas took his nephew John and they went off toward Cypress. Paul called Silas from down in Jerusalem and he came up and joined him and they went off in another direction on the second and the third missionary journeys.

There was this stress that took place there. John Mark had a bad lap but that did not finish John Mark.

We talked on FORGIVENESS as the very first thing that every young couple has to deal with.

In 2 Timothy 4, as Paul is getting ready to put the pen down, this is his last letter:

## 2 Timothy 4:10

Bring John Mark with you, for he is profitable to me for the ministry.

So John evidently got it together with Uncle Barnabas and they had an incredible ministry and it was also profitable to the apostle Paul. Before Paul met his Maker, he wanted to get his heart right with John Mark and he did. The guy had an incredible ministry.

You may be knocked down but you're never knocked out. You just get up and keep going.

Were there any other guys that had bad laps? Abraham sure had several. Isaac did. Jacob did. Elijah did. Moses did. Peter did. Jonah did. David did. But they recovered! They did not consider it a terminal experience. They continued on and John Mark did this as well.

His motto is Philippians 3:

### Philippians 3:14

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

So that's your John Mark.

“...concerning whom you received orders. If he comes to you,

receive him.”

What he’s saying is, “I sent you a note to tell you be careful with John Mark because he doesn’t have the ability to stick with it when times get tough.”

Obviously he sent another message here—he didn’t go into specifics—but just “receive him.”

“Everything has turned out alright with me and I recommend John Mark. So if he comes through and needs support and help, get after it and get him on the way so that his past won’t stand in the way.”

That leads to:

## 5. BARNABAS

Uncle Barnabas—John Mark.

1. TYCHICUS,
2. ONESIMUS,
3. ARISTARCHUS,
4. MARK, and now
5. BARNABAS.

His name means “SON OF ENCOURAGEMENT.”

Barnabas comes into the biblical record in the same way that Paul is asking Philemon to do.

Paul, after he met the Lord on the road to Damascus, came back to Jerusalem. Nobody wanted to associate with him because they didn't believe him. They didn't believe it was real. Who comes along as the Son of Encouragement and takes him to every Bible class and says “Hey he's innocent, he's okay. He's really had an experience with the Lord”? Barnabas

As soon as they got through, they tried to kill Paul in Jerusalem. He goes home to Tarsus and the church sends Barnabas up to Antioch to help get that Gentile church started. That's where they were first called Christians. That church just flourished under Barnabas' ministry.

He got so excited about the ministry he went over to Tarsus and personally invited Paul to come and join him. They served together as pastors in this growing church in Antioch. That's how they got sent down to the council in Jerusalem to deal with the legalistic brothers and how they were sent on the first missionary journey. All because the Son of Encouragement came along and helped him to get into ministry and be supported.

Did they blow up on that first missionary journey after John Mark left and had strain all the time?

We don't see that. What we see is after they went to the Jerusalem Council, they went back up to Antioch. They continued the ministry and they were breaking bread and having big banquets.

Peter was so impressed with the testimony down there in Jerusalem that he, out of curiosity, went up to Antioch to see what was going on. Do you know what Peter did? He walked into the dining room and he refused to eat with the Gentile brothers. He went over and sat down with the Jews.

Paul got so mad he stood up in the middle of the Council and condemned him for destroying his ministry. And then the text says:

“and even Barnabas was influenced by Peter's example and withdrew from the Gentile brothers and went over to sit down with the Jewish.” (ref. Galatians 2:11-21)

When Paul says that it really torched him. Probably some of the background for them going their separate ways had to do with the fact Barnabas was acting just like John Mark. He withdrew and went home. It must have been a family trait.

Barnabas, in this situation, failed the apostle at a critical time. It might be why they went. We're not sure. There's not much more that's said about old Barnabas but he was a good man, full of the spirit, and had an incredible ministry. Because he had a bad lap, didn't mean that he finished either. He certainly influenced John Mark in a positive way.



This comes from Gary Thomas:

(Thirsting for God: Spiritual Refreshment for the Sacred Journey by Gary L. Thomas)

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.

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**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.**

“And Jesus, the one called Justus,”

## 6. JUSTUS

His name “Justus” means RIGHTEOUS.

“who are of the circumcision; these only are my fellow workers in the kingdom of God; those who have been a comfort to me.”

Some of the Jews were so powerfully impacted by the Gospel that they didn't even let circumcision and the Law enter into it. Paul said "I got great comfort from these."

Do you see the relationship between this verse and the other one? You can say, "there were three brothers that I want to mention in my family album that were Jews that were really, really supportive of what we're doing."

These three guys are:

Aristarchus,

Mark and

Justus.

The three that have Jewish backgrounds have been a comfort to the apostle. We don't know anything other than that about Justus—other than he is a Jew with a noble name and he's been a comfort to the apostle Paul.

**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.**

"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.”

## 7. EPAPHRAS

There is a pastor with a pastor’s heart. He prayed and agonized over these people in his church while he’s in Rome reporting to Paul.

What does he pray for his people?

They “might stand fully grown and fully assured in all the will of God.”

That takes us back to all ELEVEN STAGES of Christ that we’ve studied in Colossians to this point. It’s a perfect picture.

He is the PASTOR. Paul said:

### Colossians 1:7

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

He cared so much for them he went to Rome to find out how to answer the Gnostics in the situation. While he was there he agonized in prayer for them.

1. Faithful minister,
2. fellow prisoner,

3. wrestler in prayer, and

4. servant of Christ

are the four things that we would learn of him. What an example of a person who really gave himself to intercessory prayer, believing the power of God in meeting his needs.

**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.**

“For I am bearing witness of him”—now he’s telling about him—“that he has toiled (and worked hard) for you and those in Laodicea and those in Hierapolis.”

Do you have the picture?

In the Lycus Valley—Colosse, Hierapolis and Laodicea are the tri-cities.

They have made an impact in Colosse—that’s where we’re studying. We don’t know much about Hierapolis and Laodicea.

It’s interesting though that Laodicea is the seventh church in the book of Revelation that’s lukewarm and neither cold nor hot and makes the Lord sick. So obviously there were needs in the Lycus Valley and the Lord makes reference to that.

Also it is believed that the book of Ephesians was written to the Laodicean church. It was a CIRCULAR LETTER.

In Ephesus, in verse 1, it is in brackets in the later Greek manuscripts. The earlier ones actually leave it blank so it would be a circular letter and that would be one of the letters that would have gone to Laodicea.

The picture then is a picture of a beloved pastor.

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

“Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas greet you.”

“Luke, the beloved physician,”

## **8. DOCTOR LUKE**

He extended Paul’s ministry by years. He was with him all the way and walked with him down the road to his beheading.

He says in:

### **2 Timothy 4:11**

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

And so “Luke, the beloved physician.”

You know Dr. Luke don't you? He's the one that wrote the Book of Luke. He's also the one that wrote the Book of Acts.

He was a tremendous historian as well as a physician and he extended the apostle's life.

What a wonderful, wonderful thing to have a medical doctor in your album. Somebody that's beloved and a brother in Christ.

Number 9 is not that much fun:

## 9. DEMAS

“Demas greet you.”

We can call him DEMAS THE DESSERTER.

When things got hot he quit. He went to Thessalonica.

### 2 Timothy 4:10

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

The loneliness there. He'll never be able to say or hear from the Lord: “fought a good fight, I finished the course...”

He's like a Judas Iscariot. He threw it in when things got tough and did not finish well.

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

“Greet the brethren in Laodicea and Nymphas and the church in her house.”

**10. NYMPHAS**

She’s the only lady in the bunch. She’s obviously got a Bible study and a church going in her house.

Then the closing greetings:

1. “[To] the brethren in Laodicea,”
2. “[To] Nymphas and the church in her house.”

Her name’s in the Lamb’s Book of Life.

**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.**

“And when this letter has been read among you, have it read also in the church of the Laodiceans;”—that’s the other one—“and the letter from Laodicea you should also read.”

That would mean that they read the Book of Ephesians in their assembly.

Isn't it interesting? In the letters to the SEVEN CHURCHES in Revelation 2 and 3—the very first church is Ephesus and the last church is Laodicea?

FIRST and LAST—the first church, the church in Ephesus, is condemned because it has left its first love.

Laodicea—they're neither cold nor hot, they're lukewarm and they're making the Lord sick because of their lack of passionate fire for the Lord.

**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).**

“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 (and discharge it fully).”

Archippus is the son of Philemon and Apphia. He's the interim pastor fulfilling the responsibilities of the church in Colosse while Epaphras—pastor Epaphras—is in Rome. So he's carried on the ministry.

Paul is concerned about him. He's kind of laid-back and a little bit loose. He's basically telling him to tighten it up and get after it. He's not scorching him for just being that way but he wants him fired up and to get it going.



## 11. ARCHIPPUS

## 12. THE APOSTLE PAUL

Our great hero—not only that he would discharge fully his responsibilities but:

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

“The greeting by my own hand, Paul, be remembering my bonds. Grace be with you.”

“Would you remember that I’m in prison when you’re praying for me?” He’s asking these people that he’s never met. Then he says: “Grace be to you.”

He started with GRACE and he ends with GRACE. What a marvelous, marvelous letter we have had to study and we’ve learned a lot about our relationship to Christ while looking at this family album that’s before us.

There are 13 lessons in our text. Take time to let the Spirit of God touch your heart and walk through these 12 stages once again.

**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.

- Stage #1: Christ Changed My Life (1:1-8)
- 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)

It would be great to sing Bill Gaither's "The Family of God":

## 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)

Father, thank You that we've had this privilege of studying Your Word. We pray that it will prove to be meaningful and helpful to people. We pray that You will multiply the impact of the text as it is made available to others. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

# A Practical Study of EPHESIANS

## HEAVEN'S PLAN for Life on Earth

### “What It’s Like Living According to God’s Plan”

Key verse 3:11b — “*Christ is all and in all.*”

### STUDY NUMBER TWELVE – CHRIST IN OTHER PEOPLE – COLOSSIANS 4:7-18

#### KEY VERSE 4:7

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;

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.

#### NOTES

## NOTES

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.

## QUESTIONS:

1. Read Colossians 4:7-18 and in your own words pull out the main thought of this passage.

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2. How is Tychicus characterized in verse 7?

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3. Why is Tychicus being sent to them, according to verse 8?

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4. Who is Onesimus in verse 9? (The answer is found in the book of Philemon.)

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5. How are all these people characterized in verse 11?

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6. What is the concern of Epaphras for the Colossian saints recorded in verse 12?

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7. What is Archippus commanded to do in verse 17?

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8. From what source did his ministry come, according to verse 17?

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9. What verse in the study has meant the most to you?

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10. What lesson have you learned from this study?

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**LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:**

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.

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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.

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