

Colossians

Lesson 9 - Colossians 4:7-18

It would be very easy to read the verses at the end of this letter to the Colossians and think there is nothing to learn from this list of names and greetings, but we would be wrong. Each name is important enough to Paul to mention individually, and we can learn from the character traits of these men. Let this lesson be a reminder that we are all important to God, each and every one, and important to the body of Christ. Ask the Lord to reveal those qualities He would want to be worked into your life to equip you as a servant of God.

Begin your study with prayer, thanking the Lord for His Word and asking for understanding of it and wisdom in applying it to your life.

Memory Verse – This week’s memory verse:

“...(Christ--) from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love....”
Ephesians 4:16 NKJV

Read Colossians 4:7-9.

Since Paul was in prison when he wrote the letter to the Colossians, he would need to have someone else deliver his letters. He chose Tychicus and Onesimus to deliver his letters to the Ephesian and Colossian churches.

1. How did Paul describe Tychicus in Colossians 4:7? List all three below.

a.

b.

c.

2. These three descriptions tell us a lot about Tychicus and about his relationship with Paul and with the Lord.

a. Go back to question 1 above and, next to each description, write what they represent in a person’s life.

b. Which of these stands out as something you would like to represent to others?

3. According to Colossians 4:7-8, besides delivering the letter, what was Paul's purpose in sending Tychicus?

4. One translation for Colossians 4:8 is "*I have sent him to you for this very purpose--to let you know how we are doing and to encourage you. NLT*" It is such a blessing to encourage others and we all need to be encouraged from time to time. What do you see in the following scriptures about this?

a. Romans 1:12

b. 1 Thessalonians 5:11

c. Hebrews 10:25

5. Is there someone in your life that needs encouragement? How can you give that encouragement today?

6. According to Colossians 4:9, Paul sent Onesimus with Tychicus to the Colossians.

a. What do you learn of Onesimus in Philemon 1:10-18?

b. What three things does Paul say to describe him in Colossians 4:9?

c. How could this big change have come about in Onesimus? Consider Philemon 1:10,16.

d. Considering where Onesimus began, what meaning would be found in the words from Paul, "who is *one of you*"?

e. What Christlike example of forgiveness do you see in Philemon 1:18?

7. Paul described both Tychicus and Onesimus as *faithful*.

a. What do you think of when you read of someone who is *faithful*?

b. What do the following scriptures say about being faithful?

1. Proverbs 20:6

2. Matthew 25:21

c. What do the following scriptures say about the faithfulness of God?

1. 2 Thessalonians 3:3

2. 2 Timothy 2:13

3. Hebrews 10:23

4. 1 John 1:9

Read Colossians 4:10-11.

Next, Paul sends greetings from three men who are with him in his imprisonment in Rome.

1. The first man mentioned, Aristarchus, was one of Paul's companions on his second and third missionary journeys. What do you read of him in the following accounts in Acts?

a. Acts 19:29

b. Acts 27:1-2

2. What does it tell you about Aristarchus when Paul, in Colossians 4:10, describes him as, "*my fellow prisoner*"?

3. The next one mentioned is Mark the cousin of Barnabas. The relationship between Paul and Mark was not always a good one.

a. What do you read of Paul and Mark in Acts 15:36-39?

b. Whether one or both of them changed, the relationship between Paul and Mark definitely changed. What does Paul say about him in the following scriptures?

1. Colossians 4:10

2. 2 Timothy 4:11

3. Philemon 1:24

c. What can we learn from each of the three men involved in this relationship?

4. In Colossians 4:11 we find a third name, *Jesus who is called Justus*. Jesus was a popular Jewish name of the time and Justus was his Roman name. This is the only verse in the Bible where his name appears, yet Paul was thankful for him and included him in this letter. Not all servants of the Lord are publicly recognized, but that does not diminish their importance.

a. What does Ephesians 4:16 say that might encourage someone like Justus?

b. Colossians 3:23-24 also applies here. Write it as a reminder below.

5. Write what Paul had to say about these three men from Colossians 4:11.

6. We should all want to serve the Lord in a way that these things could be said of us! Think about who in your life or your church might need a fellow worker. Write their names here and how you might take a step to fill that need.

Read Colossians 4:12-14.

The previous three men Paul listed were all Jewish, *of the circumcision*, but Epaphras was a Gentile, *one of you*. We know from Colossians 1:7 that he brought the gospel to the Colossians, and he founded the church there. Sometime later he went to Rome to share with Paul about the condition of the Colossian church, resulting in the writing of this letter, and remained there as a fellow prisoner.

1. What does Paul call Epaphras in Colossians 4:12?

2. Epaphras seems to follow Paul's instruction from Colossians 4:2, to *continue fervently in prayer*.

a. How is his effort in prayer described in Colossians 4:12?

b. What does Epaphras pray for them?

c. What is his attitude toward them in verse 13?

d. Epaphras prayed for the Colossians, Laodiceans and those in Hierapolis. We can follow his example in prayer as he followed Paul. Consider who you might pray for as he did. Write their names and a prayer for them below.

3. Colossians 4:14 mentions two very different men. First, we will look at Luke. Luke traveled with Paul on several of his journeys, including Troas, Jerusalem, and Rome.

a. What does Paul call Luke in Colossians 4:14 and in Philemon 1:24?

b. Read 2 Timothy 4:6-7 and 11. What do you find about Luke and Paul in these verses?

4. The second man named in Colossians 4:14 is Demas. Since Paul passed on his greeting, Demas must have been with Paul at this time. He is mentioned only three times in the scripture, but the last reference is not a good one.

a. What does it say about Demas in 2 Timothy 4:10?

b. What admonition do you find in 1 John 2:15?

c. The move away from God toward the world isn't a sudden jump, instead it happens one step at a time. What warning about this do you find in 1 Corinthians 10:12-13?

5. It is sad when we see someone start well, but not end well. In 2 Timothy 4:6-8, we see what ending well can look like.

a. Write the declaration Paul made about himself in verses 7-8 here.

b. We all want to be able to make that declaration! What choices can you make to guard against the dangers that drew Demas away?

c. What does Jude 1:20-21 say about this?

Read Colossians 4:15-18.

1. In Colossians 4:15-16 we see that the churches shared the letters from Paul, and maintained a connection with Laodicea.

a. Who is specifically mentioned in Colossians 4:15?

b. What do we learn about him? Keep in mind that there were no church buildings for meeting together at this time.

2. The last person named in this letter is Archippus, found in Colossians 4:17. He is also mentioned in Philemon 1:2.

a. What is the message Paul had for him in Colossians 4:17?

b. Since every Christian has a ministry in the body of Christ, how can this exhortation apply to you?

3. When Paul says he wrote this salutation, “by my own hand”, it was a way to authenticate the letter. He says just two more things.

a. What does he ask them to remember?

b. Why would he ask this?

In closing...

1. Paul begins and ends this letter with *grace* for those who read it. What do the following scriptures tell us about how Paul viewed that *grace*?

a. 1 Corinthians 15:10

b. 2 Corinthians 12:9

2. How do you see God's grace in your own life?

Memory Verse

"...(Christ--) from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love...."
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