

Colossians 4: 7-18

Grace Gospel Chapel, Erie, PA

October 24, 2021

1

First, we will have a short quiz
on Colossians:
ARE YOU READY?

2

According to the letter to Colossians, the Colossian believers had love for:

- A. All human beings all over the world
- B. The poor and the destitute
- C. All the saints
- D. Only those who agreed with them

ANSWER: C

3

According to the letter, the apostle wants the Colossian believers to be filled with the knowledge of:

- A. God's Righteousness
- B. God's Kindness
- C. God's Will
- D. God's Beauty

ANSWER: C

4

The word “saints” (holy) in the letter to the Colossians refers to:

- A. People who are not sinners
- B. People who are always pure in their actions
- C. People whom a church has designated to be so after their death
- D. People who are consecrated and set apart for God
- E. People considered by other people to be moral and upright

ANSWER: D

5

In Colossians 1:14 we read that in Christ we have redemption through His blood. The word “redemption” means:

- A. To be declared “not guilty” by God
- B. Purchasing back from sin’s marketplace by paying a ransom
- C. To be purified by Christ regularly and progressively
- D. To satisfy God’s righteous requirement and appease His anger

ANSWER: B

6

In Colossians 1:14 we read that in Christ we have redemption through His blood. The word "redemption" means:

- A. To be declared "not guilty" by God ← **JUSTIFICATION**
- B. Purchasing back from sin's marketplace by paying a ransom ← **REDEMPTION**
- C. To be purified by Christ regularly and progressively ← **SANCTIFICATION**
- D. To satisfy God's righteous requirement and appease His anger ← **PROPITIATION**

7

According to Colossians chapter 1, what was the apostle Paul's reaction when he heard about the effects of the Gospel among the Colossian believers?

- A. He immediately visited them
- B. He immediately sent them a letter
- C. He immediately started praying for them
- D. He immediately started jumping up and down with joy

ANSWER: C

8

In the past several weeks we have learned the following from Colossians, except:

- A. The letter to the Colossians presents CHRIST AS SUPREME
- B. The letter to the Colossians presents THE INDWELLING CHRIST AS A MYSTERY REVEALED
- C. The letter to the Colossians presents CHRIST AS SUFFICIENT
- D. The letter to the Colossians presents CHRIST EMBODYING THE FULLNESS OF GOD
- E. The letter to the Colossians presents CHRIST AS THE TREASURE-HOUSE OF ALL KNOWLEDGE
- F. All of the above are false

ANSWER: F

9

The geographic locations mentioned in Colossians was in these areas except:



- A. Asia Minor
- B. Lycus River Valley
- C. Modern-day Turkey
- D. Area of Paul's 1st missionary journey

ANSWER: D

10

Who ministered initially in the geographic locations mentioned in the letter to Colossians?



- A. Timothy
- B. Tychicus
- C. Paul
- D. Aristarchus
- E. Epaphras

ANSWER: E

11

Rough Outline of Colossians

- PRAYERS (1:1-14)
- PRINCIPLES or DOCTRINES (1: 13 to 2: 3)
- POLEMICS—here Paul defends the TRUTH and attacks lies (2: 4 to 3:4)
- PRACTICAL aspects or PRACTICES (3:5 to 4:6)
- PERSONAL greetings (4:7 to verse 18)

12

Rough Outline of Colossians

- PRAYERS (1:1-14)
 - To be filled with the knowledge of God's Will in All Spiritual wisdom and understanding, leading to
 - A walk worthy of the Lord fully pleasing Him in all respects, which involves 4 aspects:
 - a) Bearing fruit in every good work ← **PRODUCT**
 - b) Increasing in the knowledge of God ← **PERSPICACITY**
 - c) Strengthening with all power, according to God's glorious might for all endurance and patience with joy ← **POWER**
 - d) Giving thanks to the Father who has qualified them/us for an **OTHERWORLDLY INHERITANCE**, having delivered them/us **FROM** the **DOMAIN** of darkness, And having transferred them/us to the Kingdom of His beloved Son ← **PRAISE**

13

The Great Faithfulness of the Father and Son towards us:

- We are **RESCUED** from the domain of darkness (1:13)
- We are **RELOCATED** (transferred) to the Kingdom of God's beloved Son (1:13)
- We are **RENDERED ACCEPTABLE** (been qualified) to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light (1:12)
- We have been **RESURRECTED** (made alive) along with Christ (2:13)
- We have been **REDEEMED** (we have redemption in Christ) (1:14)
- We have been **RECONCILED** to God through Christ's death (in His fleshly body) to present us holy and blameless and beyond reproach (1:22)

14

Colossians 4:7-9

Tychicus will tell you all about my activities. He is a beloved brother and faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord. ⁸ I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are and that he may encourage your hearts, ⁹ and with him **Onesimus**, our faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They will tell you of everything that has taken place here.

15

Colossians 4:10-11

¹⁰ **Aristarchus** my fellow prisoner greets you, and **Mark** the cousin of Barnabas (concerning whom you have received **instructions**—if he comes to you, welcome him), ¹¹ and Jesus who is called **Justus**. These are the only men of the circumcision among my fellow workers for the kingdom of God, and they have been a comfort to me.

16

Colossians 4:12-14

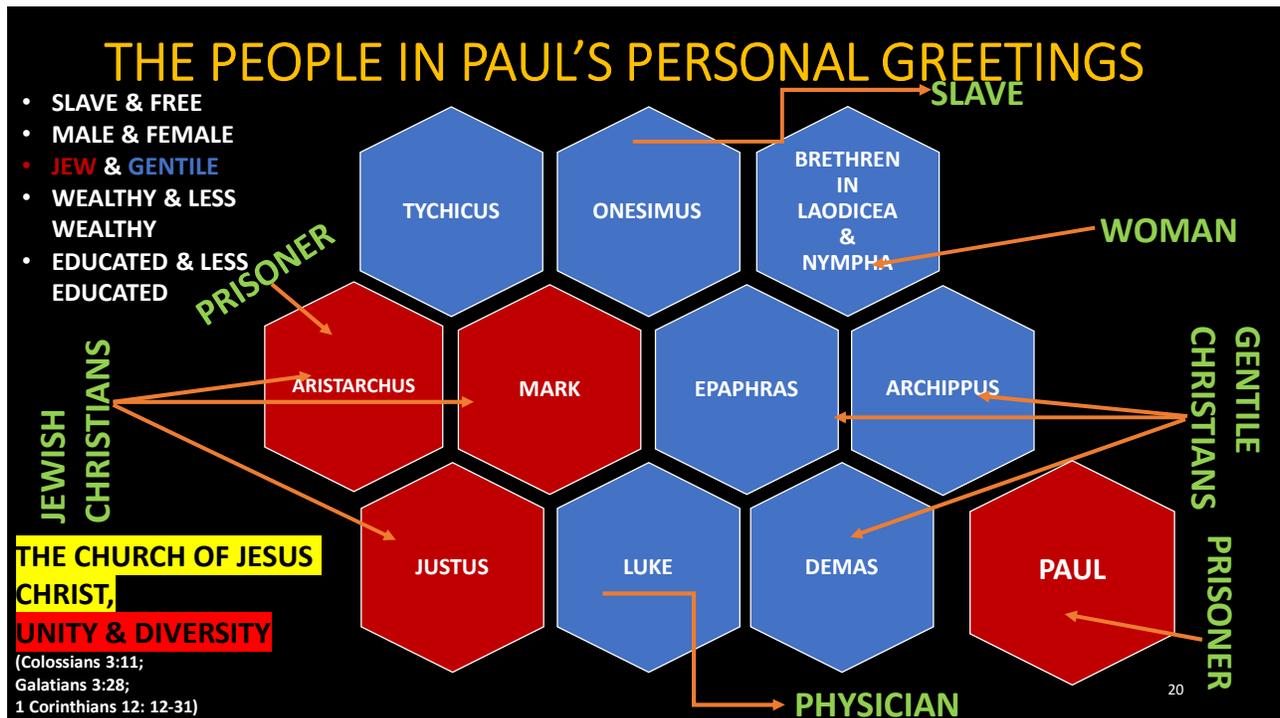
¹² **Epaphras**, who is one of you, a servant of Christ Jesus, greets you, always struggling on your behalf in his prayers, that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God. ¹³ For I bear him witness that he has worked hard for you and for those in Laodicea and in Hierapolis. ¹⁴ **Luke** the beloved physician greets you, as does **Demas**.

17

Colossians 4:15-18

- ¹⁵ Give my greetings to the **brothers at Laodicea**, and to **Nympha** and the church in her house. ¹⁶ And when this letter has been read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans; and see that you also read the letter from Laodicea. ¹⁷ And say to **Archippus**, "See that you fulfill the ministry that you have received in the Lord."
- ¹⁸ I, **Paul**, write this greeting with my own hand. Remember my chains. Grace be with you.

18



THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST,
UNITY & DIVERSITY

(Colossians 3:11;
 Galatians 3:28;
 1 Corinthians 12: 12-31)



Colossians 4:7-9 → Tychicus & Onesimus

Tychicus will tell you all about my activities. He is a beloved brother and faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord. ⁸ I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are and that he may encourage your hearts, ⁹ and with him **Onesimus**, our faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They will tell you of everything that has taken place here.

THE PEOPLE IN PAUL'S PERSONAL GREETINGS

TYCHICUS

- Mentioned 5 times in the NT
- He is from Asia Minor (Acts 20:4)
- He was definitely acquainted with Aristarchus and Timothy, along with other brethren (Acts 20:4)
- Accompanied Paul during Paul's 3rd missionary journey (Acts 20:4)
- Paul sent Tychicus to Asia Minor, possibly Ephesus (Ephesians 6:21) as well as to Colossae (Colossians 4:7) with the express purpose of informing the saints regarding Paul's circumstances
- Tychicus → communicator of news, but also an able minister of God
- He would most likely explain anything in Paul's letters that needed further clarification

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THE PEOPLE IN PAUL'S PERSONAL GREETINGS

TYCHICUS

- It is possible that one of the two unnamed brothers mentioned in **2 Corinthians 8:19-24** is Tychicus. Paul states that this brother has been "**often tested, and found diligent in many things**"
- He is not merely a deliverer of news. **2 Timothy 4:9, 12**, "**Make every effort to come to me soon**"; "**Tychicus I have sent to Ephesus**". Tychicus will temporarily fulfill Timothy's functions.
- Tychicus is sent to Crete and Titus is asked to visit Paul. "**When I send...Tychicus to you, make every effort to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there**" (**Titus 3:12**)
- These indicate that Tychicus is more than a deliverer of news, but a minister of God's Word.

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THE PEOPLE IN PAUL'S PERSONAL GREETINGS

TYCHICUS

- In Colossians, Tychicus is described as “beloved brother”; “faithful minister”; “fellow servant”
- “**Beloved Brother**” → **STATUS**: equal with Paul, in the same family
- “**Faithful Minister**” → **SERVICE** rendered with loyalty to Christ. Trustworthy, Reliable, steadfast. He carries out the task commissioned to him.
- “**Fellow servant**” → **STANCE**, of humility, submissiveness. Having the “mind of Christ”

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THE PEOPLE IN PAUL'S PERSONAL GREETINGS

ONESIMUS

- The letter to Philemon informs that Onesimus was a runaway slave who appears to have ran away to Rome after robbing his master Philemon.
- Onesimus became Paul's son (in the faith) while Paul “**was in chains**” (**Philemon 1:10**). It appears that Onesimus converted to Christ in Rome. ← **Onesimus' Conversion**
- Onesimus means “useful”. Paul's play on words— Onesimus “**formerly was useless to you** [i.e. Philemon] **but now is useful to you and to me.**” (**Philemon 1: 11**) ← **Onesimus' Profitableness**
- Onesimus was a great help to Paul, and Paul calls him “**my heart**”. Read **Philemon 1: 12-13** ← **Onesimus' ministry** (to Paul)

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THE PEOPLE IN PAUL'S PERSONAL GREETINGS



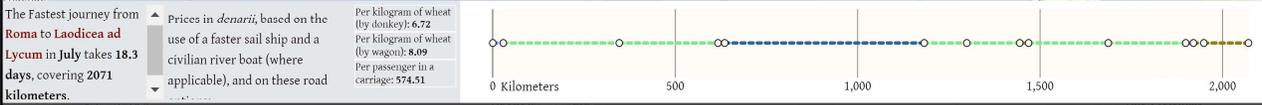
- No longer a slave but a **beloved brother**" (Philemon 1:16-17) ← **Onesimus' Spiritual Transformation**
- In Colossians, Onesimus is **"one of your number"**, meaning that he is a fellow Colossian.
- He is described as **"faithful and beloved brother"**
- He accompanies Tychicus and will bring news regarding Paul to the Colossians (Colossians 4:9)
- **NOTICE THE TRANSFORMATION** →
 - formerly a slave, now a beloved brother
 - Formerly a thief, unreliable, running away, useless, but now called **"faithful"** by the apostle Paul, and also **"useful"** and returning to face consequences.

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TYCHICUS (and Onesimus): From Rome to Laodicea (or Colossae)



- ONE POSSIBLE TRAVEL ROUTE (fastest possible)**
- Cost close to 600 denarii— which depending on the laborer would be equivalent to 1 or 2 years wages.
 - **About 2071 km = 941 miles**
 - About 18-19 days of travel
 - **Travel by both land and sea**
 - Most likely passed through Ephesus and delivered the letter to Ephesians there.
 - **The same dangers that confronted Paul in his journeys would confront Tychicus (and Onesimus) → dangers from rivers, robbers etc., dangers in the wilderness, sea etc. (2 Corinthians 11:26)**



Colossians 4:10-11 → Aristarchus, Mark, Justus

¹⁰ **Aristarchus** my fellow prisoner greets you, and **Mark** the cousin of Barnabas (concerning whom you have received **instructions**—if he comes to you, welcome him), ¹¹ and Jesus who is called **Justus**. These are the only men of the circumcision among my fellow workers for the kingdom of God, and they have been a comfort to me.

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THE PEOPLE IN PAUL'S PERSONAL GREETINGS

ARISTARCHUS

- Aristarchus is mentioned 5 times in the New Testament
- He is from Macedonia and lived in Thessalonica (**Acts 27:2**)
- In **Acts 19**, riot breaks out—Aristarchus and Gaius are dragged into the theater because the mob couldn't find Paul.
- Reason for the riot → decrease in business to the silversmiths making statues of Artemis because people were getting converted to Christ. The riot was instigated by a silversmith named Demetrius.
- Aristarchus accompanied Paul in his journey to Macedonia and Greece, after the riot (**Acts 20**)
- Aristarchus travelled with Paul and experienced the shipwreck that Paul experienced (**Acts 27**)

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THE PEOPLE IN PAUL'S PERSONAL GREETINGS

ARISTARCHUS

- Aristarchus is referred to as a “fellow prisoner” in Colossians 4:10
- Scholars are of the opinion that the phrase “fellow prisoner” refers to a voluntary imprisonment.
- Aristarchus chose to be a prisoner to probably serve Paul.
- His ministry does not appear to be in preaching necessarily, but in service to the apostle, tending to the apostle's needs. THAT IS **FAITHFULNESS**—not only to PAUL, but to CHRIST.
- Aristarchus suffered through a riot, a shipwreck and even voluntarily experienced imprisonment for the cause of Christ.

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THE PEOPLE IN PAUL'S PERSONAL GREETINGS

MARK

- Mark, also known as John Mark, wrote the gospel of Mark—the earliest gospel account that we have.
- His mother's name was Mary, and she accommodated believers to gather in her house and pray (**Acts 12:12**)
- Mark was Barnabas' cousin (**Colossians 4:10**)
- Mark was part of Paul's 1st missionary journey with Barnabas (**Acts 13:5**)
- Mark and Paul had a serious conflict because Mark did not stay through the whole journey, but deserted the group in Pamphylia (**Acts 15:38**)
- When Paul wanted to go back to the cities of the 1st journey, Barnabas was in agreement but wanted to take his cousin Mark also along (**Acts 15:37**)

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THE PEOPLE IN PAUL'S PERSONAL GREETINGS

MARK

- Paul did not want Mark coming along because he had deserted them in Pamphylia on the previous journey (**Acts 15:38**) Paul considered Mark unreliable.
- This led to a strong disagreement between Paul and Barnabas, and effectively split the missionary team into two—Barnabas taking Mark and sailing to Cyprus, while Paul went in a different direction with Silas (**Acts 15:39-40**)
- Many years later, it appears that Paul and Mark are reconciled, because **Colossians 4:10** not only records Mark as being present, but also as a “fellow worker”.
- Mark may not have been reliable before, but he is in the roster of the **faithful**.

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THE PEOPLE IN PAUL'S PERSONAL GREETINGS

MARK

- **We ought to NEVER GIVE UP ON BELIEVERS, even when we don't see eye-to-eye.**
- Paul includes Mark among the Jewish Christians who have been an encouragement to Paul (**Colossians 4:11**)
- Paul asks the believers in Colossae to welcome Mark (**Colossians 4:10**). They had received instructions regarding Mark—exactly what instructions or by whom is not clear.
- Mark is included in the greeting section of the Paul's letter to Philemon (**Philemon 1:24**)
- Paul asks Timothy, very close to Paul's death, to pick up Mark and bring him to Paul, because Mark was useful to Paul for service (**2 Timothy 4:11**)

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THE PEOPLE IN PAUL'S PERSONAL GREETINGS

JUSTUS

- Justus (also named Jesus) is the 3rd brother who was a Jewish convert, mentioned in Colossians 4:11.
- We don't know much about Justus.
- We know that he was an encouragement to Paul.

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Colossians 4:12-14 → Epaphras, Luke, Demas

¹² **Epaphras**, who is one of you, a servant of Christ Jesus, greets you, always struggling on your behalf in his prayers, that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God. ¹³ For I bear him witness that he has worked hard for you and for those in Laodicea and in Hierapolis. ¹⁴ **Luke** the beloved physician greets you, as does **Demas**.

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THE PEOPLE IN PAUL'S PERSONAL GREETINGS



EPAPHRAS

- Epaphras is mentioned 3 times in the New Testament.
- Epaphras, just like Onesimus, appears to be from Colossae—Paul refers to him as “one of you” (**Colossians 4:12**)
- Epaphras is referred to as the chief proclaimer of the Gospel in Colossae, Laodicea and Hierapolis. Paul states, that they “**learned** [the Gospel] **from Epaphras**” (**Colossians 1:7**)
- Epaphras is described by Paul as “**our beloved fellow servant**” and “**a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf**” (**Colossians 1:7**)

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THE PEOPLE IN PAUL'S PERSONAL GREETINGS



EPAPHRAS

- Epaphras not only brought the Gospel to the Lycus Valley, he also was a prayer warrior. Paul informs the Colossians that Epaphras is “**always struggling on your behalf in his prayers, that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God**” (**Colossians 4:12**)—**CONSTANT, FERVENT PRAYERS FOR THE BELIEVERS TO ACHIEVE MATURITY.**
- There is no question, that Epaphras is very concerned about the situation in Colossae, Laodicea, and Hierapolis, the syncretic philosophy making inroads into the church (**Colossians 4:13**)
- **HERE IS ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF FAITHFULNESS**

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THE PEOPLE IN PAUL'S PERSONAL GREETINGS



LUKE

- Luke is mentioned only 3 times in the New Testament
- We know that Luke wrote a substantial portion of the New Testament in 2 historical volumes known as the Gospel of Luke and Acts.
- Luke contributed about 37,933 words to the Greek New Testament, the total being 138, 020.
- This means that Luke contributed about 28% of the New Testament and is the writer who takes the first prize for the most number of words (in total). Paul contributes about 5,000 less words.
- Luke's scholarship is attested to by scholars in both his command of the Greek language and his attention to details.

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THE PEOPLE IN PAUL'S PERSONAL GREETINGS



LUKE

- It is astonishing, that a Gentile convert to Christ would be used by God to pen the most extensive history of Christ and the early Church.
- Luke is referred to as “**the beloved physician**” by Paul in **Colossians 4:14**, and as a “**fellow worker**” (Philemon 1:24)
- Luke sends his greetings to the saints at Colossae as well as to Philemon (**Colossians 4:14; Philemon 1:24**)
- **LUKE IS THE MAN WHO STAYED.** When Paul pens his last epistle, as he prepares for death, a faithful brother stayed with him when others had left. Paul states, “**Only Luke is with me**” (**2 Timothy 4:11**)
- Luke's **FAITHFULNESS** to Paul and to Christ is quite evident.

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THE PEOPLE IN PAUL'S PERSONAL GREETINGS

DEMÁS

- Demas is mentioned 3 times in the New Testament
- In **Philemon 1:24**, he is called a “**fellow worker**”
- In **Colossians 4:14**, he is merely referred to as a person greeting the Colossians along with others.
- In **2 Tim 4:10**, 3 different people are said to have left Paul → Demas, Crescens and Titus. Only Demas is referred to as “**being in love with this present world**” as a reason for his separation from Paul.
- We don't have any more information on what happened to Demas.
- Did Demas forsake Christ completely? Unlike Moses did Demas enjoy the “**fleeting pleasures of sin**” rather than “**choosing to be mistreated with the people of God**”? It is a sad tale of **UNFAITHFULNESS**.

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Colossians 4:15-18—Nympha, Archippus, Paul

- ¹⁵ Give my greetings to the **brothers at Laodicea**, and to **Nympha** and the church in her house. ¹⁶ And when this letter has been read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans; and see that you also read the letter from Laodicea. ¹⁷ And say to **Archippus**, “See that you fulfill the ministry that you have received in the Lord.”
- ¹⁸ I, **Paul**, write this greeting with my own hand. Remember my chains. Grace be with you.

42

THE PEOPLE IN PAUL'S PERSONAL GREETINGS

Brothers in Laodicea, NYMPHA, & the Church in her home

- We realize that there were brethren in Laodicea, and that there was a church that gathered in the home of a person named Nympha.
- Most translations consider Nympha a female while there are some who consider the believer in Laodicea to be NYMPHAS, in which case that believer would be a male.
- The bulk of scholarship weighs in favor of a female named Nympha.
- In those days, to have a house that could accommodate an assembly meant that the house was large.
- Usually a large house indicated wealth. It is reasonable to presume that Nympha was a wealthy woman.

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THE PEOPLE IN PAUL'S PERSONAL GREETINGS

Brothers in Laodicea, NYMPHA, & the Church in her home

- For a church to gather in her house, according to Paul in Colossians 4:15, would mean that this gathering was a regular one.
- This meant that for meetings of the assembly, particularly the meeting on the first day of the week, Nympha would open up her house.
- Nympha is a woman. Her hospitality is her service to the Lord.
- Paul asking the Colossians to greet the Laodiceans meant that the brethren from these nearby towns knew each other quite well. It is therefore possible that these brethren may have come together at some times for mutual edification. NYMPHA evidences **FAITHFULNESS** as well, for opening her house to regular gatherings.

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The Letter from Laodicea (Colossians 4:16)

“And when this letter has been read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans; and see that you also read the **letter from Laodicea**.”

- Scholars debate regarding this letter. Some say this is the circular letter to the Ephesians that would come to Laodicea on its way to Colossae. This is highly debatable. It also seems that Ephesians was written after Colossians.
- In the Greek, it states, “**the letter from Laodicea**”. It is unlikely that Paul is referring to a letter written by the Laodiceans.
- It is more likely that Paul wrote a letter to the Laodiceans, but this letter is now lost.
- Was this letter inspired? Paul’s strong emphasis on having that letter read and exchanged with the Colossian letter argues for its inspiration.
- Then why is this letter not in the canon, if God inspired the canon of the Bible?
- I think, that just like the two lost Corinthian epistles (Paul seems to have written 4 separate Corinthian letters. These letters were meant for the early Church and were not meant for us. God chose to not preserve these letters.
- What we have at present in the Scriptures, in the 66 books is inspired and inerrant and sufficient for life and godliness.

THE PEOPLE IN PAUL’S PERSONAL GREETINGS

ARCHIPPUS

- Archippus is mentioned only twice in the New Testament
- In **Philemon 1:2**, Archippus is referred to as a “**fellow soldier**”
- It is possible that Archippus is Philemon’s son because Philemon, Apphia and Archippus are mentioned together with the phrase, “the church in your house” (Philemon 1:2).
- This would indicate that Apphia was Philemon’s wife and Archippus was their son.
- Paul is encouraging Archippus to **fulfil his ministry**, in **Colossians 4:17**. This ministry was **received in the Lord**, so it probably refers to a ministry that is spiritual or having to do with the local assembly.

THE PEOPLE IN PAUL'S PERSONAL GREETINGS

ARCHIPPUS

- Note that Archippus is not asked to fulfill any ministry but the specific ministry that he has received in the Lord.
- Our **faithfulness** is demonstrated when we fulfill the ministry that God entrusts to us.

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THE PEOPLE IN PAUL'S PERSONAL GREETINGS

PAUL

- There is much we can say about Paul, but we will restrict our comments to this epistle.
- Paul wrote the final verse by himself, having used an amanuensis for the rest.
- Paul states, "**I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand.**" (**Colossians 4:18**)
- I can envision Paul taking the codex from the amanuensis and as he reaches for the codex, his chains may have started clinking, and he adds, "**remember my chains**".
- **FAITHFULNESS TO THE POINT OF PERSECUTION, IMPRISONMENT AND EVENTUALLY DEATH.**

48

CHRIST'S SUPREMACY AND SUFFICIENCY

LEADS TO OUR SATISFACTION, OUR STEADFASTNESS AND OUR FAITHFULNESS

ARE YOU FAITHFUL?

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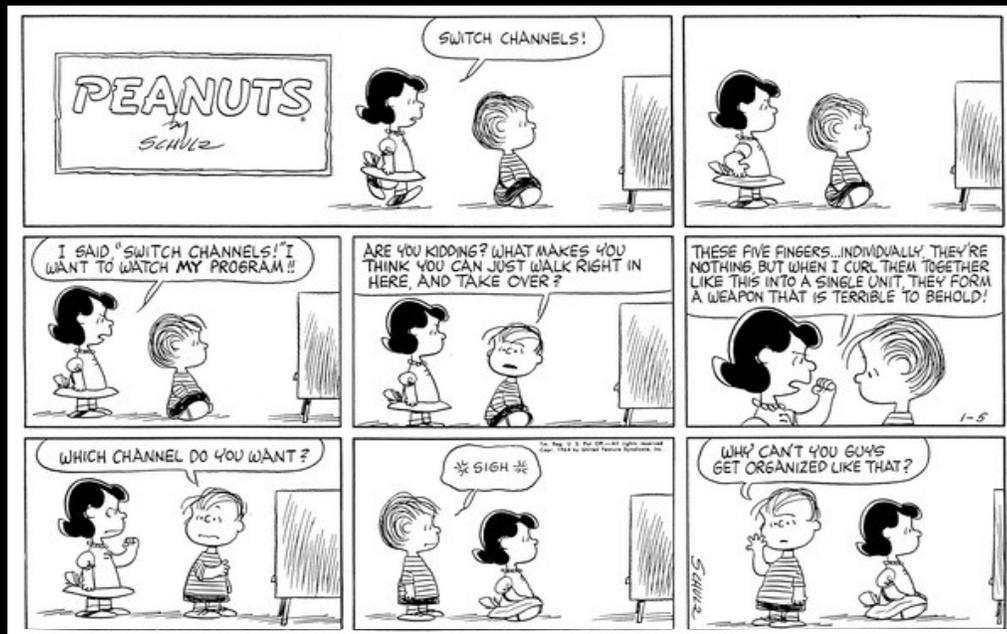
THE PEOPLE IN PAUL'S PERSONAL GREETINGS

- SLAVE & FREE
- MALE & FEMALE
- JEW & GENTILE
- WEALTHY & LESS WEALTHY
- EDUCATED & LESS EDUCATED

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST, UNITY & DIVERSITY

(Colossians 3:11;
Galatians 3:28;
1 Corinthians 12: 12-31)

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THE BODY: UNITY & DIVERSITY

51

James M. Black wrote in 1893:

Let us labor for the Master from the dawn till setting sun
 Let us talk of all his wondrous love and care
 Then when all of life is over and our work on earth is done
 And the roll is called up yonder I'll be there

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THE MISSION

1. There is a call going out across the land in every nation

A call to all who swear allegiance to the cross of Christ

A call to true humility, to live our lives responsibly

To deepen our devotion to the cross at any price

2. Let us then be sober, moving only in the Spirit

As aliens and strangers to the hostile foreign land

The message we're proclaiming is repentance and forgiveness

The offer of salvation to the dying race of man

CHORUS:

To love the Lord our God, is the heartbeat of our mission

The spring from which our service overflows

Across the street or around the world

The mission's still the same, PROCLAIM AND LIVE THE TRUTH IN JESUS' NAME

3. As a candle is consumed by the passion of the flame

Spilling light unsparingly, throughout the darkened room

Let us burn to know Him deeper, then our service flaming bright

Will radiate His passion, and blaze with holy light

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