

Index to Colossians

[Sunday, December 27, 2015] Colossians Series, Colossians chapter 4, verses 7 - 18 – Craig A Thurman

We come to the closing portion of the letter to the Colossian church. If I could impress upon our minds anything when reading these church letters, in order to glean the best fruit from them is to remember that a letter always addresses a specific people. This letter was written to a church, a certain church. What is a church? It is an identifiable group of baptized believers located in a certain place, who go out as witnesses of the risen Lord wherever they are and wherever they go. This church, the membership of this body must be able to come together to execute a variety of corporate duties. They should be able to fellowship together in the Spirit around the Word of God, worship and make judgments. This letter has no means of proper application for believers that are beyond this scope of the letter. In a strict sense of the word, only the church at Colossae could receive this letter, read it, and apply it. But, we shall learn today, this letter is applicable to any church that is like the Colossian church. Therefore there are some things that belong to all churches. But there are some things that belong to only that church.

For example, in the letter of Paul to the Roman saints, he writes that they receive a sister and servant in the Lord, named Phoebe, and assist her in her appointed business. Those words do not belong to us specifically. They were peculiarly directed to the Roman saints. We cannot receive Phoebe, nor can we help her. She is of another time and place. Phoebe has long since died and gone to be with the Lord. We simply read this portion of God's Word and learn of our duty to receive and help other sisters in the Lord who might be in a parallel circumstance.

The letter to Philemon is has a very restricted audience. So the second letter of John, which was written to one who is call *the elect lady*.

But all of these letters, the entire Word of God has been delivered into the hands of the N.T. churches. By them the Lord has preserved His Word, and they are to keep this Word. No other entity can do this, and no other entity has done this, but the churches of the Lord Jesus Christ. So, the Word of God, like this Colossian letter states, is really one large circular letter. As we shall read, the Colossians were to be sure to pass along, at least a copy of their letter to the church which

Colossians Series

was at Laodicea. And the letter that Paul wrote to the Laodicean was to be read by the church at Colossae. (Col.4.16) And so the churches were copying and forwarding their letters, and through history we now have what has come to the English-speaking people of the world, the KJV Bible. Each of the Lord's churches should receive these letters, garner its truths, apply its rule, and glorify their Lord just as if they were the original addressee. All that to say this: there is no such thing as an universal church. That doctrine has done more to whittle away at the importance of the work and doctrine of the (local) true church, and to severely weaken the cohesiveness and accountability of the membership of each body.

Verses 7-14 – Paul names names: he names his fellowhelpers in the ministry that are present with him

Verse 15 – Paul names churches: he adds a greeting to the Laodicean house-church.

Verse 16 – Paul notes that they be sure to circulate between them the letters that he has written.

Verse 17 – Paul encourages the church to encourage Archippus to keep to the business of the ministry.

Verse 18 – Paul adds his traditional closing signature

Τὰ κατ' ἐμὲ πάντα

7 ¶ *All my state*

All things as to me

τὰ κατ' ἐμὲ is found in these two other places:

*Eph 6:21 But that ye also may know **my affairs** τὰ κατ' ἐμὲ, and how I do, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things:*

*Php 1:12 ¶ But I would ye should understand, brethren, that **the things which happened unto me** τὰ κατ' ἐμὲ have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel ...*

The content of the communications of Paul to the churches generally consisted of two main parts: By keeping the churches apprised of the spread of the gospel into new areas he was able to inform them of his fellow-laborers, of the resistance they encountered, and of those who

Colossians Series

came to the faith of Christ. Then as churches were instituted he was able to communicate from one church to another of needs, specific hardships or sufferings, and of the faith and practice, growth or setbacks of like churches. This is the essence of the state, or of the affairs that Paul communicated to the churches.

Admittedly here I will chase *a rabbit*. Let's consider Paul's state for a moment. And consider Paul's state I would ask, How is our state? How are our affairs? It was at this juncture that my thoughts were to inquire how Paul came to be the great man of God that we all would hope to emulate as fellow-Christians, saints of a N.T. church? To answer this we need to consider Paul's experience.

The Lord had made known to Paul (through Ananias), even before he began his ministry that...

Ac 9:15 ... he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:

*16 For I **will shew** him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.*

*will shew, ὑποδείξω, fut., ind. of ὑποδείκνυμι, ὑπό under, in + δείκνυμι is a display; [sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world; go thy way, shew thyself to the priest; he will shew you a large upper room], ὑποδείκνυμι, Mt. 3.7, who **hath warned** you to flee; Lk. 6.47, I **will shew** you to whom he is like; 12.5, But I **will forewarn** you whom; Acts 20.35, I **have shewed** you all things ...*

Jesus said of His Lordship over them:

Jn.13.18 ¶ I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me.

19 Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he. (That is, He is your Lord and Master. [vs.13])

Of His death and resurrection:

Colossians Series

*Jn.14.28 ¶ Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I.
29 And now I have told you **before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe.***

Doubtless we all look to the apostle Paul as an example of what a Christian ought to be? Why? Among a number of reasons I will say that it is because we see him as a fruitful man. But what we might overlook is what the Lord brought into his life as a means of making and proving him to be the great apostle to the Gentiles. The real truth of the matter is, we want to be like him without having to endure the things that he went through that made him into the godly man he was. In a physical realm, we want the braun without having to go to the gym. We'd much rather someone develop a pill so that we could painlessly bulk up. But that is not how it works is it?

Paul was a fruit-bearer. And what means is, the Lord came to him in special visitations and pruned away portions of his life. Once the Lord worked to pruned away this portion. And then he worked to pruned away that. It was through this process of the Lord working that Paul came to bring forth fruit, and then more fruit. As contrary to the natural eye and to human reason that this is, the very thing that should have limited fruit-bearing actually worked to produce more fruit. Most of us know this theoretically, but we struggle with it in the real experience.

The only way to bear fruit to God is to suffer this contradiction in our lives. We must have the excesses and carnality of our lives pruned, cut, and trimmed away. (Jn.15. 1-8) We must have love tested, faith proved, forgiveness enacted, forbearance suffer, joy sorrow so that we grow more fruitful. It isn't only that the flesh is cut back, but our spirit is to be strengthened. We're going to have to endure failure in ourselves as well as in others. And we never outgrow this work. It is in the pruning process that we become sensitized to things in our lives that we have allowed to *creep* back in, or that we forgot about, or that we hid away. So the Lord comes to us and begins to tend to His branch. He begins to cut away at this, and then at that. He begins to purge out from our lives this particular issue, and later another. It is in the pruning process that we soon discover

Colossians Series

the real condition of our heart before the Lord. Sins slow and deceptive growth in our lives becomes manifested as the touch of the husbandman begins to skillfully cut away from the branches. If it weren't for His interest in us, and His love for us, His faithfulness to us we would soon become covered with lots of outward growth, but without the fruit that it must have to glorify the skillful work the Husbandman. Like a Willow shrub, when you cut down the one growth sometimes five or six more take its place. There are places we want growth, and there are places we do not. And with vines they are to be *trained* to trail correctly or else they will break when exposed to wind or weights. By this process, which is attributed to the working of our Heavenly Father, he works in us to to be willing to purge away the flesh, the old nature, and to take up the virtues of the blessed Son of God, (2Pe.1.2-11), thereby conforming us to the image of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Ro.8.30 *predestinated to be conformed [that our nature or character might be as His, **σύμμορφος**] to the image of His Son*) The only way that we will genuinely confront some of the most ugly things that are within us is to have trial bring it out into the open; it is then that we see sin glaring back at us. Whether it is pride, lust, deceit, anger, whatever it is, we are necessarily embarrassed, ashamed; we cry out for help and cleansing and repent, if not but moment by moment. And our Father purges from us those things. We will want to put away these things for the love of Christ, and for the love of the saints. We desire to abide in Him and He in us. And as fruit begins to come forth, the next season will bring more pruning. The results are that faith will be worked, love will be increased, patience will be lengthened, joy will bear through sorrow, peace will ride out the storms. That is what our Heavenly Father is working in His children. But if we rebel, we are cast forth and burned. The sweet Psalmist says, *Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me ... Ps. 138.7a*

'That there was a consciousness in David's mind of spiritual relapse is clearly evident. It would appear that in the process of trial through which he was now passing, the discovery of this relapse was made. O what a detector of the secret state of our souls does the season of trial often prove! We are not aware of our impaired strength, of our weak faith, of our powerless grace; – how feeble our hold on Christ is; how legal our views of the gospel are; how beclouded our minds may be; how partial our acquaintance with God is, – **until we are led**

Colossians Series

into the path of trouble. (bolding added) The season of prosperity veils the real state of our souls from our view. No Christian can form an accurate estimate of his spiritual condition who has not been brought into a state of trial. We faint in the day of adversity, because we then find – what, perhaps, was not even suspected in the day of prosperity, – that our strength is small.

...

Listen to the language of Moses, addressed to the children of Israel, – “Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments or no.” And O what a discovery that forty years’ marching and countermarching in the wilderness was to them of the pride, the impatience, and unbelief, and ingratitude, and distrust, that were bound up in their heart! And yet, though all this evil was deep-seated in their nature, they knew it not, and suspected it not, **until trial brought it to the surface.** Thus, beloved, is it with us. ... O let us not, then, shrink from the probing (of the Lord by fiery trial, added), **nor startle at its discovery,** if it but lead us nearer to holiness, nearer to Christ, nearer to God, nearer to heaven!’ *The Inner Life*, Octavius Winslow (Aug. 1, 1808 – Mar. 5, 1878), p. 216, 217, 218; (bolding added)

What was a back of all of the trial that Paul endured but to be made into the image of Christ, and thereby glorify Him as the Living Lord. Whether it was the rods laid hard upon his back, the shipwrecks, the starvation, the nakedness, being robbed, lied about by brethren, suffering jealousies of fellow-preacher brethren, hated by his own countrymen, now bound with a chain and prisoner in Rome; all of this worked to make him glorify the Lord Jesus Christ in a way that otherwise would and could never have been done. So, I say it again, We all want to be like Paul. What was he doing? He was emulating His Lord Jesus. *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* (Acts 9.6) The Lord shows us through Paul that sinners can be transformed by the renewing of their minds to be like Christ. (Ro.12.2; Eph.4.23)

1Ti.1.15 This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.

Colossians Series

16 *Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, **for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.*** (Paul wasn't referring to the singular moment of the experience of conversion at his first faith in Christ. He was referring to the longsuffering of the Lord all along his life since he believed. God bore with all of Paul's imperfections and used him in a wonderful way for a great work which has affected even us, 2000 years later. It is not a great Paul, but a great God who used Paul. And he can use us.

(All my state ...)

γνωρίσει ὑμῖν Τυχικὸς
shall Tychicus declare unto you,

shall ... declare, γνωρίσει, 3rd ps, fut., ind., act., of γνωρίζω.

γνωρίσει used in this one other place:

*Eph 6:21 But that ye also may know my affairs, and how I do, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, **shall make known** γνωρίσει to you all things ...*

ὁ ἀγαπητὸς ἀδελφὸς καὶ πιστὸς διάκονος καὶ σύνδουλος ἐν κυρίῳ
who is a beloved brother, and a faithful minister and fellowservant in the Lord:
the beloved brother deacon

ἀγαπητὸς, KJV, *dearly beloved, beloved, wellbeloved*; there are those who are dear to us; the Son is especially dear to the Father; John was especially noted in the Scriptures as *the one whom Jesus loved* (Jn.13.23); Tychicus, as well as Luke [in this epistle, 14) was especially dear to Paul; there is a sense that all of the saints of God are *dear* to us. All of the epistles make this clear enough. There is nothing wrong with a discriminating love.

We first discover Tychicus' name in Acts 20.4. From this reference, Paul has begun his final return to the city of Jerusalem. Tychicus very likely joined with Paul sometime earlier. Tychicus might have remained with Paul as he made his way back to Jerusalem, continued through his arrested, and sailed

Colossians Series

with Paul the prisoner to Rome, this covering an approximately period of four years. (58-62A.D., cf. Barnes chronology of Acts) It was the pen of Tychicus that is attributed to the writing of the letter to the Ephesians; and both Tychicus and Onesimus, the Colossian letter. (cf. postscripts to both letters)

διάκονος, **are those who render a service to which they have been appointed.** It doesn't matter if it is drawing water (Jn.2.9), if it is a king's servants (Mt.22.13), servors at a wedding feast (Jn.2.5), the Lord's servants (Mt.20.26), servants of the church (Ro.16.1; 1Ti.3.8, 12), or servants of the gospel (Eph.3.7), it is an appointed service. The KJV translates this as *servants* and *ministers*. In this case, Tychicus, not only was a beloved brother, but faithful to the service to which the Lord had appointed him ... and was fellowservant, in other words he pulled well with the yoke of service with Paul, in the gospel of Christ.

Concerning the word, διάκονος, a study of this word leads us to understand that this *service, ministry* is always because of an appointment. This Greek word is used 30 times in the N.T. With that in mind, we cannot overlook Phoebe, servant of the church which was at Cenchrea. This in no way means that she held one of the two offices of the N.T. church; bishop or deacon. This simply means that she *was appointed* to some service of this church. What it is peculiarly we cannot say, except that she, being a woman, was restricted from the only two offices of the church, and as such the church could not assume to support her (take her into the number) except that she meet the prerequisite qualifications of Scripture. (cf. 1Ti.5.9, 60+ years of age, raised children, ministered faithfully with the saints, and once married.) As long as she is not required to speak in the gatherings of the saints or instructs men at that time she could well serve in any capacity that the church might think she could, and she might receive assistance through freewill contributions.

σύνδουλος, σύν together, with + δούλος a servant.

Τὰ κατ' ἐμὲ πάντα γνωρίσει ὑμῖν Τυχικὸς ὁ ἀγαπητὸς ἀδελφὸς καὶ πιστὸς διάκονος καὶ σύνδουλος ἐν κυρίῳ

Colossians Series

ὃν ἔπεμψα πρὸς ὑμᾶς εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο
8 *Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose,*
thing

ἵνα γινῶ τὰ περὶ ὑμῶν καὶ παρακαλέσῃ τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν,
that **he might know** your estate, and comfort your hearts;
things concerning you

The Ephesian letter communicates that the church might know their business and that Tychicus might comfort them; whereas the Colossian letter communicates that, not only should Tychicus know their business but comfort their hearts as well.

γινῶ, 3rd ps, aor. 2, **subj.**, act., of γινώσκω to know; *might know*.

παρακαλέσῃ, 3rd ps, aor. 1, subj., act. of παρακαλέω, παρά about, near + καλέω to call.

*Eph 6:22 Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that **ye** might know our affairs, and that he might comfort your hearts.*

*Eph 6:22 ὃν ἐπέμψα πρὸς ὑμᾶς εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο ἵνα **γινῶτε** (2nd p pl, aor, subj; otherwise identical to the Colossian text) τὰ περὶ ἡμῶν καὶ παρακαλέσῃ τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν*

ὃν ἔπεμψα πρὸς ὑμᾶς εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο ἵνα γινῶ τὰ περὶ ὑμῶν καὶ παρακαλέσῃ τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν,

... (picking up the main thought,) *I have sent* [Tychicus] ...

σὺν Ὀνησίμῳ τῷ πιστῷ καὶ ἀγαπητῷ ἀδελφῷ ὅς ἐστιν ἐξ ὑμῶν
9 With Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, **who is [one] of you.**

τῷ πιστῷ, a dative phrase used in this one other passage, Gal.3.9, *with faithful* Abraham.

Colossians Series

Tychicus shall be accompanied on this trip by Onesimus. We read the words, *Onesimus ... who is one of you*. Onesimus appears to be from Colossae and known by the Colossian church. There appears to be a purpose behind Paul's sending Onesimus to Colossae with Tychicus. This could be the occasion that Paul uses to send Onesimus back to make restoration to his slave-owner and master, Philemon. (Phlm. 18, 19) It is in the letter to Philimon that we learn that Onesimus was, before Christ, an unprofitable and runaway slave. (Phlm. 11, 15, 18) But since departing his master, and hearing the gospel through Paul's preaching, he had come to faith in Christ.

*Phm 1:10 I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, **whom I have begotten***

ἐγέννησα, 1st ps., aor. 1, ind. act of γεννάω; to gender, beget. Simply meaning that the Lord had used Paul to see his new birth. Onesimus' birth took place while I was a bound man. **This does not mean gospel regeneration.** Regeneration is without means. (Jn.1.13, by the will of God; Jn.3.8, *of the Spirit*; 1Pe.1.3, by the Father)

in my bonds ...

Now, the issue of slavery is greatly misunderstood. Anyone who will make a Biblical investigation of slavery must acknowledge that there is a slavery that is proper, and that there is a slavery that is not.

A Dictionary of the Bible, James Hastings, p.834, Philemon by J. H. Bernard, 'It is not condemned, nor does St. Paul even advocate directly the emancipation of Onesimus.' (Note: Though the writer goes on to say, in error, that it was inconsistent with the religion of the Incarnation.)

We have no idea how Onesimus came to be a slave. But the mention of slaves in the churches of the Lord Jesus Christ is not an uncommon one. (1Co.7.21; 1Co.12.13; Gal.3.28; Eph. 6.8; Col.3.21, 22; **five places**) Amazingly, with as many references to slavery that there is, it is never condemned in the Word of God.

Colossians Series

In the Bible, slavery was the result of indebtedness (Lev.25.39; Mt.18.25),

Lev.25.39 ¶ And if thy brother that dwelleth by thee be waxen poor, and be sold unto thee; thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bondservant ...

criminal activity (Ex.22.3),

Ex.22.3 If the sun be risen upon him, there shall be blood shed for him; for he should make full restitution; if he have nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft.

and a bounty of war (Deu.21.10).

Deu.21.10 ¶ When thou goest forth to war against thine enemies, and the LORD thy God hath delivered them into thine hands, and thou hast taken them captive,

Otherwise, slavery is the evil of human trafficking, which is kidnapping of men, women, boys and girls for all sorts of purposes. This is condemned as a sinful practice by the Word of God, just as whoremongers and homosexuals are condemned. Sin is sin. (1Ti.1.10, *menstealers*, ἀνδραποδισταῖς, ἀνὴρ man + ποδός foot; cf. 3Macc.7.5, *slaves*)

*1Ti.1.9 Knowing this, **that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers,***

*10 For **whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine;***

They

That is, by the word of a fellowservant, Tychicus, and the word of a slave, Onesimus, they are going to cause the Colossians to know their affairs. As a

Colossians Series

Christian, social standing has nothing to do with one's ability to communicate faithfully and truthfully. There are plenty of rich liars. But there are plenty of poor ones too. We should not judge one's ability to be faithful and truthful based on social status. Such judgments are condemned by James. (Ja.2.1-7)

πάντα ὑμῖν γνωριοῦσιν τὰ ὧδε
shall make known unto you all things [which are done] here.
or, declare [the facts]

They shall make known, γνωριοῦσιν, 3rd p pl, fut. of γνωρίζω, to know or declare.

σὺν Ὁνησίμῳ τῷ πιστῷ καὶ ἀγαπητῷ ἀδελφῷ ὅς ἐστιν ἐξ ὑμῶν πάντα ὑμῖν γνωριοῦσιν τὰ ὧδε

10 ¶ *Aristarchus my fellowprisoner saluteth you,
fellow-captive*

Paul does not say, *fellowservant* (as in v.7), *but fellowprisoner.*

συναιχμάλωτος, σὺν together, with + αιχμάλωτος a captive (Lk.4.18). **We** have no information concerning the arrest of Aristarchus, other than that he was a fellowprisoner with Paul for the gospel of Jesus Christ. It would be very doubtful that Paul would have attached such a significant honor upon another unless they truly shared the same grounds for their *chain*; Jesus Christ. This is a always a notable mark in the saints of God.

Ro 16:7 Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and my fellowprisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me. (From this text Paul had kinsmen that preceded him in the honor of being prisoners for Christ.

Rome was not a welcome place for Christians. Those who came to Rome were at risk to becoming *captives* or *prisoners* because of their

Colossians Series

identification to Jesus Christ. And those who came to Paul were especially at risk to becoming *fellowcaptives* with him.

Of these brethren, Epaphras is the only other one who is named as a *fellowcaptive*. (Phlm. 23) (Epaphras is mentioned in the Colossian letter, but without the note of captivity. It could be that he was released from charges and therefore no longer a *fellow captive*.)

and Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas,
Or, Mark

Who had become a great man had behind him, in this instance, a great background. But that is not always the case. But when it is we would mention it as a part of that which the Lord used in the life of one of His own as a contributing factor to growth in Christ. My opinion is that Paul's mention of Mark's uncle Barnabas, was not only as a means of identifying him, but as a kind of commendation or a credential. Doubtless a man stands in his own right, but sometimes we can see some surrounding instrumentality at work for which we can give glory to God alone.

We recall that this is the same Mark who quit early into the first missionary expedition of Paul and Barnabas. This is the same Mark over whom Paul and Barnabas had a sharp contention about whether he should accompany them on the next expedition.

And Mark was not permitted to go with Paul then. Rather, Paul and Silas began their trip and then picked up Timothy a short time later. And Barnabas took Mark and went to the island of Cyprus. [cf. Acts 15.39] As far as we can tell, Barnabas and Paul never worked together as they had before, yet their work in the gospel of Jesus Christ continued as a compliment to one another. (cf. 1Co.9.6, It might be that Barnabas was a pastor of the church, receiving support of them in this work.)

Mark is now with Paul at Colossae, but will leave him for a time. We gather this from the facts that just before Paul's martyrdom he asks Timothy to be

Colossians Series

sure to bring Mark with him to Rome when he came, *for he is profitable to me for the ministry.* (2Ti.4.11)

profitable, εὐχρηστος, εὖ well + χρηστός KJV, *easy* (Mt.11.30), *better* (Lk.5.39), *kind* (Lk.6.35), *goodness* (Ro.2.4), *good* (1Co.15.33), *gracious* (1Pe.2.3); εὐχρηστος, KJV, 2Ti.2.21, *meet for ... use*; Phlm 2.11, *profitable*;

Phlm.22 *But withal* (along with the rest, at the same time) *prepare me also a lodging: for I trust that through your prayers I shall be given unto you.*

23 *There salute thee* **Epaphras**, *my fellowprisoner in Christ Jesus;*

24 **Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas**, *my fellowlabourers.*

The names of these brethren greeting Philemon are the same as those in Colossians, and by that we would conclude that these two letters were written at about the same time.

περὶ οὓς ἐλάβετε ἐντολάς ἐὰν ἔλθῃ πρὸς ὑμᾶς δέξασθε αὐτόν
(*touching whom ye received commandments: if he come unto you, receive him;*)
concerning

... if he comes unto you, Either this means that Paul is not sure whether to send Marcus to Colossae, or that Marcus is willing to go, or perhaps he is considering going elsewhere. In any event Mark will be leaving Paul for a while for reasons unbeknownst to us.

receive, δέξασθε, 2nd p pl, aor 1, **imper** of δέχομαι, *receive, take.*

δέξασθε, is used four times in the N.T.: (2Co.11.16, *receive*; Eph. 6.17, *take*, Ja. 1.21, *receive.*)

Based on Mark's person, his background, and his work the Colossians are to *receive him*. Mark had evidently come to Colossae before and brought to them certain commandments from Paul (... *touching whom ye received commandments* ...). These commandments must have been some kind of instruction concerning the Word of God or else they could not have been

Colossians Series

held in so high regard. So by Paul's use of his name he reminds them of these commandments as well.

Ἀσπάζεται ὑμᾶς Ἀρίσταρχος ὁ συναιχμάλωτός μου καὶ Μάρκος ὁ ἀνεψιὸς Βαρναβᾶ περὶ οὗ ἐλάβετε ἐντολὰς ἐὰν ἔλθῃ πρὸς ὑμᾶς δέξασθε αὐτόν

11 *And Jesus, which is called Justus, **who are of the circumcision.***

of the circumcision meaning that they are believers of the Jews.

οὗτοι μόνοι συνεργοὶ
These **only** are my fellowworkers

A clear indication that Peter, if he ever really came to Rome as tradition suggests, had not arrived there yet. Biblically, we do not know whether he ever came to Rome. **But also this must mean that these are the only Jewish brethren that are assisting him in the work of the gospel among the Gentiles at this present time.**

εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ οἵτινες ἐγενήθησάν μοι παρηγορία
unto the kingdom of God, which have been a comfort unto me.
for are become

have been, ἐγενήθησαν, 3rd p pl, aor. 1, ind., pass. of γίνομαι to become; is used in the N.T. 3 times, (1Co.10.6, were; He.11.34, waxed).

comfort, παρηγορία, this is the only time the Gr. is used in the N.T.; LXX, 4Maccabees 12.3 endeavored; 4Macc. 5.5.12, have.

St. Paul's Epistles to the Colossians and Philemon, J. B. Lightfoot, p.239, 'were used especially as medical terms, in the sense of 'assuaging,' 'alleviating'; ... and perhaps owing to this usage, the idea of consolation, comfort, is on the whole predominant in the word.'

And then what follows are the names of the remaining three Gentile ministers to Paul, Epaphras, Luke, and Demas; two of whom, Luke and Demas, will remain there with him for the time. We know that Demas will

Colossians Series

forsake Paul *having loved this present world*. (2Ti.4.10, which could have been written about three years later. cf. Barnes, Acts Chronology, vol. 10, p.385)

καὶ Ἰησοῦς ὁ λεγόμενος Ἰουῆστος οἱ ὄντες ἐκ περιτομῆς οὗτοι μόνοι
συνεργοὶ εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ οἵτινες ἐγενήθησάν μοι παρηγορία

12 *Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always*

ἀγωνιζόμενος ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν
labouring fervently for you in prayers,
agonizing for your behalf

laboring fervently, ἀγωνιζόμενος, nom., sing., masc., part., pres. of ἀγωνίζομαι, KJV, strive, fight, labor; this is our present struggle against that which is contrary ... whether that be inward or external conflict.. he was faithful.

ἀγωνιζόμενος, is used two other times in the N.T.:
1Co 9:25 And every man that striveth ἀγωνιζόμενος for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.

Col 1:29 Whereunto I also labour, striving ἀγωνιζόμενος according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.

There are only two ways that Paul could have known Epaphras' prayers were so earnest. Either they prayed together or they spoke of their prayers between them. Some like long prayers.

There are two prayers of our Lord Jesus that were lengthy. One is recorded in John, the seventeenth chapter. We know of another only because it is mentioned that He spent the night in prayer. (Lk.6.12)

Some like instructive prayers. But we should all prefer closet prayers. **I think public prayers should be to the point, or else it isn't long before**

Colossians Series

another point becomes evident ... for show, instruction, self-exaltation.

The prayers that our Lord Jesus offered before others were short, meaningful, and to the point. (Mt. 11.25; 26.39, 42; Lk. 23.34, 46; Jn.11.41) Keep in view the purpose for the prayer being offered. If it is an opening prayer for the Lord's blessing we should pray so. If it is like a giving of thanks to God for the food He has set before us, let's offer that prayer. Our Lord raised His eyes to heaven and gave thanks. (Mk.6.41) And then they broke bread. It was a simple expression of gratitude to the Father. It is not necessarily the appropriate time to consider praying for all of the things on our prayer list. As much as we can, in our public prayers, keep focused regardless of the audience.

ἵνα στήτε τέλειοι καὶ πεπληρωμένοι ἐν παντὶ θελήματι τοῦ θεοῦ
that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.

may stand, στήτε, 2nd p pl., aor. 2, imperative or subjunctive of ἵστημι; used only once each (here in the subj. mood); KJV, *to stand, set, appoint, establish, continue.*

complete, πεπληρωμένοι, nom., pl., masc., part., perf., pass. of πληρόω; is used four times in the N.T. (*Ro.15.14, filled with all knowledge; Phi. 1.11, being filled; Col. 2.10, complete*); having available the knowledge of the Word of God; bearing a complete, perhaps a broad spectrum, of the fruit of Christ's righteousness; we have all that we need in the Word of God and we find our completion in Him; and here in Col. 4.12, that we might be found fully, willingly compliant in our lives to that revealed will of God.

ἀσπάζεται υἱὰς Ἐπαφρᾶς ὁ ἐξ ὑμῶν δοῦλος Χριστοῦ πάντοτε ἀγωνιζόμενος ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν ἐν ταῖς προσευχαῖς ἵνα στήτε τέλειοι καὶ πεπληρωμένοι ἐν παντὶ θελήματι τοῦ θεοῦ

μαρτυρῶ γὰρ αὐτῷ ὅτι ἔχει ζῆλον πολὺν ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν
13 *For I bear him record, that he hath a great zeal for you,*
to him in behalf of you

καὶ τῶν ἐν Λαοδικείᾳ καὶ τῶν ἐν Ἱεραπόλει
and them that are in Laodicea, and them in Hierapolis.

Colossians Series

the (ones)

the (ones)

Epaphras was moved in his life especially for these saints of God. Perhaps in the way that Paul was for his (Jewish) kindred, Epaphras was for those of his home town. Admitted, I consider my kin where they are. My mind always drifts to the Missouri, Arkansas, northeastern Texas area. I pray for them often, hoping that they are serving the Lord faithfully and growing in the true knowledge of His Word. I'm a gentile related to every other gentile, yet I think of my gentile kinsman especially.

μαρτυρῶ γὰρ αὐτῶ ὅτι ἔχει ζῆλον πολλὸν ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν καὶ τῶν ἐν Λαοδικείᾳ καὶ τῶν ἐν Ἱεραπόλει

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

ἰατρὸς; KJV, always translated *physician* (7); the physician treats those who are incomplete, (Mt.9.12; Mk.2.17; Lk.5.31); are those who treat serious ailments or diseases, (Mk.5.26; Lk.8.43); The Lord Jesus was called in mockery, Physician, which must have been because of His attending to the sick, the lame, and the demon oppressed and possessed, (Lk.4.23); We have no reason to doubt that Luke was such a person, and that he ministered to Paul in some way that gave him relief from, mostly his physical afflictions, whatever they all were; cf. to ἰάομαι, which is translated, *to heal, make whole*.

ἀσπάζεται ὑμᾶς Λουκᾶς ὁ ἰατρὸς ὁ ἀγαπητὸς καὶ Δημᾶς

Verse 15 – Paul adds a greeting to the Laodicean house-church.

15 Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea,

salute, ἀσπάσασθε, 2nd p pl, aor 1, imper of ἀσπάζομαι; ;

It is always good to remember our near churches and their work. We are not alone in this work, we are not the only ones being used of the Lord to accomplish the task before us. Let us keep from an attitude of superiority to others. Not only is it offensive to others, has a sense of pride attached to it, but it is a judgment that we cannot make. Brethren, churches are used

Colossians Series

of the Lord that have programs that we don't have, even though we are persuaded that the programs are far better left off. Churches are used of the Lord who do not have a good program of instruction, verse by verse and topical messages. Some churches are used of the Lord who have men that are unqualified for the service of the pastoral office. Some churches are used of the Lord who have woman teaching and speaking in the assembly. You know how I know that? Because I know that the Lord uses this church in spite of our problems in the past as well as our problem today. I'm not excusing any of these things in the least, but to say that the Lord worked in this church even when it was an Arminian church. Let us be very careful in our judgments. It does a lot of harm to being able to fellowship (not compromise) differences in other churches.

and Nymphas, and the church which is in his house.

There are a number of house churches in the New Testament. They are every bit as much of a church as a church which meets in a dedicated building. The only difference between a house church and any other church is only in our minds. They ought to operate as much as any other church. Though I would admit that there could be differences in house church government from those which meet in public places.

i.e. A house-church of a husband and wife would necessarily approach the woman's speaking issue a bit more differently than a public meeting would.

Ἀσπάσασθε τοὺς ἐν Λαοδικείᾳ ἀδελφοὺς καὶ Νύμφαν καὶ τὴν κατ' οἶκον αὐτοῦ ἐκκλησίαν

Verse 16 – A note to both churches to be sure to circulate the epistles between them.

16 And when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans;

cause, ποιήσατε, 2nd p pl, aor 1, imper, act of ποιέω to do; ;

Colossians Series

and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea.

read, ἀναγνῶτε, 2nd p pl, aor 2, subj, act of ἀναγινώσκω; ἀνά above, again, (by, in, through) + γινώσκω to know; ye should familiarize.

καὶ ὅταν ἀναγνωσθῆ παρ' ὑμῖν ἡ ἐπιστολὴ ποιήσατε ἵνα καὶ ἐν τῇ
Λαοδικέων ἐκκλησίᾳ ἀναγνωσθῆ καὶ τὴν ἐκ Λαοδικείας ἵνα καὶ ὑμεῖς
ἀναγνῶτε

Verse 17 – An admonition to Archippus to keep to the business of the ministry.

καὶ εἶπατε Ἀρχίππῳ
17 *And say to Archippus,*

say, εἶπατε, 2nd p pl, aor 2, imper or ind act of εἶπα; ;

Βλέπε τὴν διακονίαν ἣν παρέλαβες ἐν κυρίῳ
Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord,
Look, Beware

take heed, βλέπε, 2nd ps, pres, imper, act of βλέπω to see; KJV, of the imperative, take heed (11); beware (7); see (1); look (1).

*thou hast received, παρέλαβες, 2nd ps, aor. 2, ind. act of παραλαμβάνω;
παρά above, before, nigh, by + λαμβάνω to receive or take.*

ἵνα αὐτὴν πληροῖς
that thou fulfil it.
you might fulfil it

it, αὐτήν, acc. sing. fem pronoun; she or it.

fulfil, πληροῖς, 2nd ps, pres., subj., act. of πληρόω; πληροῖς is only used in this text;

There is in the service of Christ both the receiving and the taking of our work. We receive our gifts, passively, meaning that the Sovereign has distributed them according to His good pleasure (Ro.11.29; 12.6; 1Co.12.18,

Colossians Series

19; Eph.4.8), and then we take them up and use them (1Co.12.31). At some point in the past Archippus took the ministry, acknowledged the call of God to it, the saints must have agreed with his claims, and yielded themselves to it. **The implication is that Archippus is not attending to the ministry quite as he ought and someone has informed Paul of this. Paul, saying nothing more has said enough. He puts the burden upon the church to help their servant to do what he should and watch, beware, and see to his ministry, which is for their good. Notice Paul say to the membership that you say to Archippus ... Paul heard the complaint, yet not necessarily receives an accusation against a fellow-servant in the ministry (1Ti.5.19), but moves them from being members who might be spectators, to being in the fellowshipping process of the body.**

As a member of this church don't be spectator. Become a functioning member in this church. **Don't only view the processes of this church, but be a part of the process.** Move about in the membership and take interest in one another's lives. Let us find out for ourselves the state of our brothers and sisters in Christ. Some of you are like me. I have to push myself to go and talk to someone. Almost always we find a blessing and the conversation will generally flow. If it doesn't, hey, we tried. Perhaps next time. But we need to apply ourselves and take the initiative sometimes. Not everyone is going to come to us. We need to go to them.

καὶ εἶπατε Ἀρχίππῳ **Βλέπε** τὴν διακονίαν ἣν παρέλαβες ἐν κυρίῳ ἵνα αὐτὴν πληροῖς

Verse 18 – Paul's signature

Ὁ ἀσπασμὸς τῆ ἐμῆ χειρὶ Παύλου
18 ¶ *The salutation by the hand of me Paul.*
by my own hand

Identical words in the Greek at 1Co.16.21 & 2Thes.3.17:

1Co 16:21 Ὁ ἀσπασμὸς τῆ ἐμῆ χειρὶ Παύλου
The salutation of me Paul, with mine own hand.

2Th 3:17 Ὁ ἀσπασμὸς τῆ ἐμῆ χειρὶ Παύλου
The salutation of Paul with mine own hand ...

Colossians Series

[to which is added ...]

*ο εστιν σημειον εν παση επιστολη ουτως γραφω
which is the token in every epistle: so it write.*

Paul did not pen the body of the letters, except the book of Galatians, but he add to the ends of them a closing note his own *hand writing*, and not necessarily a signiture.

In essence Paul's signature was this ... *Grace ... be with you.*

Ro.16.20; 1Co.16.21-24; 2Co.13.14; Gal.6.18; Eph.6.24;
Phl.4.23; Col.4.18; 1Thes.5.28; 2Thes.3.17, 18; 1Ti.6.21b;
2Ti.4.22; Tit.3.15b; Phile.25; He.13.25. If it didn't state it outright it certainly was understood that The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

of me, ἐμῆ, dat., s., fem. of ἐμός; possessive adjective of the 1st person, *my, mine*; KJV, *my, mine, mine own, of me.*

μνημονεύετε μου τῶν δεσμῶν
Remember my bonds.

remember, μνημονεύετε, 2nd p pl, pres, **imper** of μνημονεύω to remember.

bonds, δεσμῶν, gen. pl. of δεσμός; KJV, *bond/s (15), band (3), chain (1), string (1).*

Remember me in these bonds. Remember me your brother in the Lord, and an apostle for Jesus Christ. Remember why I am wearing them.

Acts 28.20 For this cause therefore have I called for you (the chief of the Jews, v.17), to see you, and to speak with you: because that for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain.

cf. Acts Series, Acts 24.16, '[I]t does appear that the real or underlying offense is rooted in the claim that the Messiah they killed,

Colossians Series

named Jesus, was in fact raised from the dead. This is the real rub. (must read 25.19; 26.6, 23) **My opinion is that the gentile issue is a mask for the real hatred that they have for Paul: he dared to preach Christ crucified, risen, and coming again; the hope of Israel!!!** (cf. 21.28)'

ἡ χάρις μεθ' ὑμῶν ἀμήν
Grace be with you. Amen.

What does that statement say? God's grace, our free favor in Jesus Christ be with you wherever you may go.

Eph.1. 3 ¶ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: (what follows is an explanation of how the Blessed Father has blessed us in Christ.)

4 According as (when, if we consider it as a time; or as, if we consider this as an event ... he chose us ...)

καθὼς, which is κατά + ὥς, KJV, as, even, even as, when (Acts 7.17); and according as.

he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be (Or, chosen us in him before the foundation of the world to be ...)

that we should be, εἶναι, pres. infin., to be; perhaps expressing a future reality.

holy and without blame before him in love:

5 Having predestinated us (Or, predestinating us) unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to (κατὰ) the good pleasure of his will,

6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

Colossians Series

The order is that He chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world and then proscribed our horizon so much so that we shall be glorified at the coming of Jesus Christ.

In every blessing, in every trial, in every place, from eternity into time and back to eternity the grace of God be with you. There is no instance where the elect of God are not in grace before the Lord. As long as the Son of God continues before the Father is as long as the children as the sons of God. There's never been a time that they were not accepted in Jesus Christ. Faith simply proves the truth that they were of the Father's love given to the Son before the foundation of the world; that Christ Jesus came to redeem them from their fallen estate in sin back into a right standing before God. Grace, what a word! For no other reason than that God chose to bestow His love upon some of those which proceeded from His creative hand is marvelous grace. Grace will always be, for those who receive it, the unmerited, eternal, loving favor of God. Amazing Grace! These words must always stir in the minds of the saints such a great and swelling emotion of praise, gratefulness, and adoration. None of us can fully comprehend it, but we know it is true. The Holy Spirit of God testifies within our hearts that we are His sons. (Ro.8.16)

Ὁ ἀσπασμὸς τῆ ἐμῆ χειρὶ Παύλου μνημονεύετε μου τῶν δεσμῶν ἢ χάρις μεθ' ὑμῶν ἀμήν

The added postscript:

πρὸς Κολασσαεῖς ἐγράφη ἀπὸ Ῥώμης διὰ τυχικοῦ καὶ Ὀνησίμου
« *Written from Rome to Colossians by Tychicus and Onesimus.* »