

Introduction:

Today we will conclude our look at *How Christians Should Live*.

Things we will look at in this lesson: Challenges, Observations, and Closing Greetings.

Challenges, Observations, and Closing Greetings:

01. What does Paul challenge the believers in Colossae to do?

02. What did Paul recognize as important?

03. What did Paul ask the church in Colossae to pray that God would do?

04. What did Paul recognize the correlation between?

05. How should we think of ourselves?

06. What did the success of Paul's apostolic ministry depend on?

Article 1) Ten Key Members of Paul's Ministry Team:

“Tychicus, our dearly loved brother, faithful minister, and fellow servant in the Lord, will tell you all the news about me. I have sent him to you for this very purpose, so that you may know how we are and so that he may encourage your hearts. He is coming with Onesimus, a faithful and dearly loved brother, who is one of you. They will tell you about everything here. Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, sends you greetings, as does Mark, Barnabas's cousin (concerning whom you have received instructions: if he comes to you, welcome him), and so does Jesus who is called Justus. These alone of the circumcised are my coworkers for the kingdom of God, and they have been a comfort to me. Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ Jesus, sends you greetings. He is always wrestling for you in his prayers, so that you can stand mature and fully assured in everything God wills. For I testify about him that he works hard for you, for those in Laodicea, and for those in Hierapolis. Luke, the dearly loved physician, and Demas send you greetings. Give my greetings to the brothers and sisters in Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her home. After this letter has been read at your gathering, have it read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and see that you also read the letter from Laodicea. And tell Archippus, “Pay attention to the ministry you have received in the Lord, so that you can accomplish it.” I, Paul, am writing this greeting with my own hand. Remember my chains. Grace be with you.” —Colossians 4:7-18

Article 1) continued...

(1) Tychicus—The Person with a Servant's Heart.

On several occasions, Tychicus willingly tackled difficult assignments for the apostle Paul (Acts 20:1-5; Ephesians 6:21-22; 2 Timothy 4:12; Titus 3:12). In this case, we find him taking Paul's letter across many miles to Colossae and other churches in Asia Minor. There was no complaint, just the faithful expression of a servant's heart.

(2) Onesimus—The Person with a Sinful Past.

Onesimus had been a runaway slave. He had worked for a Christian in Colossae named Philemon. Onesimus wanted his freedom, so he stole money from Philemon and ran away. But in Rome, Onesimus met the apostle Paul and was saved. Now Paul calls Onesimus "a faithful and dearly loved brother" (v. 9).

(3) Aristarchus—The Person with a Sympathetic Heart. Aristarchus was a Jewish believer from Thessalonica (Acts 19:28-29; 20:1-5; 27:1-2).

Aristarchus stuck with Paul through thick and thin. For four years he stayed close to Paul in prison, encouraging him and ministering to his needs.

(4) Mark—The Person with a Second Chance.

John Mark had a different beginning to his ministry career. He started out as part of Paul's ministry team, but apparently things got too tough for him. He left the team and returned home (Acts 13:5; 13). This angered Paul and he refused to take him along on the next missionary journey (Acts 15:36-40). Now several years later, we find Mark a changed man and restored to usefulness. Paul told the Colossians that if Mark came, they needed to listen to him.

(5) Justus—The Person with a Strong Commitment.

Nothing is known about Justus other than the information we have in verse 11. It is possible he was one of the Roman Jews who believed Paul's message when he preached in Rome. Paul was severely criticized by the Jews. Justus was not afraid of criticism. He was a person of strong commitment.

(6) Epaphras—The Person with a Powerful Prayer Life.

Epaphras was the founder of the Colossian church. Here he was with Paul in Rome, "wrestling in prayer" for those in Colossae and "working hard" on their behalf. The Greek word translated "wrestling" is "agonizomai" from which we get our English word "agony".

Article 1) concluded...

(7) Luke—The Person with Dedicated Talent.

Luke was Paul's personal physician as well as his close friend. We do not know a lot about Luke's background. We do know Luke surrendered what might have been a lucrative practice to serve the Lord with his talent. In return, God gave him the privilege of writing a significant part of the New Testament (Luke and Acts).

(8) Demas—The Person with a Sad Future.

Demas is listed as one of Paul's ministry associates. Later, this man turned out to be a disappointment to Paul (2 Timothy 4:9-10). He abandoned Paul; he defected because of his love for the world.

(9) Nympha—The Person Who Was Willing to Open Her Home.

Nympha is singled out by Paul because of her willingness to open her home to a small gathering of believers. Meeting in homes was a common practice in the early church (Acts 16:15; Romans 16:5 Philemon 2).

(10) Archippus—The Person Who Needed Encouragement to Finish Well.

Archippus started well. He was filled with enthusiasm and vision. God had given him a task and a calling. But Paul saw the signs and it concerned him. Archippus was letting up. Paul said, "Pay attention to the ministry you have received in the Lord, so that you can accomplish it."