
COLOSSIANS: CHRIST PREEMINENT

Session 13 | Colossians 4:2-18 | Dr. Randy White

Final Instructions | vv. 2-6

- Verse 2 –
 - This verse would have been a better place to begin the chapter, since the subject changes here.
 - To **continue** is the verb, an imperative.
 - The Greek is προσκατερέω [proskartereo] with the root of κρατος [kratos] (power / might).
 - It is a word that is an intensified form of "holding on with all your might."
 - Newberry translates as "steadfastly continue."
 - **Watch** - This should be *watching*, as it is a present active participle, describing the subject.
 - **Watch in the same** –
 - What is it to be watching while continuing in prayer?
 - Can you pray without watching?
 - The word watch is γρηγορέω [gregoreo] which means "alert." The English name Gregory comes from this word.
 - Our prayers, therefore, should not be lazy, routine, and without focus.
- Verses 3-4 –
 - **Withal** - That is, "at the same time."
 - **That God would open us a door** -
 - Paul's number one priority was to speak the **mystery of Christ** (That God had delayed the judgement of the Tribulation and instead inserted a time of Grace in which there is neither Jew nor Greek and no barrier to receiving salvation.)
 - Sadly, most of the church today doesn't understand this mystery, thus cannot even properly explain the Gospel.
 - **Manifest** - The word φανερώ [phaneroo] is "to shine light upon" or "make visible." We get the English word *phantom* from this root, since a *phantom* is a visible ghost.
- Verse 5 –
 - **Walk in wisdom** –
 - Paul does not tell us what wisdom is **toward them that are without**, only that we should walk in it.
 - In light of vv. 3-4, he is likely referring to our need to evangelize. However, we should do so with wisdom, knowing that not all people and places are open and receptive.
 - **Redeeming the time** –
 - The word **redeeming** is ἐξαγοράζω [exagorazo]. The *agora* is the marketplace and *ex* is "out of." Thus the word is a word that means "purchasing on the open market."
 - All of our time is "spent" in exchange for something we value or need, otherwise it is wasted.
- Verse 6 - Paul often speaks of the need for study and knowledge. Here he reminds us that we also need grace in our speech. This is certainly part of the **wisdom** of which he speaks in v. 5.

Final Greetings | vv. 7-18

- Verses 7-8 – **Tychicus** - He delivered the letters of Ephesians, Philemon, and Colossians, and possibly 2 Corinthians.
- Verse 9 – **Onesimus** - The slave of Philemon who was saved under Paul's ministry and befriended by Paul. Evidently Onesimus was from Colossae.
- Verse 10 –
 - **Aristarchus** - Here he is called a **fellowprisoner**. Acts 27:2 says that he went with Paul to Rome, and was a Macedonian. He is of Jewish decent.
 - **Marcus** - That is, John Mark, the nephew of Barnabus, both of Jewish decent.
- Verse 11 –
 - Notice that the Kingdom of God is given in reference to the Jewish associates, Aristarchus and Marcus.
- Verses 12-13
 - **Ephaphras** -
 - From Col. 1:7 and 4:12 it is possible that Ephaphras may have been the pastor of the church or a deacon (in 1:7, the word διάκονος [*diakonos*] is translated **minister**).
 - He is also mentioned in Philemon 1:23, and Philemon's companion (possibly son) Archippus is mentioned in Colossians 4:17.
 - In the light of the references to Philemon's family, it is possible that the church of Colossae met in Philemon's home (Philemon 1:2). It is also possible that Philemon or Archippus could have been the Pastor. All is speculative.
 - The role of a Pastor – If Ephaphras is, as assumed, the Pastor of the church, then this verse gives a beautiful "job description" of a Pastor:
 - **of you** - A home-grown pastor or one who is closely tied to the congregation is ideal.
 - **a servant of Christ** - this is the chief role of the Pastor.
 - **laboring fervently for you in prayers** for the specific reason that the church would **stand perfect and complete in the will of God**.
 - **a great zeal for you** - The Greek word ζήλος [*zelos*] is the origin of both *zealous* and *jealous*. A pastor should have a zealous jealousy for his people.
- Verse 14 – **Demas** was with Paul during this first imprisonment. Sadly, he deserted Paul in the second imprisonment (2 Tim. 4:10).
- Verse 15 – **Nymphas** - Some manuscripts have this in the masculine (Nymphas) and others in the feminine (Nympha). Nothing is known of this individual except what is found here.
- Verse 16 - It was customary to deliver Paul's writings to the various churches. Since Paul was an Apostle, these letters were considered "God's Word" even at the time of his writings. Unfortunately, the letter to the Laodicean's has not been preserved. However, God has preserved all that is needed so that we are "thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim 3:17).
- Verse 17 – **Archippus** - Some believe that he was the son of Philemon. The **take heed** instruction given to him is not to be taken negatively. He may have been on missionary service and this was an encouragement to him.
- Verse 18 - Paul concluded his letters in his own handwriting to show it was not a forgery.