

WEDNESDAY FAITH CONNECTION  
Dr. David Renwick  
National Presbyterian Church, Washington, DC

## COLOSSIANS: A Church, a City, and a Letter

June 10, 2020 – Jesus' Team At Work

### What Have We Covered So Far? . .

#### 1. Background

### Where is Colossae?

- Modern day Turkey
- A region we sometimes call Asia Minor
- On the border of a section of Asia Minor called Lydia



### When Written?

Sometime between A.D. 54-66  
= 20-35 yrs after Jesus'  
Life, Death, Resurrection

#### 2. (Ch.1:1-14; 4:2-6) Praying for Jesus' Power

- (Ch.1:13-23) The Exalted Jesus
  - above every power that can cut us off from God or diminish our self image
- (Ch.1:21-29) Jesus proclaimed as a “Mystery”
  - revealed in space and time for everyone
- (Ch.2:1-23) Jesus or Religion? . .
  - no longer trying to please, or placate someone!
- (Ch.3:1-17) Jesus' Life in Our Lives
  - Two images:
    - death/resurrection (*put to death . .*)
    - clothing (*take off/put on*)
  - lists of dos and don'ts
    - . . . from Jesus' teaching
- Last Week (Ch.3:18-4:6) Jesus' Life in Our Everyday Relationships
  - Men/Women,
  - Parent/Child,
  - Slave (*servant, see 4:12; employee?*)/Free
    - wherever there is a power differential

### What Are We To Make Of These Admonitions?

#### 1. Maybe not as severe as people think?

- *E.g., Is the word “submission” or “be subject” a correct translation?*
  - Even if it is . . . then we need to remember . . . “Submission” called for from everyone
    - Jesus is “subject” to the Father (1 Cor.15)
    - husbands are to be subject to wives (Eph 5:21)
- *Does it ever have other meanings? YES! It can be as “weak” AS “Be still” or “Pay attention to”*

#### 2. The Passage itself is Revolutionary

- These groups people are all in the same small house church as each other; Addressed directly
- Not through the men in power (indirectly)

#### For example:

- The owners would have heard the admonition to the slaves
- Slaves heard the admonition to the owners

EVERYONE ends up being a servant

Why? Because Jesus was a servant!! Grovel? NO!!

- known by God, raised to enormous heights
- friends of the exalted Christ

## TODAY: Jesus' Team at Work

ay seem to be rather boring . . . but Colossians ends with a list of 10 (11) names:

### COLOSSIANS 4:7-18

<sup>7</sup>**Tychicus** will tell you all the news about me;

he is a beloved brother,  
a faithful minister (*diakonos* = *deacon*),  
and a fellow servant (*sun-doulos*) in the Lord.

<sup>8</sup>I have sent him to you for this very purpose,  
so that you may know how we are  
and that he may encourage your hearts;

<sup>9</sup>he is coming with **Onesimus**,  
the faithful and beloved brother,  
who is one of you. (= a Colossian)

They will tell you about everything here.

<sup>10</sup>**Aristarchus** my fellow prisoner greets you,

as does **Mark** the cousin of **Barnabas**,  
concerning whom you have received instructions  
—if he comes to you, welcome him.

<sup>11</sup>And **Jesus** who is called **Justus** greets you.

*These are the only ones of the circumcision  
among my co-workers for the kingdom of God,  
and they have been a comfort to me.*

<sup>12</sup>**Epaphras**, who is one of you (= a Colossian),  
a servant (= *doulos*) of Christ Jesus, greets you.

He is always wrestling in his prayers on your behalf,  
so that you may stand mature and fully assured in everything that God wills.

<sup>13</sup>For I testify for him that he has worked hard for you  
and for those in Laodicea and in Hierapolis.

<sup>14</sup>**Luke**, the beloved physician,  
and **Demas** greet you.

<sup>15</sup>Give my greetings to the **brothers and sisters in Laodicea**, (a nearby city)  
and to **Nympha** and the church in her house.

<sup>16</sup>And when this letter has been read among you, have it read also in the church  
of the Laodiceans;

and see that you read also the letter from Laodicea.

<sup>17</sup>And say to **Archippus**, “See that you complete the task that you have received in  
the Lord.”

<sup>18</sup>I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand.  
Remember my chains. Grace be with you.

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*What do we know about these early Christians?*

## TYCHICUS

In 4:7-8 he is called . . .

- a beloved brother,
  - a faithful minister (*deacon*)
  - and a fellow servant (*sun-doulos*)  
in the Lord
- *an encourager*  
→ *a messenger of Paul.*

Where else can we learn about him?

- Acts 20:4 – travels with Paul back to Judea
- 2 Timothy 4:12 – sent by Paul to Ephesus
- Titus 3:12 – possibly sent by Paul to Titus in Crete?
- Ephesians 6:21 (mentioned)

## PAUL'S WORLD



## ONESIMUS

<sup>9</sup> the faithful and **beloved** brother,  
who is one of you.  
They will tell you  
about everything here.

- A Colossian (“one of you”)
- The Letter to Philemon tells his story as a runaway slave
  - (Note: Philemon, Paul’s friend, is not mentioned in this list. We don’t know why!)
- (c.AD 100?) Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch  
mentions a person named “Onesimus” as the Bishop of Ephesus

## ARISTARCHUS

<sup>10</sup> Aristarchus my fellow prisoner greets you

“A Fellow prisoner” Literal? Or captive of Christ?

- Philemon 23-24
- Acts 19:29 Gets in trouble with Paul in a riot in Ephesus
- Acts 20:4 A Macedonian from Thessalonica; a companion as Paul goes back to Judea
- Acts 27:2 a companion on Paul’s voyage to Rome.

MARK (the Gospel Writer?) the cousin of **Barnabas**

- Estrangement from Paul. (Acts 13:13, 15:38)
- Maybe Mark needed Paul to mention that he should be “given a welcome” (because the Colossians knew of this estrangement)?

<sup>11</sup> JESUS *who is called JUSTUS* – Jewish; Has Jewish and Greek names, like Paul

## <sup>12</sup> EPAPHRAS

- Cf. 1:7, 4.12-13. . . a Colossian,
- a servant (*doulos*) of Christ Jesus,
- wrestling (*agonized*) in his prayers on your behalf,
- he has worked hard for you and for those in Laodicea and in Hierapolis.

- Philemon 23 . . ‘my fellow prisoner in Christ sends greetings’

<sup>14</sup> LUKE, the beloved physician (Another Gospel Writer!?)

Only mentioned in here in Colossians 4:14; Philemon 24, & 2 Timothy 4:11

NOTE: There is no clear statement that he is the Author of Luke/Acts

## DEMAS

- Philemon 24 – in good standing! . . . but by the time we get to
- 2 Timothy 4:10 – “deserted me, gone to Thessalonika”

## <sup>15</sup> NYMPHA

**and the church in her house.** Lives in Laodicea

- Acts 16:15 → like Lydia in Philippi

## <sup>17</sup> ARCHIPPUS

“complete the task that you have received in the Lord.”

- Philemon 2 – Paul’s fellow soldier. Mentions *the church in his house* → **a house-church leader?** . . is this “**the task?**”

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So here we have a picture of the early “Body of Christ”

## WHAT ELSE DO WE SEE

### *If We Look At The Endings of OTHER LETTERS?*

For Example:

I. **Who exactly was the actual writer (with pen and ink!)?**

## Colossians 4:18

*I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand.*

## 1 Corinthians 16:21

*I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand.*

## Galatians 6:11

*See what large letters I make when I am writing in my own hand!*

## 2 Thessalonians 3: 17

*I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. This is the mark in every letter of mine; it is the way I write.*

## Philemon 19

*I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand*

AND THEN . . .

## → Romans 16:22

*I Tertius, the writer of this letter, greet you in the Lord.*



OR . . . II. How did Paul normally sign off?

**Colossians 4:18**

**“Grace be with you?”**

**1 Corinthians 16 23-24**

The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you. My love be with all of you in Christ Jesus.

**2 Corinthians 13:13**

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you.

**Ephesians 6. 23-24**

Peace be to the whole community, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all who have an undying love for our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Philippians 4:19-20, 23**

And my God will fully satisfy every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.

23The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

**1 Thessalonians 5 28**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

**2 Thessalonians 3:16, 18**

Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in all ways. The Lord be with all of you.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with all of you.

**2 Timothy 3:22**

The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.

**Titus 3:15**

Grace be with all of you.

→ **ROMANS 16:25-27 (very similar to Colossians)**

25Now to God who is able to strengthen you

-- according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ

- according to the revelation of the mystery
- *that was kept secret for long ages 26but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God,*

to bring about the obedience of faith

— 27to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be the glory forever! Amen.

OR . . .

III. How did you normally greet each other in church?

= ‘pass the peace’?

**“Greet one another with a holy kiss”** -- No CoVid-19!! –

**Not in Colossians . . but in**

Romans 16:16; 1 Corinthians 16:20; 2 Corinthians 13.11; 1

Thessalonians 5:26

OR

IV. What else can we learn from names of people in the letters?

(YELLOW HIGHLIGHT = repeats from Colossians)

**Philemon 1-2, 22-25**

<sup>1</sup>Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother,

To Philemon our dear friend and co-worker,

<sup>2</sup>to Apphia our sister, to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in your house:

<sup>22</sup>One thing more—prepare a guest room for me, for I am hoping through your prayers to be restored to you.

<sup>23</sup>Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, sends greetings to you, <sup>24</sup>and so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, my fellow workers.

**2 Timothy 4:10-21**

<sup>10</sup>Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica;

Crescens has gone to Galatia,

Titus to Dalmatia.

<sup>11</sup>Only Luke is with me.

Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful in my ministry.

<sup>12</sup>I have sent Tychicus to Ephesus.

<sup>13</sup>When you come, bring

- the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas,
- also the books,
- and above all the parchments.

<sup>14</sup>Alexander the coppersmith did me great harm; the Lord will pay him back for his deeds.

<sup>15</sup>You also must beware of him, *for he strongly opposed our message*.

<sup>19</sup>Greet Prisca and Aquila,

and the *household of Onesiphorus*.

<sup>20</sup>*Erastus* remained in Corinth;

*Trophimus* I left ill in Miletus.

<sup>21</sup>Do your best to come before winter.

*Eubulus* sends greetings to you,  
as do *Pudens and Linus and Claudia*

### **Titus 3**

<sup>12</sup>When I send *Artemas* to you,

or *Tychicus*, do your best to come to me at Nicopolis (*Dalmatia*),

-- for I have decided to spend the winter there.

<sup>13</sup>Make every effort to send *Zenas the lawyer* and *Apollos* on their way,  
and see that they lack nothing.

### **1 Corinthians 16:10-19**

<sup>10</sup>*If Timothy comes*, see that he has nothing to fear among you, for he is doing the work of the Lord just as I am; <sup>11</sup>therefore let no one despise him. (young? Or because of stories?)

Send him on his way in peace!

<sup>12</sup>Now concerning *our brother Apollos*, I strongly urged him to visit you with the other brothers, but he was not at all willing to come now. He will come when he has the opportunity.

<sup>15</sup>... members of the household of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, and they have devoted themselves to the service of the saints;

<sup>17</sup>I rejoice at the coming of *Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus*,

<sup>19</sup>The churches of Asia send greetings.

*Aquila and Prisca, together with the church in their house,*

### **Philippians 4:18,22**

<sup>18</sup>I have received from *Epaphroditus* the gifts you sent

<sup>22</sup>All the saints greet you, especially *those of the emperor's household*

### **Romans 16 x 36**

<sup>16</sup>I commend to you our sister *Phoebe*,

- a deacon of the church at Cenchreae . . .
- a benefactor of many; and of myself as well.

<sup>3</sup>Greet *Prisca and Aquila*,

- who work with me in Christ Jesus, who risked their necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles.

<sup>5</sup>Greet *also the church in their house*.

Greet my beloved *Epaenetus*, who was the first convert in Asia for Christ.

<sup>6</sup>Greet *Mary*, who has worked very hard among you.

<sup>7</sup>Greet *Andronicus and Junia*,

- *my relatives* who were in prison with me;
- prominent among the apostles, and in Christ before I was.

<sup>8</sup>Greet *Ampliatius*, my beloved in the Lord.

<sup>9</sup>Greet *Urbanus*, our co-worker in Christ,

and my beloved *Stachys*.

<sup>10</sup>Greet *Apelles*, who is approved in Christ.

Greet those who belong to *the family of Aristobulus*.

<sup>11</sup>Greet *my relative Herodion*.

Greet those in the Lord who belong to *the family of Narcissus*.

<sup>12</sup>Greet those workers in the Lord, *Tryphaena and Tryphosa*.

Greet the beloved *Persis*, who has worked hard in the Lord.

<sup>13</sup>Greet *Rufus*, chosen in the Lord; and greet his mother—a mother to me also.

Mark 15:21 And they compelled a passerby, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, . . . to carry his cross

<sup>14</sup>Greet *Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas*, and the brothers and sisters who are with them.

<sup>15</sup>Greet *Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas*, and all the saints who are with them.

<sup>16</sup>Greet one another *with a holy kiss*.

<sup>21</sup>*Timothy*, my co-worker, greets you;

so do *Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my relatives*.

<sup>22</sup>*I Tertius, the writer of this letter*, greet you in the Lord.

<sup>23</sup>*Gaius*, who is host to me and to the whole church, greets you.

*Erastus, the city treasurer*



“Erastus in return for his aedileship laid (the pavement) at his own expense.”

and our brother *Quartus*,

. . . greet you.