

Lesson 39
Col 4:7-18

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7 Tychicus will tell you all the news about me. He is a dear brother, a faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord. 8 I am sending him to you for the express purpose that you may know about our circumstances and that he may encourage your hearts. 9 He is coming with Onesimus, our faithful and dear brother, who is one of you. They will tell you everything that is happening here.

10 My fellow prisoner Aristarchus sends you his greetings, as does Mark, the cousin of Barnabas. (You have received instructions about him; if he comes to you, welcome him.) 11 Jesus, who is called Justus, also sends greetings. These are the only Jews among my fellow workers for the kingdom of God, and they have proved a comfort to me. 12 Epaphras, who is one of you and a servant of Christ Jesus, sends greetings. He is always wrestling in prayer for you, that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured. 13 I vouch for him that he is working hard for you and for those at Laodicea and Hierapolis. 14 Our dear friend Luke, the doctor, and Demas send greetings. 15 Give my greetings to the brothers at Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her house. 16 After this letter has been read to you, see that it is also read in the church of the Laodiceans and that you in turn read the letter from Laodicea. 17 Tell Archippus: "See to it that you complete the work you have received in the Lord." 18 I, Paul, write this greeting in my own hand. Remember my chains. Grace be with you. NIV

I. Introduction

In this passage, Paul commends the bearers of this letter and passes on the greetings from several of his fellow workers in the ministry in Rome and salutes several acquaintances from among the Colossians. He then singles out Archippus for a special admonition.

Colossians 4:17 And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it. KJV

II. The Background of Archippus

- a. Archippus is mentioned in both the Epistle to the Colossians (Col 4:17) and **Philemon**.
- b. He is thought to have been a **son** of Philemon, whence Paul includes him in the same salutation with Philemon and Apphia, and the church in Philemon's house. Philem 2
- c. Paul calls him "our **fellow soldier**," an allusion to the frequent metaphor used by Paul regarding Christian warfare. 2 Tim 2:3
- d. The Colossians are charged to admonish Archippus to make **full proof** of the ministry to which he had been called.

III. The Ministry of Archippus

- a. It is probable that Archippus was a young pastor recently appointed to the Church at **Laodicea**.

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- b. The statement “in the Lord” identifies Archippus' ministry as a 'spiritual gift' rather than merely an assignment to an organizational function.
- c. Apparently, early in his ministry signs had already begun to surface of his **slackened zeal**.
- d. Commentators have suggested that many years later this slackened zeal may have been reflected by the congregation as **lukewarmness**, for which the Laodicean Church was denounced. Rev 3:14-19
- e. The condition of preacher and people often **react** to each other. The Church takes its lead from the Pastor, and generally reflects back to him an exaggerated image of what he projects to them.
- f. Hence the apostle, knowing well the **perils** surrounding the inexperienced Archippus, sends to him this timely warning to take heed to his ministry.
- g. According to **tradition** he was martyred at Chonse, near Laodicea.

IV. Laodicean Church Problems Rev 3:14-19

14 And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;

15 I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.

16 So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. 17 Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: 18 I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. 19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

KJV

- a. In a time when **persecution** was wide-spread in Asia Minor, that was not their greatest threat, nor were their problems brought about by heresies from within.
- b. Theirs was an internal problem in which many members had religion enough to lull the conscience into a **false security**, but not enough to save the soul. Rev 3:18
- c. They were lukewarm, drawn to the flame and intrigued by the light, but never so much drawn to it as to **submit** them selves to the life-giving transformation that it offered them.
- d. Instead, they prided themselves on their **imagined** spiritual riches IE: on their spiritual self-sufficiency. Rev 3:17
- e. They failed to **recognize** that they were wretched and to be pitied.
- f. They were blind; lacking **spiritual insight** as to their true condition.
- g. They were naked, that is to say not clothed in the **righteousness** of Christ.
- h. They were counseled to “**buy**” from the Lord gold “faith to believe.” Matt 13:44
- i. They were given space to **repent** and admonished to do so, but historically, there is no proof that ever happened in the Laodicean congregation.

V. Application

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- a. Scripture abounds with warnings to those who identify themselves as Christians but who are not: Matt 7:22-23; 25:6-11; Luke 6:46.
- b. Therefore each believer is admonished to work out his own salvation in fear and trembling Phil 2:12.
 1. What would it take for one to lull oneself into believing that s/he is saved when s/he is not?
 2. At what point does one have enough “religion”?
 3. How would you recognize if you were like the Laodiceans?

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