

Colossians 4.2-18

The Gospel for the World

Christ is SUPREME > 1.16-18 For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.

Jesus Ascended over Every Sphere – Visible/Invisible – Daylight/Darkness

Human/Angelic – View thru MICROSCOPE and the TELESCOPE

Wherever LOOK “This is My Father’s World”

In Creation & Salvation – Principalities & Powers – Church & World

Christ is SUFFICIENT > Contra Claims of False Teachers in Colossae

Not Need Special Days or Diets – Legalism, Asceticism, Mysticism

They all CLAIM Jesus is NOT Enough > Something must be ADDED

2.8-10 See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ. For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority.

Christ is LORD > RISEN from Dead – Sovereign WISDOM & POWER

Total SUPREMACY and Complete SUFFICIENCY

Husbands/Wives – Parents/Children – Slaves/Masters – Jew/Gentile

3.1-4 If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

1. People accomplish the Work

How Message Supreme, Sufficient, Lord works in People’s Lives

Illustrate TRANSFORMING Power of Gospel of Jesus Christ

Ch 4 Paul PULLS Back Camera > Wider View than PILIKIA in Colossae

Easy be ABSORBED w ISSUES at Home > Jesus Savior of WORLD

Little church Colossae > Prayed for Apostle & Authors of Gospels: Mark & Luke

v. 7,8 Tychicus will tell you all about my activities. He is a beloved brother and faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord. I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are and that he may encourage your hearts,

Entrusted Courier this LETTER > Paul believed to be WORD of GOD

Difficult journey Across Oceans, Walking on Land, Carrying SCROLL

Tychicus: beloved brother, faithful minister, fellow servant in the Lord

Do you have friends you TRUST to Tell ALL ABOUT YOU?

v. 9 and with him Onesimus, our faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They will tell you of everything that has taken place here.

Sensitive Assignment bring Onesimus > Runaway SLAVE of Philemon

ONCE was LOST, Now is FOUND in Christ: Faithful & Beloved Brother

Paul's 13 NT Letters & Acts > More than 100 friends of Paul NAMED

Not Know DETAILS! > Meet in HEAVEN & HEAR their Stories!

LIST of Real People in Real Life Situations – Joys, Sorrows, Challenges

God IN their Anxieties, Dreams, Fears, Joys, Surprises, Disappointments

THEOLOGY of Colossians APPLIES to PRACTICAL Life of Believers

List of 3 JEWISH and 3 GENTILES Colleagues in Christ

v. 11 These are the only men of the circumcision among my fellow workers for the kingdom of God, and they have been a comfort to me.

Team MODELS 3.11 Here there is not Greek & Jew, circumcised & uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all.

Linked by Service > Diff. Cultures & Likes > One Heart for LOST World

JEWS & GENTILES: Gospel crosses Social, Racial, Kosher Barriers

v. 10 Mark the cousin of Barnabas (concerning whom you have received instructions—if he comes to you, welcome him),

WHY Need to Say Welcome?? Author of Gospel, Uncle BARNABAS

Acts 15 > 14 yrs Earlier: Unfaithful – Runaway from Service

Diff of Opinion over John Mark Bitterly Divided Paul and Barnabas

So, HOW does FAILURE come back into FELLOWSHIP?

Jesus Christ is RISEN in Power > ASCENDED > Sends Spirit of GOD

NEVER Forgive? Never BE Restored? Never SAY Never with GOD!

vs. 15,16 Give my greetings to the brothers at Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her house.

Paul STRENGTHENING ties w Xtians in Colossae NEVER MET!

Unseen BROTHERS and SISTERS in Family of LIVING God

Go Down Road to Laodicea > Worship with the Family of Faith There

v. 17 And say to Archippus, "See that you fulfill the ministry that you have received in the Lord."

What HAPPY Surprise for Church Worker in Colossae

Maybe WEARY, DISCOURAGED, READY to QUIT! PRESS ON!!

NAMES – Paul's New Family, Forever Family, Disowned by Relatives

Walked away from Traditions, Rituals, History, Family Line

IMPOSTER from Nazareth – MURDERED – Hung Naked on CROSS

Follow DECEIVER > PREACHING his FALSE Claims!

Graduation Weekend > Baptized Sr. in HS > Friends Party Animals

Church Kids LIFELONG Friends > One coming to Preach here JUNE

Some PARTY Animals > Better PARTY > JOY of Salvation in JESUS

OLDER People > Friends for Decades > Company aids COMPROMISE

NOT Fully Committed to Jesus WORRIED about THEM > OPINION

Step into OCEAN of Fullness of Jesus > Saving Grace, Eternal LIFE

Maybe your Friends/Family NOT Coming because YOU Compromising

WAITING to SEE Life Fully Committed to Jesus as LORD > Live 4 Him

1. People accomplish the Work

C. S. Lewis wisely remarked: "In each of my friends there is something that only some other friend can fully bring out. By myself I am not large enough to call the whole man into activity; I want other lights than my own to show all his facets."

2. Prayers to Empower the Word

Paul's PRAYERS 1.3 We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you,

1.9 And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you

NOW he ASKS them about THEIR Prayer LIVES > Gospel Invitation

4.2 Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving

STEADFAST: Practice Presence of God > Ready, bring all to the Lord INTERCEDED w/ Perseverance, because the FATHER is a Father!

Father has something in his hand, wants to see if we want it!
Sometimes holds longer than we want, cause He wants us Come & Trust

'watchful' – lit. "STAY AWAKE" – Not a SLEEPY Activity - ALERT

Jesus: "Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation" Mt 26.41

Seize Opportunities > Intercede FOR & ADVANCE Gospel Opportunities

Thankful = COMMUNION & CONFIDENCE in Christ > GLORIFIED

NOT Worried – PANIC – Desperate – Fearful – Anxious > THANKFUL

1.9-12 "And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy; giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light"

v. 3 pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word

We cannot BEAT Door Down – WALK thru Doors God already OPENS

20 % - US Xtians: Rarely or never pray for the spiritual status of others.

Colossian Xtian > KEY Role to play in Global Mission thru PRAYERS

Paul SUFFERING PRISONER Not Praying for COMFORT > Confidence

Paul asks for an OPEN Door to PREACH – Not Open Door PRISON

Paul to Philippians: "I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel, so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ" Philippians 1.12,13

vs. 3,4 to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison— that I may make it clear, which is how I ought to speak.

1.26,27 the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints...this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory

Make GOSPEL CLEAR > that there would be NO Confusion or Doubt

Paul NOT care about ELOQUENCE but ACCURACY

Made GOSPEL SO CLEAR he is in PRISON > Trouble Maker!

John BUNYAN – Baptist Pastor arrested in England for Preaching Gospel

Anglican Royalists Offered RELEASE: IF Bunyan would Stop Preaching

“If I am out of prison today, I will preach the
Gospel tomorrow, by the help of God”

PAUL been Hanging Out w their PASTOR Epaphras in ROME

vs. 12,13 Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ Jesus, greets you, always struggling on your behalf in his prayers, that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God. For I bear him witness that he has worked hard for you and for those in Laodicea and in Hierapolis.

Prayer MTG in Colossae was Dwindling > Paul STIRS them to Resume

Reminds Fervent Prayer Pastor: Maturity, Stability, All the Will of God

v. 12 Gk word: Epaphras is AGONIZING in Prayer for You > Life / Death

1. People accomplish the Work / 2. Prayers to Empower the Word

3. People See our Witness

v. 5 Walk in wisdom toward outsiders,

Colossians SO Focused on ISSUES INSIDE the Church - LOST Sight >>

Real FAULT Line btwn HUMANITY – Not Color, Culture, Citizenship

INSIDERS and OUTSIDERS > Outside Church, Saving GRACE of God

Might WORK with them All Day – Every Day for YEARS

Might be LIVING Under SAME ROOF – Sleeping in SAME BED

But IF NOT Trusting Jesus as LORD > OUTSIDERS to Forgiveness, Life

ONE Day DOOR will Close > those Outside Weeping, Gnashing Teeth

Walk IN WISDOM = Walk with Jesus

2.3 Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom & knowledge.

The point is that the wisdom we seek is not the wisdom to please unbelievers, or to make ourselves look good...we need wisdom to please the Lord in our conduct toward outsiders.

John Woodhouse

Early 1900's Dr. Will Houghton New Pastor Bapt. Tabernacle ATLANTA

Man in City ATL hired DETECTIVE to find DIRT on Pastor Houghton

Det. REPORTED > Life matched Preaching – Man became a Xtian!

v. 5 making the best use of the time / SEIZE the MOMENT

VIVID phrase in Greek > Time in SHORT Supply, Like Bargain Hunter

Be QUICK to SNAP Up what TIME You HAVE > SOON Will PASS!

Prays for GOSPEL DOORS to OPEN before All Believers in Christ

Paul's advice is not to find a better technique to approach people. Rather, he presents our responsibilities in a much more promising light. Our privilege is to answer everyone. Be ready to answer questions rather than initiate conversations on leading topics; seek to accept openings rather than make them...Paul believes opportunities for response and explanation are to be found everywhere, for everyone is looking for answers about life and its meaning. And Paul thinks believing Christians should be found everywhere too, ready to take up these frequent opportunities.

Dick Lucas

v. 6 Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.

Never UNDERESTIMATE the POWER of SPEECH

Few words from JUDGE Decide your PARDON or PUNISHMENT

DIAGNOSIS of Doctor lead to RELIEF or DESPAIR

SPEECH Flavorful, Wise, Winsome, Attracts People to Find/Follow Jesus

Nothing WORSE than when Xtians make Jesus Boring & Irrelevant

Our Words about JESUS > Sincere 'without wax' / From our HEARTS

Interesting, Lively, Colorful SPEECH about our KING and SAVIOR

v. 18 I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. Remember my chains. Grace be with you.

Paul says Farewell: Today his CHAINS are NO MORE: Rusted Away!

WORDS Living > Kept by Holy Spirit > Part of Canon Scripture

Blessing to WHOLE Church throughout Whole World till End of TIME

He's MORE Alive than WE Now Are: In Presence of Savior he Served

1.13 “delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son”

LEAVES Us with Simple, Life-Changing words > “Grace be with you.”

Colossians 4.²Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving. ³At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison— ⁴that I may make it clear, which is how I ought to speak. ⁵Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. ⁶Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person. ⁷Tychicus will tell you all about my activities. He is a beloved brother and faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord. ⁸I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are and that he may encourage your hearts, ⁹and with him Onesimus, our faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They will tell you of everything that has taken place here. ¹⁰Aristarchus my fellow prisoner greets you, and Mark the cousin of Barnabas (concerning whom you have received instructions—if he comes to you, welcome him), ¹¹and Jesus who is called Justus. These are the only men of the circumcision among my fellow workers for the kingdom of God, and they have been a comfort to me. ¹²Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ Jesus, greets you, always struggling on your behalf in his prayers, that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God. ¹³For I bear him witness that he has worked hard for you and for those in Laodicea and in Hierapolis. ¹⁴Luke the beloved physician greets you, as does Demas. ¹⁵Give my greetings to the brothers at Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her house. ¹⁶And when this letter has been read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans; and see that you also read the letter from Laodicea. ¹⁷And say to Archippus, “See that you fulfill the ministry that you have received in the Lord.” ¹⁸I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. Remember my chains. Grace be with you.