Colossians 4:7-18

Review…

- **Colossians 3:1-4:1 – Put on Jesus Christ…**
  - Since we have been given a new life in Jesus Christ – live for the Lord…
    - Do not focus on the things of this world – focus on the things of God…!
    - 'PUT OFF' the old life / sinful nature that used to dominate our lives…
  - Instead we are to now to 'PUT ON' Jesus Christ…
    - In marriage – husband love our wives / teach our children…
    - In work - obeying our employers – and not just when they are watching!
- **Colossians 4:2-6 – The need for prayer…**
  - In order to put on Jesus – we need to be men of prayer…
    - Consistent in prayer – not with repetition – but talking to God…
    - Alert in prayer – not distracted – but focused on the Lord…
    - Thankful in prayer – not focused on our needs – but praying for others!
  - We should walk in wisdom – knowing people need to hear about Jesus…
    - Taking every opportunity to share the Good news of salvation with them…
    - Speaking with grace – sharing the consequences of sin – but the hope of heaven!

Conclusion to the letter… (*2 things*)

- **1st – Final greetings of Paul… vs. 7-15 (*9 people*)**
  - 1st – Tychicus – fortunate – traveled on the 3rd missionary journey – **Acts 20**… vs. 7-8
    - Tychicus was a beloved brother…
      - It means he had true affection / sincere love for the saints in the church…
      - On any given Sunday – we might ask how someone is doing – but do we really care…
      - We might ask because we feel we have to – but there is no 'sincere love'…
      - People can tell if you really care – or are just going through the motions…
      - People will not care what you say – until they are sure that you care!
    - Tychicus was a faithful minster…
      - The word minister is the word 'deacon' – the picture is that of a 'table waiter'…
      - We do not think of a table waiter – being something to be thankful for…
      - When we think about how God could use us we think BIG / IMPROTANT…
      - Not the person who empties the trash / cleans / he is just a servant!
      - We would call that person 'nothing special' – but God calls them the 'leader'!
      - **Matthew 20:36** – "Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant."
    - Tychicus was a fellow servant (*doulos*) in the Lord…
      - If you want to be the greatest – then be a servant (*doulos*) – **Matthew 10:26-28**
      - Leadership in the church should not look like the leadership in the world…
      - It should be the opposite - like an upside down pyramid...
      - The 'greater' you become in the Kingdom of God - the lower you go – servant…
      - A great leader is the one shows others what to do by serving everyone else!

- Tychicus was a messenger…
  - He was with Paul in Rome – was there visiting him while he was in prison…
  - Because he was available Paul sent him to deliver his letters…
  - Tychicus delivered the letter to the Ephesians / Colossians / and Philemon!
  - Often we wonder why God is not using us – why nothing is happening in our lives…
  - The problem is we are not available – we are not willing to go/do anything…
  - God looks for those who are ready – 'here I am Lord – send me'!
- Tychicus comforted the saints…
  - The word comfort meant to 'come along side' of others…
  - Comforting does not mean you know what to say – often words fail to comfort…
  - I once had to comfort a couple that had lost their son in a train accident…
  - There was NOTHING I could say – not words that would help ease their pain…
  - When people are hurting / when they are going through hard times…
  - Often all it takes to comfort them – is to be willing to stand by their side…
  - Be there to let them know they are not alone – we 'stand with them'!

o 2nd – Onesimus – his name means profitable… vs. 9

- Onesimus was also a faithful and beloved brother like Tychicus…
  - He traveled along with Tychicus delivering the letter to the churches…
  - Not only to the church in Ephesus and Colossae – but also to Philemon…
- Onesimus was the runaway salve of Philemon…
  - He had run away from his master – ended up in Rome where he met Paul…
  - Paul told him about Jesus – and he got saved – and now was going back to Philemon!
  - Not to be a slave again – but to make things right with his former master…
  - Like Onesimus we were once slaves – we were slaves to sin – **Romans 6:16**
  - But Jesus set us free from sin – we are no longer slaves to this world…
  - And now like Onesimus – we need to go back and makes things right…
  - People we hurt / the damage we did before we knew Jesus…
  - We need to go back and ask for forgiveness – undo the damage we did!
  - When I was a kid a got in a big fight with my then best friend…
  - We did not talk again for years after that – and I had a lot of bitterness towards him
  - When I got saved I knew I needed to call him – heal the old wounds!

o 3rd – Aristarchus – his name means the first – Paul had met him in Ephesus… vs. 10

- Paul worked while in Ephesus - **Acts 20:34** - likely making tents...
  - People would steal his sweatbands - **Acts 19:12** - and be healed by them!
  - God was doing a work with Paul - so people started to try and 'duplicate' it…
  - The 7 sons of Sceva tried to cast out a demon out in 'Paul's name' - **Acts 19:13**...
  - The demon answered - 'Jesus I know / Paul I know - but who are you...'
  - And the demon possessed man jumped on them - beat them - and they fled naked!
  - Amazed people started getting saved – a revival was coming to Ephesus!
- As a result - a certain idol maker named Demetrius - was losing a lot of money...
  - People were no longer buying his little idols - so stirred he the up the multitudes...
  - 25,000 people gathered into a riot in the theatre - 'great is Dianna of Ephesus'...
  - Paul wanted to go in and preach to them - but his friends rushed him out of the city!
  - Instead the traveling companion of Paul - Aristarchus - was arrested – **Acts 19:29**…

        - But he was released and traveled with Paul all the way to Jerusalem!
        - He also came along with Paul when he was sent to stand trial in Rome – **Acts 27:2**
    - The simple point being Aristarchus stood by Paul in the good time and bad…
        - Too many people today are 'fair weather friends' – here only the good times…
        - A true friend is one who sticks by your side through the good and the bad!
- 4th – Mark the cousin of Barnabus… vs. 10
    - Mark went along with Paul and Barnabus on the first missionary journey…
        - But in the middle of their first missionary journey – Mark went home…
        - We are not told why – perhaps he got sick / or perhaps just 'home sick'…
    - In **Acts 15:36-38** – Paul and Barnabus wanted to go on the 2nd missionary trip…
        - Barnabus wanted to take his cousin Mark – but Paul refused to take him…
        - Because Mark had proven himself unfaithful / undependable…
        - So Barnabus took Mark / and Paul took Silas and they went separate ways!
    - Yet in **II Timothy 4:11** – Paul has a change of heart…
        - Mark grew up and matured – and Paul saw the need to give 2nd chances…
        - In fact this is the same Mark who wrote the Gospel according to Mark!
        - We all mess up – all of us make mistakes – fortunately God does not give up on us!
        - It is through those mistakes we learn and grow in our faith…
        - And God gives us – like Mark – 2nd chances to be used by the Lord!
- 5th / 6th – Justus – also called Jesus (*common name in that day*)… 11 / 15
    - Nymphas – who had a church in his house…
        - They – along with the other men listed – we all Jewish Christians…
        - They all worked together in helping build the Kingdom of God / the church…
        - But we know next to nothing other than that about them...
        - Except to say - their names made in into the Word of God!
    - Because of their faith - love for Jesus - their names were recorded in the Bible!
        - Many people try to leave their 'mark' – their name on memorials to be remembered
        - But memorials crumble – names fade away – things are forgotten…
        - Yet Justas / Nymphas names are written here for us to read 2000 years later!
        - The things we do for ourselves – the glory of men – are all forgotten…
        - It is the things we do for the Lord that last forever – **Matthew 6:20**
- 6th – Epaphras – was a man of prayer… vs. 12-13
    - Epaphras had started the church in Colossae – **Colossians 1:7 / 4:12**
        - The church in Colossae met in the house of Philemon – **Philemon 1:2**
        - Epaphras went to Rome to talk to Paul about some problems in the church…
    - Epaphras prayed for the church in Colossae…
        - He was ALWAYS praying for the church / fighting for the church through his prayers!
        - He prayed for the people one by one / praying for the maturity of the saints!
        - He did not just pray for the church in Colossae – he also prayed for other churches!
        - When we pray – do not just pray in general – pray specifically…
        - Pray that that people God has placed in your life mature in their walk with Jesus!
        - Pray for the church – for churches – that many would come to faith in God!
- 8th – Luke – the beloved physician… vs. 14
    - Luke was a gentile - the only non-Jewish author in the Bible (*except for perhaps Job*)

- Thought to be the author of both the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts...
- Together 'Luke' and 'Acts' make up 28% of the entire New Testament...
- More than that of any other author - including the Apostle Paul, John, or Peter!
- Making Luke - a gentle - the most prolific author of the New Testament!

o 9th – Demas – who worked with Paul – **Philemon 1:24**… vs. 14
- Something went wrong with Demas – he left Paul / and the ministry…
- **II Timothy 4:10** – "Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world…"
- The problem was he loved the things of this world / more than God…
- Many Christians try to cut a deal with God - give them 'part' of their lives...
- God I will give you Sunday mornings / and whatever other time I can spare...
- **Luke 6:24** - "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and this world..."
- We cannot serve both Jesus and the things of this world (*mammon*)
- We will end up loving one and hating the other / loyal to one and despise the other...
- We will only be effective for God when we choose to be completely dedicated to Him!

- **2ND – CONCLUDING WORDS… VS. 16-18**

o 1st – Paul commanded the saints to read the letter… vs. 16-17
- And when they had finished reading the letter – they were to pass it on…
  - The simple point is that it is important to READ the Word of God…
  - Nothing more important than spending time in God's Word - **Romans 10:17**...
  - Suppose I gave you the parts to a car - and your life depended on assembling it...
  - Along with it I gave you an instruction manual - would you wing it / or read it...
- Happiness / our eternity depends on what we do with the life God has given us...
  - God has given us an instruction manual so we can be successful...
  - It is through hearing the Word we get to know and have a relationship with God...
  - It is in the Word we learn about God's expectations / will for our lives...
  - It is through hearing God's Word we learn how to enter eternal life!
  - **John 5:24** - "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life..."
- Take the time to have personal devotions - read your Bible...
  - You might be thinking - when - there is not enough time - I am too busy...
  - Funny how we have time to lago-x2 / watch TV / text / spend time on Facebook...
  - It is not a matter of time - it is a matter of priorities - what we do with out time!
  - Get up in the morning and start the day with Jesus...
  - But if you are not a morning person - if you have a hard time getting up - anytime!

o 2nd – Remember my chains… vs. 18
- Paul signed the letter in his own hardwiring – he had a hard time seeing…
- But he wanted the church to remember his chains – his hardships…
- And he closes the letter the same way he opened it – Grace be with you!