**COLOSSIANS #231 (12-3-15)**  COL. 4, pg. 255

***Colossians 4:11 …and also Jesus who is called Justus; these are the only fellow workers for the kingdom of God who are from the circumcision, and they have proved to be an encourage-ment to me.***

***Jesus,*** **Ἰησοῦς,** Jesus**, יֵשׁוּעַ** Jeshua/Joshua; Jesus was a common Jewish name. This companion of Paul’s was also called Justus meaning “righteous”, also a common name. ***Jesus, which is called Justus*** would be the name Joshua in the Hebrew language.

***Called***, LEGOMENOS (****), is the present passive participle of the verb LEGW, a very common verb having two or three meanings all having to do with speaking. The present tense is an aoristic present for punctiliar action in present time. The aoristic present indicates that this is what they are now calling a man by the name of Joshua. The passive voice: Joshua receives the title as a lawyer defending Paul in the Roman court. The participle is circumstantial to indicate that Joshua is Paul’s legal representative in his trial before Nero. Translated therefore: ***Joshua who is called the just*** [a technical word here for the fact that he was a lawyer]

JUSTUS, JOUSTOS (**Ἰοῦστος**), “Justus” indicates his function rather than his name. He was a barrister in Rome, and as a lawyer, he had the courage to stand up and defend the hot potato, apostle Paul when no one else would touch Paul. To be associated with Paul meant the possibility of persecution and execution.

***From the circumcision***…These three, Aristarchus, Mark, and Justus, were Jews, literally “of the circumcision” by either birth or conversion.

***Encouragement***, PAREGORIA (**παρηγορία**), n. nsf; comfort, encouragement, relief; consolation, or help. This is not the word usually used for encouragement, PARAKALEO, but is a hapax legagamina meaning an unusual word found only here in the New Testament. It is a medical term), implying soothing relief as in our product we know as “Paregoric”.

***Colossians 4:12 Epaphras, who is one of your number, a bondslave of Jesus Christ, sends you his greetings, always laboring earnestly for you in his prayers, that you may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God.***

**EPAPHRAS** was a distinguished disciple and probably the founder and maybe the pastor of the Colossian church. He is also mentioned in the Epistle to ***Philemon 1:23***, where he is called by Paul his “fellow-prisoner.” His being named before Mark, Luke, and others, ***Philem. 23-24***, perhaps indicates the high esteem in which Paul held him

***Who is one of your number***…Epaphras was a native of Colossae as was Onesimus.

***A bondslave of Jesus Christ***… Is there an implied reference to ONESIMUS, ***ver. 9***, who was “a bondman after the flesh,” but “the Lord’s freedman”, ***Philem.16,*** while Epaphras, “the freeman,” is “Christ’s bondman”.

***1 Corinthians 7:22 For he who was called in the Lord while a slave, is the Lord's freedman; likewise he who was called while free, is Christ's slave.***

***Laboring earnestly for you in his prayers,*** AGONIZOMAI (**ἀγωνίζομαι**), part. pm; to fight or struggle. A term of conflict or athletic competition signifying great exertion. Paul thus depicts prayer as a form of spiritual conflict or discipline crucial to their mission. The word denotes the patient persis-tence and intense energy exerted in prevailing prayer. Some believe Epaphras was the pastor in Colosse. We know he was the founder. Now he is in prison, so he has a new ministry, the ministry of prayer. If you find for some reason that you are unable to be in active service for the Lord, pray for God’s servants. God has simply given you a new ministry; He has something different for you to do.

**COLOSSIANS #232 (12-8-15) *That you may stand,*** HISTEMI (**ἵστημι**), v. aps; to hold one’s ground, maintain a position, be steadfast or upright.

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***Perfect***, TELEIOS (**τέλειος**), adj. npm; perfect, fully developed, complete or mature.

Standing perfect does not suggest perfection but rather maintaining a position or status of spiritual integrity and maturity. It describes a person who is obedient to the command to stand firm.

***Ephesians 6:14 Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth …***

***Romans 11:20 …they were broken off for their unbelief, but you stand by your faith.***

***1 Peter 5:12 …this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it!***

***1 Corinthians 16:13 Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong.***

***2 Thessalonians 2:15 So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught, whether by word of mouth or by letter from us.***

No one can stand firm minus the consistent intake of doctrine and prayer. Without these vacillation and confusion are inevitable along with a host of MAS, Mental Attitude Sins.

***Colossians 1:28 We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ.***

***Complete***, is the same word, TELEIOS*, that is used in our verse,* ***Col. 4:12****.*

***1 Corinthians 14:20 Brethren, do not be children in your thinking; yet in evil be infants, but in your thinking be*** *[GINOMAI v. pmm]* ***mature****(teleios).*

*“There are two pastors we want to study in this passage. The first is Epaphras the pastor of Colossae, and the second one is found in verse 17, Archipus. One man is viewed by Paul as being successful, the other as a failure. We first hear of Epaphras in Colossians 1:7 where it says, “As you have been taught from the source of Epaphras, our beloved fellowservant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on behalf of you.” Nothing greater could ever be said for a pastor than this. God has not called any one of us as pastors to be brilliant, to be scintillating, to be celebrities in the human sense, to be successful by human standards, to be some kind of an unusual person in some aspect of life. God has called every pastor to be a plugger, to be steady, to be faithful.”* Colossian notes by R.B. Thieme Jr.

***And fully assured,*** PLEROPHOREO (**πληροφορέω**), part. rp; fill completely; fulfill from PLḖRĒS meaning full + PHORÉŌ meaning to fill = to fully know, to be fully persuaded.

To be fully assured about something. You should know a great deal about and be certain about what you believe, and you should know why you believe it. You should be able to support your beliefs with facts and evidence.

Unfortunately, this does not describe most Christians. Most professing Christians seem to be fully assured about what they believe but they don’t know why they believe it. They are usually very dogmatic and assertive about what they believe but have very little, if any, evidence to support their beliefs.

Very seldom does anyone ask them about what they believe and even more seldom does anyone ask them questions about their beliefs.

Dogmatism and assertiveness are not evidence nor do they substitute for the facts needed to support a position. Confidence is fine when it is based on the Word of God, but stubbornness can easily become a stumbling-block to the learning of truth.

For many people, being right is more important than accepting truth. Close-minded people will never give a different viewpoint a fair hearing because it would require them to admit that they are mistaken about something which they will never do. Believers should be willing to listen to those who have different viewpoints but everything should be checked out by the Word of God.

***Acts 17:11 Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so.***

**COLOSSIANS #233 (12-10-15)** COL. 4, pg. 257

The perfect tense of PLEROPHOREOindicates the importance of being fully persuaded about issues based on the truth of God’s Word. Being fully assured goes hand in hand with being secure and having a positive attitude. Every day people are faced with decisions about everything under the sun and being confident about your decisions because they are based on doctrine gives a person peace of mind.

Being fully assured about what the will of God is for us in all the circumstances of our life has ongoing favorable results not only for all eternity, but for our time here on earth as well.

***And fully assured in all the will of God…*** We have already addressed the will of God in:

***Col. 1:9-10 For this reason also, since the day we heard of it,***[Colossians bearing spiritual fruit] ***we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, 10) so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;***

God makes his will known through the Holy Spirit's teaching ministry in the Word of God. Those who don’t care about what the will of God is, remain in the dark. If we are going to please God, we need to find out what His will is and do it.

***Ephesians 5:17 So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.***

We don’t have to guess what the will of God is for us because the Bible makes it clear:

***1 Thessalonians 4:3 For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality…***

***1 Thessalonians 5:18 In everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.***

***Psalm 40:8 I delight to do Your will, O my God; Your Law is within my heart*** [thinking Bible doctrine].

Doing the will of God takes a lifetime of service and faithfulness, but it is absolutely worth it.

***Hebrews 10:36 For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised.***

We derive confidence and courage from knowing what the will of God is for us.

***Romans 4:19-21 Without becoming weak in faith he*** [Abram] ***contemplated his own body, now as good as dead since he was about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah's womb; 20) yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God, 21) and being fully assured that what God had promised, He was able also to perform.***

If we are not fully assured that God will remember and reward our divine good, then we will lack the motivation to produce it.

Standing perfect and being fully assured in ALL the will of God go together. If we aren’t fully assured then we won’t stand, we’ll fall. It is believing that God is perfectly capable of enabling us to stand in all aspects of life that give us the motivation and the courage to indeed stand.

God wants us to fulfill ALL of His plan, ALL of his will for us. To the degree that we fail to do this, we miss out on the phenomenal abundant life that He has for us.

***Acts 13:22 After He had removed him*** [Saul]***, He raised up David to be their king, concerning whom He also testified and said, 'I have found David the* son of Jesse, a man after My heart, who will do all *My will.***

Does this mean that David was perfect? No, he wasn’t. There were times he got off track and succumbed to lust, but he would humble himself, acknowledge his sin to God and continue to do all

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that God had for him to do the best he possibly could. David didn’t do anything half-heartedly whether it was sinning or doing God’s will.

**COLOSSIANS #234 (12-15-15)**

***Colossians 4:13 For I testify for him*** [Epaphras] ***that he has a deep concern for you and for those who are in Laodicea and Hierapolis...***

***Rev. 3:14*** has to do with these churches, rewards, and what happened 30 years after Paul had written to them. The Church was not even mentioned until ***Rev. 19***. Jesus Christ was not the beginning of creation because He was THE CREATOR, so change that word in this verse:

***Revelation 3:14- …To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: The Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the ~~Beginning~~*** [CREATOR] ***of the creation of God, says this: 15) 'I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot. 16) 'So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth. 17) 'Because you say, "I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing," and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked, 18) I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see. 19) 'Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent. 20) 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me. 21) 'He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.*** ***…white garment*** [uniform of glory for mature believers who stay in fellowship.]

***Testify***, MARTUREO (**μαρτυρέω**), v. pai; to confirm or attest something on the basis of personal knowledge or belief; to bear witness or to be a witness.

Etymology of ***testify:***

*“The legal system was male dominated. We see this even in the term ‘testimony’ which some etymologists link to ‘testicle’, a word of Latin origin. The idea was that when a Roman gave evidence in court, he placed his hand on his testicles as a sign that he was telling the truth.*

*The British continued this practice In India during their rule, according to the old records.*

*“This custom is mentioned in the Old Testament. In the King James translation, the passage reads, ‘And Abraham said: “unto his eldest servant of his house... Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh: And I will make thee swear”’...Gen. 24:9.*”

*Yahoo Answers*

*“There was a time when the feminist Ms. magazine published a letter that started: “I protest the use of the word ‘testimony’ when referring to a woman’s statements, because its root is ‘testes’ which has nothing to do with being a female. Why not use ‘ovarimony’?”*

*Encyclopedia of Word and Phrase Origins* by Robert Hendrickson (New York: Facts On File, Inc., 1997), p. 662.

***Colossians 4:13 For I testify for him*** [Epaphras] ***that he has a deep concern for you…***

(NKJV) ***For I bear him witness that he has a great zeal for you…***

(ESV) ***For I bear him witness that he has worked hard for you…***

As you can see, the meaning of this phrase depends on which translation you read.

***Deep concern***, PONOS (**πόνος**), n. asm, comes from thinking about others more than yourself and putting them AHEAD of yourself, tolerating many of their faults and things that bother you. Also, not having to do things YOUR WAY ahead of other peoples’ desires. You want to HELP THEM OUT !

*① Work that involves much exertion or trouble, (hard) labor, toil* [doing everything out of love for others, communicating with them, asking them questions, listening]..

*② Experience of great trouble, pain, distress, affliction. BDAG p. 852*

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Paul demonstrated earlier in this epistle that he labored hard for those who he ministered for:

***Colossians 2:1 For I want you to know how great a struggle*** [Gr. AGON] ***I have on your behalf and for those who are at Laodicea, and for all those who have not personally seen my face,***

*“Ponos”means “pain;” in classical Greek it implies “painful, distressful exertion” (comp. κοπιῶ, ch. 1:29). It indicates the deep anxiety of Epaphras for this beloved and endangered Church. There is nothing here to point to “outward toil” (Lightfoot), any more than in ch. 2:1.*

*The Pulpit Commentary* (London; New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1909), 213.

***Phil. 2:19-23*** and ***1 Thes. 5:12-13***

EPAPHRAS wanted them to become spiritually self-sustaining. His goal was that they would depend on the Word rather than upon their pastor.

The child of God should have a great commitment to the local church.

We hear little of our responsibility to have zeal for the local church. Along with our zeal for God and those without Christ, God wants us to have a great zeal for the local church. Although God has given us a local church and expects us to support it and have a great zeal for it, He also expects us to be interested in other local churches as well.

***Colossians 4:13 For I testify for him*** [Epaphras, probably the founder of Colosse and maybe its pastor, too] ***that he has a deep concern and worked hard for you and for those who are in Laodicea and Hierapolis.***

Paul had a special concern for these people he had never even met.Paul went on record to testify that Epaphras possessed a great zeal for the Colossians, the Laodiceans and those in Hierapolis. ***Zeal*** here means ***labor***. Epaphras underwent intense pain and suffering for his church back in Colosse. ***Zeal*** is hard work with accompanying pain and distress. He wanted them to become spiritually self-sustaining. His goal was that they would depend on the Word rather than upon their pastor, ***4:12***.

***And those who are in Laodicea,*** located in what we call Turkey today, was a city ten miles from Colosse. It lay on the same road but was larger and richer than Colosse. Today it lies in a heap of r

**LAODICEA** *Church singled out in* ***ch. 2:1*** *as a special object of the apostle’s concern. ibid*

*It was located in what we call Turkey today. This city was ten miles from Colosse. It lay on the same road but was larger and richer than Colosse. Today it lies in a heap of ruins.The city of this name mentioned in Scripture lay on the confines of Phrygia and Lydia, about 40 miles east of Ephesus, on the banks of the Lycus. It was originally called Diospolis and then Rhoas, but afterwards Laodicea, from Laodice, the wife of Antiochus II., king of Syria, who rebuilt it. It was one of the most important and flourishing cities of Asia Minor. At a very early period it became one of the chief seats of Christianity. It is now a deserted place, called by the Turks Eski-hissar or “old castle.”*

Easton, *Easton’s Bible Dictionary*

***And those in Hierapolis,*** the city of the mythical Amazon queen Hiera, was situated near Colosse and Laodicea in the Lycus River valley of Phrygia. It was a wealthy dyeing center. This city was five miles north of Laodicea and it also lies in ruins.

Epaphras was interested in the local churches at Laodicea and Hierapolis as well. Although God has given us a local church, he expects us to be interested in other local churches as well.

PRINCIPLE: The child of God should have a great commitment to the local church.

APPLICATION: We hear little of our responsibility to have zeal for the local church. Along with our zeal for God and those without Christ, God wants us to have a great zeal for the local church.

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We invest thousands of dollars in the local church. Others send their children to the mission field from the local church. This is the commitment God expects toward the local church.

God has raised up para-church organizations in addition to the local church. These organizations are no substitute for the local church but they are an arm of the church. Often these organizations are on the cutting edge of advancing the gospel. Without aggressive evangelistic organizations that take the gospel across national lines, the gospel will remain within the confines of the local church. The gospel will not get beyond the city limits. However, it is the local church that supports these enterprises of the gospel. May we, like Epaphras, care about other churches who are like-minded.

Some churches never miss a month in financially supporting their missionaries. That is because responsible people band together to further the gospel. These are people who have a sense of welfare for both the home church and the cause of Christ throughout the world (Gal. 6:10; Heb. 6:10). Every Christian needs other Christians to rally around them in time of need.

**HIERAPOLIS**

*Hierapolis, a city of Asia Minor located in the upper Lycus valley close to the hot springs of Pamukkale. It is one hundred miles east of Ephesus, twelve miles from Colossae, and six miles from Laodicea. Although originating probably as the village center of a temple estate dedicated to the Phrygian mother goddess, Hierapolis grew and finally received formal status as a city from the King of Pergamum in the early second century B.C. In 133 B.C. Rome took control of Hierapolis and made it part of the province of Asia. Its subsequent prosperity was largely based on its famous textile and cloth dyeing industry. Both grave inscriptions and literary evidence (Cicero, Pro Flacco 68; see Josephus, Antiquities 12.147-53) indicate a substantial Jewish presence around Hierapolis. Col. 4:13, the sole NT reference, reports that Epaphras ‘labored much’ for the Christians in Colossae, Laodicea, and Hierapolis. Hierapolis’ extensive remains include a Roman theater (now restored), baths, city walls, and a necropolis.*

Harper & Row and Society of Biblical Literature, Harper’s Bible Dictionary, 391

***See Power Point: Laodicea & Hierapolis, Col. 4***

**COLOSSIANS #235 (12-17-15)**

***Colossians 4:14 Luke the beloved physician and Demas greet you.***

**LUKE** spoken of here Paul’s personal physician and close friend who traveled frequently with him, accompanied him on two missionary expeditions and wrote the Gospel of ***Luke*** and ***Acts***.

He joined Paul on the second missionary journey at the city of Troy, ***Acts 16:10***. Paul specifically does not name Luke among the Jewish Christians because he was a Gentile convert, ***II Tim. 4:11***; ***Phile. 24*** and probably a Greek. He may have been a student at the University of Tarsus.

Here we learn that Luke was not only a physician but a “beloved” physician. Paul loved this personal physician who was gifted at ministering both with his hand and heart. There are many passages in Paul’s epistles as well as in the writings of Luke that show the extent and accuracy of his medical knowledge. Luke stood firm with Paul, not only in this earlier imprisonment, but also in Paul’s last imprisonment. He did not forsake Paul in his hour of danger

It is interesting that two of the writers of the gospels are with Paul during this prison confinement. Both of them have already written their gospels. No doubt Paul would have read them by now.

PRINCPLE: True friendship under duress is **faithfulness** to that friend.

APPLICATION: **DEMAS** had the same advantages as Luke. Both were companions of the apostle. They had the same teaching and example. Two children brought up in the same family can turn to different directions. One will follow Christ, the other will deny him. One will rebel, the other will yield to the teaching of the Word.

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***And Demas greet you*** is the same Demas who, two years later, forsook Paul, and we can attribute his fall of Demas to love of the world, ***II Tim. 4:10***, while Luke remained true to Paul during his difficulties. Would your character stand up, unshaken, and trusting in the Lord under pressure?

***2 Timothy 4:9-10 Make every effort to come to me soon; 10) for Demas, having loved this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica; Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia.***

While Demas probably did not forsake Christ, ***Philemon 24***, Paul gives him no commendation. There may even be a suggestion that at this time, Paul was not sure of his stability.

**DEMAS** loved the world more and chose it over his service in the Lord’s ministry, ***II Tim. 4:10***.

**DIOTREPHES**’ supreme passion was to have the pre-eminence, ***III Jn. 9***.

**DEMETRIUS’** supreme passion was the truth, ***III Jn 12***.

These three men were characterized by their supreme passions. The difference lay in the object of their commitment.

PRINCIPLE: Many make a grand entrance and later fade from dynamic Christian living.

APPLICATION: It is sad to see a person fail toward the end of their life. In this verse, we see contrasting examples of faithfulness and unfaithfulness. Luke, the faithful physician, remained with Paul during his difficulty. ***II Tim. 4:11*** ***Only Luke is with me***. Everybody else left Paul in his moment of dire need. Demas’ cowardice preferred his own skin to his conscience.

May God allow us to finish our lives in true, spiritual, eternally rewardable fashion.

Now we come to the final words of the epistle to the Colossians, ***4:15-18.***

***Colossians 4:15 Greet***  [v. amm] ***the brethren who are in Laodicea and also Nympha and the church that is in her house.***

Paul’s letter to the Colossians was meant to be circulated to the other churches in the area including Laodicea which was located near Colosse. Paul sends salutations to them as well. So he commands them to greet the fellow believers there for him.

**NYMPHA** had to be a very special woman for Paul to single her out in this way. RBT says that the ***2 John*** was written by the Apostle John while he was in Ephesus to this great believer, the chosen or elect lady, Nympha, in Laodicea. Paul noted her outstanding positive volition because she her enthusiastically and graciously did all she could to promote the teaching of the Word of God in her area and thereby, gained an upstanding reputation.

It is possible to translate this sentence; ***Nympha, and the church which is in her house***.

She is the only woman mentioned in this chapter because she opened her home to hold the church. No church can operate very long without a place to meet. And Christians were forced as a common practice to worship in houses for the first 250 years of the church’s existence since public worship was dangerous, ***Jn 20:19***; ***Acts 28:23, 30***;  ***Acts 12:12***; ***16:40;*** ***Rom 16:5***; ***I Cor. 16:19***; ***Philemon 2***. Church buildings came later.

While the church met in homes, the heathens met in temples. There were no church edifices before the third century. While some got to gather in homes, some churches met in gravel pits, caves, fields and forests.

PRINCIPLE: All God expects of us is to do what we can with what we have.

APPLICATION: Nympha may not have been able to preach, sing or play, but she could open her house to be used of God. She did what she could with what she had. This is all God expects of us.

***2 John 1:1 The elder*** [the Apostle John] ***to the chosen lady*** [KURIA*/* Nympha] ***and her children, whom I love in truth; and not only I, but also all who know the truth,***

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Under the old covenant, there were rules governing the places where worship might be offered but under the new covenant, the earthly location is of no importance.

Worship in the home:

***Daniel 6:10 Now when Daniel knew that the document was signed, he entered his house (now in his roof chamber he had windows open toward Jerusalem); and he continued kneeling on his knees three times a day, praying and giving thanks before his God, as he had been doing previously.***

***Matthew 6:6 “But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, close your door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you.***

***Romans 16:5 …also greet the church that is in their house. Greet Epaenetus, my beloved, who is the first convert to Christ from Asia.***

***1 Corinthians 16:19 The churches of Asia greet you. Aquila and Prisca greet you heartily in the Lord, with the church that is in their house.***

***Philemon 2 …and to Apphia our sister, and to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in your house:***

***Acts 12:12 And when he realized this, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John who was also called Mark, where many were gathered together and were praying.***

***Colossians 4:16 Now when this epistle is read among you, see that it is read also in the church of the Laodiceans, and that you likewise read the epistle from Laodicea.***

***Now when this epistle is read among you…*** Paul expects that his letter to the Colossians will be read publicly in the assembly both in Colossians and Laodicea. This stipulation for reading the Word publicly gives some indication of how the early church practiced worship.

***Read*** means to exegete Colossians. Few churches today expound the Bible verse by verse. God wants us to study the Word.

***See that it is read also in the church of the Laodiceans…*** Paul also expected his letter to the Colossians to be read publicly in the church of the Laodiceans as well. New Testament churches shared the books of the Bible. ***Colossians*** was obviously intended for other churches as well. It was intended for the church of today.

***And that you likewise read the epistle from Laodicea…*** The Epistle from Laodicea was lost, but it did not belong to the authorized books of the Bible known as the Canon to begin with. The Canon is composed of those books the church deemed as inspired. [Need to check this out for accuracy: Not all of the epistles Paul wrote were inspired. However, the Laodicean letter may in actualily be the book of ***Ephesians***.

The first and seventh of the churches of ***Revelation*** are Ephesus and Laodicea. The letter was sent first to Ephesus then to the other churches on that circuit ending up at Laodicea. Therefore, this Laodicean epistle may be ***Ephesians***.]

Circular letters written by Paul were to be read by all the churches in that area.

PRINCIPLE: God has designed the local church to be the place for growth in the Word of God.

APPLICATION: Local churches are geographically pinpointed. Born again people make up the local church. These people support the missionary enterprise around the world. That is where they should study the Bible from a gifted pastor.

Do you attend a church where you are taught the Word of God?

***Colossians 4:17 …and say to Archippus, ‘Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it.’***

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**ARCHIPPUS** was a minister at Colosse. Paul challenges the church to admonish him to be diligent about doing his work. Evidently he was sidetracked with things of less importance. He may be the son of Philemon, ***Philem 2***. ***Archippus*** may have ministered in Colosse at Epahras’ absence.

In Philemon, Paul asks Philemon to free his slave, Onesimus. Now he chastises his son for not staying sharp in the ministry, however, Philemon still remained his friend!

***Take heed*** means to watch out. The ministry is not the ability to balance a cup of tea or make proper clucking noises at any kind of party. ***Take heed*** in this context means to concentrate on the Lord’s ministry. Some ministers do everything but teach His Word. Here Paul say, ***“Get with it”,*** ***I Tim.*** ***4:16***; ***Ac 20:28***; ***II Tim. 4:5;*** ***I Tim. 1:12***; ***Acts 20:24***.

***Ministry*** is used 3 ways in the New Testament:

1) Leader of the national entity, ***Rom 13:1.***

2) Universal priesthood of the believer, ***II Cor 3:6-4:1.***

3) Pastor of the local church ***Eph 3:7***; ***6:21***.

Here the idea is the pastor of local church.

***Which you have received in the Lord…***All true ministry is “received in the Lord.” It comes from God’s appointment and leading. A person does not get into the ministry because he is holier than anyone else. You will never believe this, but it is true. A true minister does not go into some secret sanctuary where the touch of the world never quite reaches him. He does not go into the ministry because he is sheltered.

The reason anyone is in the ministry is because of the grace of God. We have a tendency to put the ministry on a pedestal. Every minister is a member of the human race as well – if he is a normal person! He is no monastic who lives in a hypothetical, esoteric, abstruse life on cloud 30. He is a very normal person like anyone else. He has a gift from God by grace and that is it.

***That you may fulfill it…*** Paul also challenged both Archippus and the Colossians to complete their ministry. This may be an indication of the later declension of the church, ***Rev. 3:14***. God expects us to complete our ministry.

PRINCIPLE: God expects us to finish what we start to do ministry-wise.

APPLICATION: God gives to every single Christian a ministry to equip the saints, ***Eph. 4***. God expects us to carry on the work of ministry. God does not.

Today, we have air-conditioned mega-churches with cushy seats, state of the art audio and video, Star Bucks coffee, 200 member choir, Christian rock band with drums or orchestra, but members who are spiritually and doctrinally starved.

***Colossians 4:16 When this letter is read*** (v. aps) ***among you, have*** (v. aam) ***it also read*** (v. aps) ***in the church of the Laodiceans; and you, for your part read*** (v. aas) ***my letter that is coming from Laodicea.***

***Read***, ANAGINOSKO **ἀναγινώσκω**), v. aps; to read something aloud for public hearing.

Paul expects that his letter to the Colossians will be read publicly in the assembly both in Colossians and Laodicea. From this verse, we have an indication that part of the practice of worship in the early church was reading the Scriptures. Of course at the time, they saw it as an epistle (a letter) which would later became part of the canon of Scripture.

Circulating the letters among the churches was how the Word of God reached the people before the canon was completed. The epistles, written on parchments, would wear out over time so copies were made and continued to be circulated.

So the Colossians sent their letter on to Laodicea and the letter sent to the Laodiceans was sent to the Colossians.

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Paul does not say that he had written a letter to the Laodiceans so that one may be the letter that was actually sent to the Ephesians, which was written about that time, and sent to the same general vicinity.

In other letters, Paul also emphasized the importance of reading his letter publically aloud:

***1 Thessalonians 5:27 I adjure you by the Lord to have this letter read*** [same Greek word used in ***Col. 4:16***] ***to all the brethren.***

***1 Timothy 4:13 & 16 Until I come, give attention to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation and teaching. 15) Take pains with these things; be absorbed in them, so that your*** [spiritual] ***progress will be evident to all.***

These letters were not just read as if Paul was bringing his fellow believers up to date as to what was happening to him; they were used by the first century pastors to teach their flock Bible doctrine. This practice is still going on today, or at least it should be.

*“God’s Word does not have to be edited or changed to meet different problems in various situations, for it is always applicable.”* Warren W. Wiersbe, The Bible Exposition Commentary, vol. 2, 153.

***Colossians 4:17 Say to Archippus, "Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it."***

***Archippus*** means “master of the horse”. He was a member of Philemon’s family, probably his son. It would appear that his office was an important one, probably that of chief pastor. It may be that he was the pastor of the Laodicean church since he was warned by Paul to fulfill his ministry and the Laodicean church was later rebuked in Revelation chapter three.

He was named as one of the recipients of the letter that Paul sent to Philemon.

***Philemon 1:1-2 O Philemon our beloved brother and fellow worker, 2) and to Apphia our sister, and to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in your house:***

***Take heed,*** BLEPO, v. pam, This Greek word has eight meanings. Here it means to process information by giving thought, direct one’s attention to something consider, or take note of something.

This is a wakeup call to get his attention. This is good advice to anyone in authority; people who hold office in government, pastors, coaches, employers, military and police officers, educators, husbands and parents. We must stay alert and stay on top of things if we are to keep our house in order.

A business does not run itself; it needs vigilant leader- ship. This is also true for nations, schools, churches, and homes. It doesn’t take long for any organization to get off track and get into trouble.

***Ministry,*** DIAKONIA **διακονία**), n. asf; functioning in the interest of a larger public, service. The force of this word has to do with service. Having a ministry has everything to do with being responsible for others and serving them.

A similar admonition was given to Timothy:

***2 Timothy 4:5 But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.***

God does not give a ministry to those who have official authority, He gives each believer a specific ministry to fulfill. God has definite purposes for His servants to accomplish. That means that you must “*take heed*” of the ministry you have been given as well.

Ministry is not something we do for God; it is something God does for us, in us, and through us.

***That you may keep on fulfilling it,*** PLEROO (**πληρόω**), v. pas; to bring to a designed end, fulfill a prophecy, an obligation, a promise, a law, a request, a purpose, a desire, a hope, a duty, a fate, a destiny.

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We are able to fulfill our ministries when we are “filled full” of Jesus Christ and His Word. The present tense is major in this verse. It is one thing to reach a point where you are fulfilling your mission or ministry, it’s quite another to maintain that position over the long haul. It is so easy to get distracted or lose momentum, the only way we can fulfill our ministry is to keep on consistently taking in and applying BD.

***Colossians 4:18 I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. Remember my imprisonment. Grace be with you.***

Paul’s eyesight possibly prohibited him from actually writing his own letters. The Galatian’s letter was one of the first letters he wrote and he had difficulty writing even then.

***Galatians 6:11 See with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand.***

***Remember*** (v. pam) ***my imprisonment.*** The (NKJV) translates this differently:

***Remember my chains*** which is closer to the literal meaning of the Greek word.

Paul was a slave of Christ in a very literal way.

This is really a command for them to remember that it was his commitment to Christ that put him in chains and they should share that same commitment. It was also to challenge them to remember to pray for him.

***Grace be with you.*** It is altogether fitting and predictable that Paul would end his letter with a phrase including grace.

***Philippians 1:7 For it is only right for me to feel this way about you all, because I have you in my heart, since both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers of grace with me.***

If God’s grace was sufficient for the Apostle Paul in prison and all of the adversity he was facing, it was certainly sufficient for the Colossians and it is indeed sufficient for us.

This concludes our study of the book of Colossians which we started on ***June 20, 2013***, which was **2 ½ years ago**. **END OF COLOSSIANS SERIES**

 **REVIEW over the entire book of Colossians**

**COLOSSIANS #237 (12-29-15)**

1. What do the “prison epistles” refer to?

 The letters that the Apostle Paul wrote while he was in prison.

2. Name the “prison epistles”.

 Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon.

3. What are the 3 things one must do in order for BD to benefit him or her?

**3 DOCTRINAL STAGES**

***STAGE 1:* HEARING PERCEPTION RECEPTION**

Most people fail at this stage because they are putting other things first, they’re not interested in hearing doctrine taught, they’re too arrogant & unteachable, or all three.

***STAGE 2:* BELIEVING METABOLIZATION RETENTION**

One must have an open mind, concentrate on the teaching of the Word, and believe it before it can become long term memory.

***STAGE 3:* APPLYING UTILIZATION RECALL**

The main reason people fail at this stage is because of worry or fear. Also, they fail to consistently feed their soul with doctrine so it’s not circulating in their streams of consciousness and they soon forget what they learned.

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4. In ***Colossians 1:9***, Paul prays that the Colossians would be filled with all spiritual wisdom. This would include the wisdom to know when to speak and when not to speak.

***“A wise old owl sat in an oak;***

***The more he saw the less he spoke;***

***The less he spoke the more he heard;***

***Let’s all try to imitate that bird.”***

5. **MEANING OF POSITIONAL & EXPERIENTIAL & ETERNAL**

**PHASE 1**: **POSITIONAL What happens at salvation**

**PHASE 2**: **EXPERIENTIAL What happens from salvation till death**

**PHASE 3**: **ETERNAL What happens in eternity**

6. ***WAYS TO EXPRESS*** **POSITIONAL & EXPERIENTIAL**

 1) **TOP CIRCLE at salvation** & **BOTTOM CIRCLE after salvation:**



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2) **SALVIFIC** = eternal salvation /**NON-SALVIFIC** = deliverance in time

3) **What God Does for Us When We Believe the Gospel**

**WHAT WE DO IN TIME AFTER WE ARE ETERNALLY SAVED:**

**a. Obey God,** avoid a wasted life and divine discipline

**b. Grow in grace and knowledge,** reap rewards

**COLOSSIANS #238-239 (1-5 and 1-7-16)**

**WE RECEIVED ETERNAL SALVATION in a MOMENT of TIME**

**Positional, Phase 1, Top Circle, Salvific**

**It’s an accomplish fact, a done deal.God did all the work.**

**All believers are guaranteed to inhabit heaven.**

**WE CAN be DELIVERED from DIVINE DISCIPLINE & REAP TEMPORAL & ETERNAL REWARDS & BLESSINGS**

**Experiential, Phase 2, Bottom Circle, Non-Salvific**

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**This is only a potential.**

**When we work, God helps us to accomplish His plan.**

**We must endure till the end or lose out on rewards.**

**Believers with +Volition will be winners in time & eternity.**

**Believers with –Volition will lose out in time & eternity.**

**KEY BIBLICAL WORDS WITH DUAL MEANINGS**

**Positional: Depends entirely on God’s work**

**Experiential: Depends on man’s work**

**Positional: DEPENDS ON GOD’S WORK Experiential: DEPENDS ON MAN’S WORK**

**Overcome** **Positional:** **1 John 5:5 Experiential: Rev. 2:7, 3:21, 21:7**

**the World**

**Inheritance** **Positional:** **Gal. 4:6-7, Rm. 8:16-17a Experiential:**  **Rm. 8:17b, Col. 3:23-24**

**Saved Positional: Eph. 2:8-9, Titus 3:5 Experiential: 1 Tim. 2:15, 1 Cor. 15:2**

**Eternal Life** **Positional: Jn 3:16, Rm. 6:23 Experiential:**  **Rm. 2:7, Gal. 6:8**

**Justifi Positional: Rm. 3:24-28, Gal. 2 Experiential: Rm. 2:13, James** **2:21-24**

**Sanctified**  **Positional:** **Acts 26:18, Heb. 13:12** **Experiential: 2 Tim. 2:21, John 17:17**

**Righteousness** **Positional:** **Rm. 4:5, Gal. 3:6 Experiential: Rm. 6:16, 1 Tim. 6:11**

**Son**  **Positional:** **Gal. 3:26, Rm. 8:15-19** **Experiential: Mt. 5:44-45, Rm. 8:14**

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**Heirs**  **Positional:** **Gal. 4:7, Eph. 3:6** **Experiential: Heb. 11:7, Ja 2:5**

**Christ in you Positional: Jn. 14:20, Rm 8:10-11 Experiential: Jn. 15:4-8, 2 Cor. 13:5**

**Overcome** **Positional:** **1 John 5:5 Experiential: Rev. 2:7, 3:21, 21:7**

**the World**

***1 John 5:5 Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?***

***Revelation 2:7 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God.'***

***Revelation 3:21 He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.***

***Revelation 21:7 He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son.***

**Inheritance** **Positional:** **Gal. 4:6-7, Rm. 8:16-17a Experiential:**  **Rm. 8:17b,** **Col. 3:23-24**

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***Galatians 4:6-7 Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" 7) Therefore you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God.***

***Romans 8:16-17a The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, 17) and if children, heirs also,***

***Romans 8:17b …and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.***

***Colossians 3:23-24 Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, 24) knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance.***

**Saved**  **Positional:** **Eph. 2:8-9, Titus 3:5 Experiential: 1 Tm. 2:15, 1** **Cor. 15:2**

***Ephesians 2:8-9 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9) not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.***

***Titus 3:5 He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit,***

***1 Timothy 2:15 But women will be saved through the bearing of children if they continue in faith and love and sanctity with self-restraint.***

***1 Corinthians 15:2 …by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain.***

**Eternal Life** **Positional: Jn 3:16, Rm. 6:23 Experiential:**  **Rm. 2:7, Gal. 6:8**

***John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.***

***Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.***

***Romans 2:6-7 …who will render to each person according to his deeds: 7) to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life;***

***Galatians 6:7-8 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. 8) For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.***

**Justified** **Positional: Rm. 3:24-28, Gal. 2:16** **Experiential: Rm. 2:13, Ja.** **2:21-24**

***Romans 3:24-28 …being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; 25) whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed; 26) for the demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. 27) Where then is boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? Of works? No, but by a law of faith. 28) For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law.***

***Galatians 2:16 Nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified.***

***Romans 2:13 …for it is not the hearers of the Law who are just before God, but the doers of the Law will be justified.***

***James 2:21-24 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar? 22) You see that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works, faith was perfected;***

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***23) and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "And ABRAHAM believed GOD, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness," and he was called the friend of God. 24) You see that a man is justified by works and not by faith alone.***

**Sanctified**  **Positional:** **Acts 26:18, Heb. 13:12** **Experiential: 2 Tim. 2:21, Jn 17:17**

***Acts 26:18 …to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.'***

***Hebrews 13:12 Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered outside the gate.***

***2 Timothy 2:21 Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from these things, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work.***

***John 17:17 Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.***

**Righteousness** **Positional:** **Rm. 4:5, Gal. 3:6 Experiential: Rm. 6:16, 1 Tim. 6:11**

***Romans 4:5 But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness,***

***Galatians 3:6 Even so Abraham believed GOD, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.***

***Romans 6:16 Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness?***

***1 Timothy 6:11 But flee from these things, you man of God, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness.***

**Son**  **Positional:** **Gal. 3:26, Rm. 8:15-19** **Experiential: Mt. 5:44-45, Rm. 8:14**

***Galatians 3:26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.***

***Romans 8:15-19 For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" 16) The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, 17) and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him. 18) For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. 19) For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God.***

***Matthew 5:44-45 But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45) so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.***

***Romans 8:14 For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.***

**Heirs**  **Positional:** **Gal. 4:7, Eph. 3:6** **Experiential: Heb. 11:7, Ja 2:5**

***Galatians 4:7 Therefore you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God.***

***Ephesians 3:6 …to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel,***

***Hebrews 11:7 By faith Noah, being warned by God about things not yet seen, in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world, and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.***

***James 2:5 Listen, my beloved brethren: did not God choose the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him?***

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**Christ in you Positional: Jn. 14:20, Rm 8:10-11 Experiential: Jn. 15:4-8, 2 Cor. 13:5**

***John 14:20 In that day*** [Pentecost, unique to Church Age believers*]* ***you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.***

***Romans 8:10-11 If****1st*[Since] ***Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin*** [OSN], ***yet the spirit*** [human spirit] ***is alive because of*** [imputed] ***righteousness. 11) But if****1st* [And since] ***the Spirit*** [HS] ***of*** [from] ***Him*** [GTF] **w*ho raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead*** [deaths] ***will also give life to your mortal bodies*** *[all depends on God in a second]* ***through His Spirit who dwells in you.***

***2 Corinthians 13:*5 Test** [v.pam] ***yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves*** [v.pam]**! *Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you-- unless indeed you fail the test?***

***John 15:4-5 Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. 5) "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.***

There is a difference between being “in Christ” and “abiding in Christ”. There is also a difference between “Christ being “in us” and “Christ abiding in us”.

We are never commanded to be “in Christ” because we are permanently in Him from the point of believing the gospel. However, we are commanded to “abide in Christ” which is not automatic, it is only a potential. In the same way, Christ abiding in us is not automatic, but only a potential.

**COLOSSIANS #240 (1-12-16)**

**SYNONYMS FOR THE CHURCH:**

**1. The head and THE BODY, *Eph.1:22-23*; *2:16*; *5:23*; *4:4, 5*; *Col. 1:24*; *2:19*.**

**2. The Shepherd and THE SHEEP, *John 10*; *Heb. 13:20*; *1 Peter 5:4*.**

**3. The Vine and the BRANCHES, *John 15*.**

**4. The Chief Cornerstone and the stones of THE BUILDING, *Eph. 2:20;* *1 Peter 2:4-8.***

**5. The high priesthood of Christ and THE ROYAL PRIESTHOOD of the believer, *Heb 7:25; 10:10-14;* *1 Pet 2:5,9*; *Rev 1:6*.**

**6. The Bridegroom and THE BRIDE, *2 Cor 11:2*; *Eph. 5:25,27*; *Rev 19:6-8*.**

**Power Point: “THE BOOKS”: Book of Life, Books of Works, Lamb’s Book of Life**