

COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH
PAUL'S LETTER TO THE COLOSSIANS – LESSON 9
COLOSSIANS 4:7-18
WEEK OF FEBRUARY 16 – FEBRUARY 21

PAUL'S FELLOW GOSPEL LABORERS

In this letter to the Colossians, Paul has stretched our thinking and understanding of the exalted and glorious Christ. Paul has taught us grand and lofty theological truths. Now, in these concluding verses, we see that Paul is a man whose theology inspires and fuels his love for Christ's people. He views them as co-laborers committed to growing in maturity in Christ together. He expresses his appreciation for their sacrificial service. He cares for them deeply. He encourages them in their faithful service to the Lord. Paul's final words to the Colossians exude his warmth and love for people. May we be encouraged by these verses to a greater love and appreciation of our brothers and sisters with whom we labor together. Through our common bond in Christ and our caring relationships with one another we can demonstrate what it means to "walk in a manner worthy of the Lord" (Col.1:10).

Read Colossians 4:7-9:

1. In **Colossians 4:7-8**, how did Paul describe Tychicus? What do you learn about his devotion to ministry of the gospel?

2. From **Ephesians 6:21-22**, what does Paul tell us of his trust in Tychicus and his service of ministry?

3. We will learn more about Onesimus, the runaway slave, in Paul's letter to Philemon. In **verse 9**, what does Paul say about Onesimus? What impact would you expect Paul's commendation to have on Onesimus and the Colossians?

Read Colossians 4:10-11:

4. Aristarchus, Mark and Jesus Justus were part of Paul's support while imprisoned in Rome. What did they supply to Paul and what was distinctive about them?

5. What do you learn about Aristarchus's commitment to Paul from the following verses:
 - **Acts 19:28-41**
 - **Acts 20:4**
 - **Acts 27:1-2**

6. Mark is named in **verse 10** as one of Paul's ministry partners serving Paul in Rome. What do you discover about the relationship between Mark (John Mark) and Paul from the following passages:
 - **Acts 13:1-5**
 - **Acts 15:36-39**
 - **2 Tim. 4:11**

Read Colossians 4:12-13:

7. Epaphras was the pastor of the church at Colossae and likely the founder of the churches of Laodicea and Hierapolis. Paul wrote this letter to the Colossians largely in response to Epaphras' questions and concerns about the heresy of the false teachers. How does Paul describe Epaphras' devotion and shepherding care for the saints in that region?

8. What was Epaphras' prayer and goal for the saints in his care?

Read Colossians 4:14-18:

9. Luke, Paul's beloved physician, joined with him on Paul's second missionary journey and continued to faithfully serve Paul during the time of his first Roman imprisonment. Paul writes 2 Timothy during the time of his second imprisonment in Rome. What do you learn about Luke from **2 Timothy 4:9-11**? How are you challenged or encouraged by Luke's example?

10. Demas is named as one of the supporters and co-laborers with Paul in Rome. He is also mentioned in the prison epistle written by Paul to Philemon. What does **2 Timothy 4:9-10** tell us about Demas? How do you think that affected Paul?

11. How was Mark's abandonment of Paul (*question 6*) different from Demas's departure? See **James 4:4** as you consider this.

12. In **verses 15-18**, Paul concludes this great doctrinal letter with warm greetings to people he never met. By this, Paul exhibits the deep and common bond between those who are one, "complete in Christ". In **verse 17**, how does Paul exhort and encourage Archippus, who we will meet in the letter to Philemon?

13. From this concluding section of Colossians, what lessons have you learned about commitment and sacrifice in laboring together in ministry with like-minded servants of the Lord? What specific actions will you take as a result of those lessons?

It is a travesty when the study of theology at a high level of thought and understanding causes a person to love less. Mind you, it is a travesty no smaller when great love for people is thought to prohibit serious study of God. Somehow in our day these options seem to be set over against one another. For Paul, all his great theological knowledge served the purpose of working ever so hard to see hearts encouraged, knit together in love, and full of the rich assurance that comes with knowing Christ. (Col. 2:2). [Colossians & Philemon](#). John Woodhouse, p. 270