

Colossians 3:22-4:18 Lives worthy of the Lord 29/5/2022

Background. See Col. 1:3-14, esp. 9b-10.

1. Living in the first century- slaves and masters. 3:22-4: 1.

Paul does not support the practice of slavery but neither does he directly forbid it. Why? Slavery was endemic in the Roman Empire, it also varied from more of an employment relationship to a very inhumane practice. Paul is concerned for their welfare and how they live as a witness to their faith in Jesus Christ. **Christian Masters.** Paul challenges them to provide for their slaves what is '**right and fair**' because they are accountable to God.

Reflection/Response: 'right and fair'? see 3:1-14.

2. The importance of prayer 4:2-4

Prayer is not our means of getting from God what we want or forcing Him to act. Rather prayer is firstly our acknowledgement that we are totally dependent on God especially to be able to live lives '**worthy of the Lord and please him in every way**'.

Being **watchful** = taking every opportunity to witness to Christ through our words and actions. Being **thankful** = believers are to live new lives that reflect our thankfulness to God for loving us, rescuing us, forgiving us and uniting us to Christ through the indwelling Spirit. Paul does not ask them to pray for his release! Rather to remain faithful to Jesus Christ in his teaching and writing.

3. Being witnesses in the wider community 4:5-6.

Conversation that is '*full of grace*' is conversation that leads to Christ. It is God's grace expressed through the gracious words and actions of believers. It is wise but humble conversation that shows the presence of Christ, through his Spirit, at work in the believers.

4. Tychicus, a faithful minister and servant, is being sent to encourage them. Paul wants them to know he has not forgotten them and he wants to encourage them with this letter.

5. Pauls sends greeting from six companions 4:10-18.

Aristarchus probably a fellow prisoner (Acts 19:29; 20:4; 27:2).

Mark the cousin of Barnabas (Acts 12:12; 12:25; 13:13; 15:37-39). **Jesus/Justus**, - all three were Jewish Christians. **Epaphras**, faithful minister (1:7-8; 1:24-2:5). **Luke**, the doctor, author of Luke and Acts (2 Tim. 4:11). **Demas** (2 Tim. 4:10). Paul's authoritative letter is also for other Churches (1 Thess. 5:27). The letter 'from Laodicea' is Paul's letter to the Ephesians. **Archippus** is to continue his work in the Lord – teaching new converts?

Reflection/Response. How would Paul's imprisonment be an encouragement to the Colossians? See Epaphras' prayer 4:12. BB