

Sunday, January 30, 2022—Colossians 4:13-16 Luke, Demas, House Churches & Other Tidbits

Colossians 4:13

- **For I bear him record, that he hath a great zeal for you, and them that are in Laodicea, and them in Hierapolis.**
- **For I bear him record**—who is the “him” in verse 13? It is Epaphras from verse 12. Paul now adds his own personal testimony regarding Epaphras.
- Paul writes that Epaphras has “great zeal” form the Colossians as well as the believers in Laodicea and Hierapolis.
- The word “zeal” is a very interesting word that carries good or bad connotations depending on how it is used.
- According to Noah Webster’s American Dictionary of the English Language the word “[zeal](#)” carries the following meanings.
 - Passionate ardor in the pursuit of any thing. In general, zeal is an eagerness of desire to accomplish or obtain some object, and it may be manifested either in favor of any person or thing, or in opposition to it, and in a good or bad cause.
 - The blind conductor of the will.
- The Greek word rendered “zeal” carries the following meanings: excitement of mind, fervor of spirit, ardour in embracing, pursuing, or defending something, zeal in behalf of, or for a person or a thing, fierceness of indignation, and envious or contentious rivalry, jealousy.
 - Negative Uses of the Word: Acts 5:17, 13:44-45, I Corinthians 3:3, Galatians 5:20
 - Positive Uses of the Word: II Corinthians 9:2, 11:2
- Colossians 4:13—Paul’s use of the word “zeal” serves as yet another example of Epaphras’ heart toward the believers in Colosse. It seems reasonable to assume that Epaphras had something to do with both the founding and ongoing care of all three of these churches.
- The cities of Colossi, Laodicea, and Hierapolis were located relatively close together in the Lycus Valley. Colossae was the farthest south, Laodicea was northwest of it, and Hierapolis was north of Laodicea.
- Laodicea is mentioned four times in the book of Colossians and twice in the book of Revelation.
 - Colossians 2:1; 4:13, 15, 16
 - Revelation 3:16.
- Colossians 4:13 serves as the only mention of the both the city and church that was located in Hierapolis.

Colossians 4:14

- **Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you.**
- Luke is credited with having written both the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts. He is mentioned three times in the New Testament.
 - Philemon 24—Paul calls Luke one of his fellowlabourers.
 - II Timothy 4:11—Luke was faithful to Paul unto the end.
- Demas like Luke is also mentioned only three times in the New Testament, but his story is very different from Luke's
 - Philemon 24—both here and in Colossians Paul considers Demas one of his fellowlabourers.
 - II Timothy 4:10—the word forsaken means to abandon, desert, leave in straits, to leave helpless. Unlike Luke, Demas forsook Paul.
- Are you going to be a Luke or a Demas? We need saints like Luke those that are going to be faithful fellowlaboures in the work of the ministry.

Colossians 4:15

- **Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the church which is in his house.**
- Many believers today are choosing to meet in houses claiming that it is the New Testament pattern for believers. Some even go so far as to argue that meeting in a building is sinful. Even in grace circles some have claimed that if Paul's pattern is going to be truly followed the only acceptable place for believers to meet is in homes.
 - Romans 16:5
 - I Corinthians 16:19
 - Philemon 2
- Based on these verses it is argued that it is wrong to have a building of any sort or to meet in any other structure other than a house.
- Furthermore, it has been suggested by some that the Body of Christ is the one true church and that local church organization is foreign to the word of God. Some have possessed questions such as if you are the church how do you go to church?
- I Corinthians 12:12—makes it clear that upon faith in Christ believers are baptized by God the Holy Spirit into the church the Body of Christ. This is the only membership that truly matters. That is why this assembly will not have a formal membership procedure.

- Ephesians 1:22-23
- Ephesians 4:4—how many bodies of Christ are there? One
- I Corinthians 16:19—the Holy Spirit knows that difference between singular and plural.
- Acts 19:9—nowhere does Paul establish a mandate for the Body of Christ for where they should meet. Here Paul is meeting in a school the joins hard to the Jewish synagogue.
- Let's not let the religious system or grace legalizers cloud our thinking.