

Sunday, February 6, 2022—Colossians 4:16-18 Take Heed to the Ministry

Colossians 4:16

- **And when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea.**
- Paul instructs three things be done in this verse:
 - The Epistle is to be read to the entire assembly
 - It should also be read in the church of the Laodiceans
 - The Epistle from Laodicea is to be read in the Colossian church.
- Please notice that it says the “epistle from Laodicea,” not the “epistle to Laodicea.” Joel Hayes believes that this is a reference to the book of Philemon. He could very well be right. I am just not sure.
- There is no epistle addressed to the Laodiceans that appears in Scripture. The letter Paul is talking about could have been anyone of his epistles that happened to have been in the possession of the Laodicean church.
- I Corinthians 5:9—not every letter Paul wrote is in the cannon of Scripture. Only those that he was inspired by God the Holy Spirit to write are scripture.
- II Timothy 3:16, II Peter 1:21
- I Corinthians 13—One of the jobs of the New Testament prophet was to identify what was Scripture and what was not.
- Much has been made in recent years over the Gnostic Gospels and where or not they should be included in the Bible.
- Colossians 4:18—**The salutation by the hand of me Paul. Remember my bonds. Grace be with you. Amen**
- Cross references suggest that even though Paul sometimes dictated his letters he always penned the salutation in his own hand.
 - Romans 16:22—in the case of the book of Romans, Tertius was the amanuenses or the one to who Paul dictated the epistle.
 - Romans 1:1
 - Galatians 6:11—in the case of the book of Galatians it seems that Paul wrote the entire epistle himself.

- Colossians 4:18
- II Thessalonians 2:17—this verse states that Paul’s hand-written salutations were a token of all his epistles. In short, Paul’s hand-written salutations were a make of authenticity and apostolic authority.
 - II Thessalonians 2:1-2—the indication from verse 2 is that the Thessalonians had received and were troubled by false letters “as from” Paul. It is therefore fitting that Paul point out the significance of his salutations at the end of the epistle.
- This is one reason why I don’t believe that Paul wrote Hebrews.

Colossians 4:17

- **And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it.**
- Archippus is mentioned two times in the New Testament once here in Colossians 4 and also in Philemon Verse 2.
- For me these verses clinch the fact that Philemon and Archippus were both from the city of Colosse.
- Paul instructs the Colossians to deliver a message to Archippus. Simply stated Archippus is to “take heed” that he fulfills the ministry that he had received in the Lord.
- First, Paul wants Archippus to “take heed to the ministry” The English word “heed” carries the following meanings according to Noah Webster’s *American Dictionary of the English Language*:
 - To mind; to regard with care; to take notice of; to attend to; to observe.
 - 1) Caution; care; watch for danger; notice; circumspection; **usually preceded by take.**
- The basic meaning of the expression “take heed” means to proceed with caution or care i.e., to beware of. The expression “take heed” serves as a warning or exhortation.
 - I Corinthians 10:12—“take heed”
 - Galatians 5:15—“take heed”
 - Philippians 3:2—“beware of”
 - Colossians 2:8—“beware”

- The expression “take heed” is in the present tense which means that Archippus is to be continually and carefully watching and seeing to the ministry. What does Paul want Archippus to take heed to? The ministry which he received in the Lord.
- Based on the Scriptural evidence, it is very likely that Archippus played an important part in the leadership of the Colossian church. The inclusion of this verse indicates that Paul was aware that Archippus had been letting some of his responsibilities slip.
- II Corinthians 5:17-6-10—We have all been given a ministry to fulfill during the Dispensation of Grace it’s called the ministry of reconciliation.
- This encapsules God’s primary purpose today during the Dispensation of Grace in forming the one new man the Church the Body of Christ we are workers together with God in accomplishing his eternal purpose.
 - Ephesians 4:12—the ministry is going to be work; therefore it requires commitment, perseverance, and faithfulness.
 - II Timothy 4:1-5—“make full proof of thy ministry” means to carry through to the end and to fulfill the ministry in every part.
- Colossians 4:17—we have already considered many times how the word fulfill means to complete in the scriptures.
- Paul exhorts Archippus to be like Luke rather than Demus. Paul exhorts all of us with the same exhortation to see our ministry through to completion.

Practical Application

- The affairs of this life often take our focus off from the heavenly purpose and citizenship that we have in Jesus Christ.
- As Christ’s ambassadors we have been left here to carry out his purpose of having all men be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth.
- II Corinthians 8:4—through the local church there is fellowship in the ministry as we do what Paul says in Philippians 1:27 striving together for the faith of the gospel.
- The local church is the God ordained vehicle through which believers’ partner together and work toward accomplishing God’s purpose of forming the Body of Christ.
- I Corinthians 16:15—do you have any addictions? The primary addiction of a believer’s life ought to be to the work of the ministry.
- We like every church that has ever existed could not exist without fellowlabourers in the work of the ministry.