

Sermon Series: Colossians

Sermon Text: Colossians 4:7-18 Brotherhood

God's grace in Christ encourages us to persevere through the fellowship we enjoy in the advance of the gospel.

- Fellowship—"Tychicus . . . a beloved brother, faithful minister, fellow servant"; Onesimus, our faithful and beloved brother"; "Aristarchus my fellow prisoner"; "Aristarchus . . . Mark . . . Justus . . . fellow workers for the kingdom of God"; "Luke the beloved physician . . . Demas"; "brothers at Laodicea"; "to Nympha and the church in her house"; "have it read in the church of the Laodiceans;" see that you also read the letter from Laodicea"; Why would Paul want them to greet the Laodiceans for him if he is already greeting them in his letter to them? To encourage fellowship among the churches. "Laodicea and Hieropolis"; "say to Archippus, 'See that you fulfill the ministry that you have received in the Lord.'"
- Suffering—"my fellow prisoner"; "remember my chains"
- Grace—"Grace be with you!"

1) God encourages us through reports of His work in other parts of His Church (7-9).

- a) Messengers are sent to encourage the saints with report of the ministry of the Word through Paul's imprisonment.
- b) **Application:** Presbytery reports on church planting; Missionary Reports; RUF Reports; encouraging Christians in churches nearby, like Providence PCA

2) God encourages us through the fellow suffering of faithful brothers (10-11).

- a) Fellow prisoner(v. 10); Aristarchus, Mark and Justus are "the only men of the circumcision among my fellow workers for the kingdom of God, they have been a comfort to me" (v. 11).— Paul's suffering at the hands of the non-Christian Jews and his trouble with Judaizers in the Church. These faithful Jewish brothers strengthened his hands for the work.
 - i) Aristarchus from Thessalonica (Acts 20:4; 27:2; Philem. 24)
 - ii) Mark (Acts 12:12; 15:36-37; 2 Tim. 4:11; 1 Pet. 5:13)
 - iii) Justus
- b) **Application:** Christian service meets with conflict from the world and from internal strife. Do you stand with those who suffer for righteousness' sake?

3) God encourages us through the prayers of faithful brothers (12).

- a) "Epaphras . . . a servant of Christ Jesus . . . always struggling on your behalf in his prayers, that you may stand mature and fully assured in the will of God"
- b) **Application:**
 - i) Pastors are to devote themselves to prayer and the ministry of the Word (Acts 6:4).
 - ii) All believers have the privilege and responsibility to intercede for each other (cf. 4:2-3).
 - iii) How can you become more disciplined (struggling/fighting) in prayer?
 - iv) Personal prayer? Family prayer? Covenant Group prayer?

4) God encourages us through the service of faithful brothers (13-14).

- a) "For I bear him witness that he has worked hard for you and for those in Laodicea and in Hierapolis."

- b) "Luke the beloved physician"
- c) Demas (cf. 2 Tim. 4:10 "For Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me . . .")
- d) **Application:** Your faithful service encourages your pastors and other fellow members of the body.

5) God encourages us through our fellowship in the Scriptures (16-17).

- a) "And when this letter has been read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans; and see that you also read the letter from Laodicea."
- b) "And say to Archippus, 'See that you fulfill the ministry that you have received in the Lord.'" — they are to remind him of the Apostolic command, which is the very Word of Christ (cf. 1 Thess. 2:13)
- c) **Application:** How is your Scripture intake? In community?

Doxology: Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith— to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen. (Rom. 16:25-27)