

Colossians 4:7-18

Colossians chapter four. Chapter four, verse seven. And this will close out the teaching of Galatians, Phillipians and Colossians for the year. Tonight, of course, will close out the book of Colossians and this will be the last of the verses that has to be covered yet to cover all the Church epistles on a Corps night. All the other Church epistles have been covered previously. So these verses will close it out and then we'll have it all available, and sooner or later, Mark, I guess it'll be in University of Life. So that's a good enough reason to join up to University of Life, so you get all that information.

Colossians 4:7:

All my state shall Tychicus declare unto you, *who is* a beloved brother, and a faithful minister and fellowservant in the Lord.

First of all, "all my state". "All my state" is all the things pertaining to me, literally that's what the phrase is. It means all my affairs, all the things pertaining to me. Tychicus is going to tell you about it, he's going to declare it to you. It sort of reminds me of last Sunday night when Reverend Lewis was here from the state of Illinois and declared to us the things of Illinois as well as the Word that fit in with it. And when Reverend Guarini was here, a number of weeks ago and shared on a Sunday night. I think having our leaders come in from off the field at different times and sharing here on Sunday night to make known their affairs, what's going on in their state, is real exciting. They don't always get into it in the teaching, but somewhere along the line they usually meet with a group and tell us what's going on. And it's always great to hear, because I want to know. Is God working out there on the field or is He loafing? I don't think He's loafing. I want to hear what's happening on the field.

Well anyway, Tychicus is going to tell them everything that's going on as far as Paul's life and ministry, where he is at that time in Rome. He'll declare to you who is a beloved brother. Now Tychicus first comes up in Acts, chapter 20. And in verse four, where Paul was going from...first he had left Ephesus, went up to Greece, then on his way back through Macedonia, back over to the Asia area. He's got a bunch of people going along and verse four:

Acts 20:4:

And there accompanied him into Asia Sopater of Berea and the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timotheus; and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus.

So where was Tychicus from? Asia. And now Tychicus is going back to Asia to deliver this epistle to the Colossians, as well as... Look at Ephesians chapter six just to refresh your memory.

Ephesians 6:21:

But that ye also may know my affairs [all the things pertaining to me], *and* how I do, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things.

Tychicus is going to not only deliver the epistle to the Ephesians but he's going to deliver this one to the Colossians. Both of those are in the Province of Asia. Now back to Colossians four. Well, I got to tell you a little more about Tychicus. Look at Titus, chapter one. After he was here at Colosse, he later was possibly sent to the island of Crete. In Titus, chapter one, verse five, when Paul is writing to Titus, he says:

Titus 1:5:

For this cause left I [Paul] thee [Titus] in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and [do what?] ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee.

Paul put Titus on the island of Crete, that was his Corps assignment, to ordain elders in every city, Twig Coordinators. Now, in chapter three of Titus.

Titus 3:12:

When I shall send Artemas unto thee, or [whom?] Tychicus, be diligent to come unto me to Nicopolis: for I have determined there to winter.

So, Paul is either going to send Artemas or Tychicus to the island of Crete. That'll be Tychicus's new Corps assignment. Got the picture? Now, look at II Timothy which happened after Titus.

II Timothy 4:12:

And Tychicus have I sent to [what?] Ephesus.

So, when Ephesians and Colossians were written, Paul was in Rome, Tychicus was with Paul in Rome, but he's going to send Tychicus to Ephesus, then, over to Colosse. Later Paul is in Nicopolis is going to send either Artemas or Tychicus down to the island of Crete. That'll be his new assignment. Now in II Timothy he has already sent Tychicus back to Ephesus in Asia. That's his new assignment. And these epistles are at least a year a part or so. So, it's like a yearly assignment or two or three year assignment, where he would send them on different assignments to do different things. Well, I think when he was traveling with Paul back through Asia with that other group, that was the Corps traveling with him at the time.

Now back to Colossians chapter four, verse seven. It describes Tychicus as a beloved brother. He was a brother spiritually and a faithful minister. That word is translated "deacon" sometimes. A faithful servant, one that serves in any capacity, and he's a faithful one. Now that's required of anybody in a leadership position to at least be a faithful servant, one who serves in a capacity. But it also gives them a third description here. He's a fellow doulos, a fellow bondsman in the Lord. A fellow bondsman is a servant that not only does what is required, he goes way beyond, he gives way beyond what he's expected to do. Tychicus was one of those man that did the extra. He went beyond the 100%. He was a fellow bondsman in the lord. Now that phrase, we've had a number of times. What does "in the lord" mean? Service to the household.

Colossians 4:8:

Whom I have sent unto you [Tychicus] for the same purpose, that he might know your estate, and comfort your hearts.

And that word "estate" is the same as the word "state" back in seven. It's that he might know your affairs. And "comfort" is to encourage, encourage your hearts. Now the thing is; some of the texts say that he might know your affairs. Other texts say that you might know our affairs. Now which one is right? That's the question. We'll come back to that. But he's sending him.

Colossians 4:9:

With Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, who is *one* of you. They shall make known unto you all things which *are done* here.

Who is Onesimus? Well, Philemon verse ten tells you who Onesimus is. And remember Philemon was written at this same time approximately.

Philemon 10-12:

I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds [while Paul was in chains]:

Which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me:

Whom I have sent again: thou therefore receive him, that is, mine own bowels.

He's telling Philemon to do what? Receive Onesimus. So Onesimus is evidently on his way to Philemon, with this personal epistle while he's traveling with Tychicus who is carrying the epistle to the Ephesians and the epistle to the Colossians. Now that was a handful of heavy letters going in the direction of Asia.

Colossians 4:9:

With Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, who is *one* of you. They shall make known unto you all things which *are done* here.

So, where was Onesimus from? Colosse. So where was Philemon? He was in Colosse when he received that epistle that Onesimus was bringing. With Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They shall make known unto you all things which are done here. Now, in verse seven, "all my state, all my affairs" shall Tychicus declare to you. Then in verse eight, you have, he will make known your affairs or you might know our affairs, one of those. And in verse nine, they shall make known to you all things, things done here, which are here. Now, to answer that question I brought up. Look at chapter one.

Colossians 1:7, 8:

As ye also learned of Epaphras our dear fellowservant [bondslave], who is for you a faithful minister of Christ;

Who also declared unto us your love in the Spirit [your spiritual love for us].

Epaphras had already come from Colosse and told them the affairs of the Colossians. So was there a need for them to declare to Tychicus what was going on there? No. Paul already knew it. Tychicus knew it. Now in chapter two.

Colossians 2:1:

For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, and *for* them at Laodicea, and *for* as many as have not seen my face in the flesh.

He wants them to know of his affairs, the great contest that he has for them. He wants them to know his affairs. So it's clear that they already knew; Paul already knew their affairs, Tychicus knew. But the need was for them to know Paul's affairs, what was going on in his life and the great contest that he had going on. Now, back to chapter four. That's why this verse.

Colossians 4:8:

Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that he might know your estate [that you might know our affairs]...

This is very important. First of all, whenever Paul sent an epistle, a God-breathed epistle, one of the Church epistles, he always sent it with a top leader. Tychicus or others, Epaphroditus in Philippians, a top leader. He didn't trust the mail service. You know, he could have just given it to any carrier, or a courier or whatever that was going over there, Federal Express, something else, but he didn't. He gave it to one of his top leaders, Tychicus or Epaphroditus, or someone else, Tertius. Because that top leader would then

expound the epistle. The spoken Word has an immediate and an emotional impact upon the recipient, but the written Word preserves it. Look at Isaiah chapter 30.

Isaiah 30:8:

Now go, write it before them in [on] a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come for ever and ever.

They're to do what? Write it, note it in a book. That's what the written Word does. It preserves it for the time to come. We've still got it today, don't we? Sure. That's what the written Word does. Suppose we had to depend on the spoken Word that had come down to us through the ages, through the lips of so many people. But look what the written Word has done for us. It's preserved it for us, for the time to come. Look at Proverbs, chapter 22.

Proverbs 22:20, 21:

Have not I written to thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge,
That I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth; that thou mightest answer the words of truth to them that send unto thee.

The written Word not only preserves it for the future, but it establishes it, it makes it certain in the hearts of people. When you can read it, it's much more certain than when you hear it with the ear. Unless, of course, it's in the newspaper. When somebody tells you, "Well so and so told me this." Well, could be, could not be. Maybe the words got mixed up. Ever play telephone or telegraph, whatever it is?

What about Pony Express? If that so and so sends you a written document, then you feel much more confident that he said that. But when somebody says that he said it, you don't know for sure. It makes it certain for you. Look at Luke chapter one.

Luke 1:3:

It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first [from above, *anōthen*], to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus,

To write to you. Why would he write?

Luke 1:4:

That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been [what?] instructed.

What does the written Word do? It makes it certain.

John 20:30, 31:

And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:
But these are written, that ye might [do what?] believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

These things were written, many other things were done, many other things were spoken, but these things were written that you might believe. To believe you have to be certain about something. And that's the purpose of the written Word, to make it certain and to preserve it for the future. Now look at Nehemiah chapter eight. The written Word preserves the Word for the future and it makes it a certainty, it establishes it in people's hearts. But the preached Word has an immediate and an emotional impact upon people's lives. The preached Word makes known that written Word. Without the preached Word, the written Word doesn't have the vitality for the average person. And that's what you as the Corps leadership need to develop is that

ability to communicate the written Word. Because it's the preached Word that really sparks people's lives and hearts up. If that's good English or not, it's still true. It builds something. It's the spoken Word that makes that living Word real for people. Now in Nehemiah chapter eight.

Nehemiah 8:5-7:

And Ezra opened the book [scroll, written Word] in the sight of all the people; (for he was above all the people;) and when he opened it, all the people stood up:
And Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands: and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the Lord with *their* faces to the ground.
Also Jeshua, and Bani, and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodijah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites, caused the people to understand the law: and the people *stood* in their place.

They not only read it. They caused them to do what? Understand.

Nehemiah 8:8:

So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly [accurately], and gave the sense, and caused *them* to understand the reading.

That's the purpose of the preached Word. To make known that written Word. Understand?

Luke 24:44, 45:

And he [Jesus] said unto them [the 11 behind closed doors], These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me.
Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures [writing].

The written Word preserved it, it kept it for them, made it certain for them. But it took that preached Word from Jesus Christ who is the incarnate Word to open their understanding. Isn't that beautiful? You need both. I Corinthians chapter one. You need the written Word, but you also need the preached Word, because that spoken Word, the preached Word makes known the written Word. It gives it the impact.

I Corinthians 1:21:

For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of [much writing? No.] preaching to save them that believe.

It was the foolishness of preaching that made known the written Word, expounded it, so people could believe and get saved. But only for those that want to believe. Back to Colossians. So everywhere Paul sent an epistle, he sent it with one of his top leaders. And that top leader would make known, he would preach, speak the Word to expound that written Word. The leader had been with Paul, the leader had lived with him. He'd perhaps had been in that area with him for sometime previous where he had written the epistle. He understood the heart of the man of God. He understood it by experience. He had lived under the pressures there at Rome with Paul. He had understood the Mystery from the lips of Paul, as well as seeing now in writing. So when he gets to Ephesus, when he gets to Colosse, he can not only just read the letter but he can cause them to understand, like Nehemiah and the priests did, the Levites. That leader has lived it and he's able to communicate the heart of the Word. That's why Colossians 4:7 through 9 is really saying this three times. All my affairs shall Tychicus declare unto you. And in verse eight. For the same purpose, I sent him to you, for the same purpose that you might know our affairs. And then in verse nine he says it again. They shall make known unto you all things here. All things that are going on here, in Rome. The only difference is the first time, he says, my affairs, the second time he says, our affairs, and the third time

he says, everything here. The first time it's very personal. Because they wanted to know or would want to know everything that's going on in the life of Paul relevant to the move of the Mystery.

When Tychicus gets there, could he tell them, "Look, Paul has really been hot on this issue lately, he's really been preaching it and it's been really bringing the Gentiles and the Judeans together. It's really been cementing that one Body. Boy, there's a lot of love there and with that there's a lot of healing. There's a lot of other things going on; signs, miracles, wonders, all over the place. Man, you walk down the streets of Rome...you just wouldn't believe it. The other day he was preaching to the believer that had come over when he tied up that soldier, another soldier came along, they had to change handcuffs...the other soldier was going on a break and this new one was come in. He just kept right on preaching while they were going."

Tychicus was there, he lived through it, he knew what was going on? Right. Sure. And not only his affairs, but with the other believers and how the Mystery is moving there. Our affairs. And not only that, all things that are going on there. Maybe the Devil's kicking up his heels, maybe some of the Judeans are moving in, maybe some of the Gnostics or pagans of other groups are moving in and trying to squelch the Mystery, or trying to get at believers, trying to cause division. Tychicus knew what was going on there. All things going on here. He reiterates that three times. When he wrote Ephesians chapter six:

Ephesians 6:21, 22:

But that ye also may know my affairs [the things going on with me], *and* how I do, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things:

Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that ye might know our affairs, and *that* he might comfort your hearts.

My affairs in verse 21. Shall make known unto you all things and then, sent unto you for the same purpose, that ye might know our affairs. Very similar to what you have in Colossians.

So you need the written Word, but you need the preached Word. And I think that's fantastic. When I thought about this, I thought, boy wouldn't that be neat...sometime when we send out a letter instead of just putting it in an all mailing and sending it to every believer, if we just made copies, gave it to some of our leadership and let them go out and preach it, make it known, expound the letter. How often, I wonder people get letters and they sort of glance at it, maybe read it over, file it away or something else and it becomes just another piece of paper. But if it's got some real heart and meat and so forth in it, some people really take note, others just lay it to the side. But suppose somebody came along with that letter and said, "Look at what this letter says. Let me explain what he meant by that." I don't know, it's just a thought. [laughter] Anyway the literal according to usage of these first three verses.

Colossians 4:7-9: (Literal)

Tychicus, a beloved brother, faithful servant, and fellow bondsman in the lord will make known to you all my affairs.

For this same reason, that you might know our affairs and that he might encourage your hearts, I am sending him to you

with Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother who is one of you. They shall make known to you everything that is going on here.

I said it three times, that ought to establish it.

Colossians 4:10:

Aristarchus my fellowprisoner saluteth you, and Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas, (touching whom ye received commandments: if he come unto you, receive him;)

Aristarchus, who is he? Look at Acts chapter 19. Fantastic fellow, wish you could have known him. Sat around the campfire with him one night, no I didn't. Get the picture? Tychicus probably did, I'm sure he did.

Acts 19:29:

And the whole city was filled with confusion [this was that great *ekklesia*, remember the silversmith's and so on, got together for a union meeting]: and having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of [where?] Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel, they rushed with one accord into the theatre.

What cities are in Macedonia? Well, you've got Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Amphipolis, Apollonia. Aristarchus and Gaius, they were men of Macedonia and Paul's companions in travel. They rushed with one accord into the theatre. They caught these two guys and brought them into that meeting. Now where is Aristarchus? He's being held captive at a union meeting. This guy was always in trouble, look at chapter 20. Well, in chapter 20 he wasn't in trouble, here he is traveling.

Acts 20:4:

And there accompanied him into Asia Sopater of Berea; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timotheus; and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus.

Now look at chapter 27.

Acts 27:1, 2:

And when it was determined that we should sail into Italy, they delivered Paul and certain other prisoners unto *one* named Julius, a centurion of Augustus' band.
And entering into a ship of Adramyttium, we launched, meaning to sail by the coasts of Asia; *one* Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica, being with us.

What kind of a ship were they on? Well, there was a bunch of prisoners on this ship. Was Aristarchus a prisoner going along with him? This guy is in trouble again. Well, for a good cause though.

Colossians 4:10:

Aristarchus my fellowprisoner saluteth you...

He was a fellowprisoner with Paul. He salutes you. Now, look at Romans.

Romans 16:7:

Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen [they're Paul's relatives], and my fellowprisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.

They were at some time prisoners with Paul. Some of Paul's relatives got in the Word before he did. And some of Paul's relatives were in jail with him. Now, look at Philemon verse 23.

Philemon 23:

There salute thee Epaphras, my fellowprisoner in Christ Jesus;

But it's different, fellowprisoner in Christ Jesus. He's not just a fellowprisoner, he's a fellowprisoner in Christ Jesus. Now that changes the sense of it.

Philemon 24:

Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellowlabourers.

It doesn't call "Aristarchus" a fellowprisoner, yet we know he was, from Colossians. But here it's using fellowprisoner with a different sense, not of him being in prison or in chains, but Epaphras was a fellowprisoner in Christ Jesus. Like the beginning of Philemon, verse one.

Philemon 1:

Paul, a prisoner of [whom?] Jesus Christ....

It's not talking about his physical imprisonment, but that he's really tied up to Jesus Christ. He's a prisoner of Jesus Christ. You find the same thing in Ephesians 3:1 and in Ephesians 4:1. Paul is a prisoner of Jesus Christ. So it's a different sense there. The commentaries want to argue over... well, maybe Epaphras was in jail with him for a little while, and then Aristarchus was for a little while and they sort of switched back and forth, it doesn't make a whole lot of sense. Anyway back to verse ten of Colossians four.

Colossians 4:10:

Aristarchus my fellowprisoner saluteth you, and Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas, (touching whom ye received commandments: if he come unto you, receive him;)

Now, "Marcus". This is that John Mark that's mentioned in Acts chapter 12, verses 12 and 25. He was the son of Mary, where they were praying and Peter got delivered from jail, the angel came and opened up the prison. And then in chapter 13, it mentions this John Mark as the one that went along with Paul and Barnabas, on Paul's first itinerary. In chapter 13, verse five and in verse 13. And then in chapter 13 verse 13, is where John Mark decided he didn't want to go with them anymore, so he left them and went back home. And so when you get to chapter 15 verses 37 and 39. You find that Paul and Barnabas had a disagreement over this John Mark, because he had been disobedient before he had left them, so Paul didn't want to take John Mark along. Barnabus did. So Paul and Barnabus had a falling out over John Mark. So Paul went one way, Barnabus another. But when you read I Peter 5:13, you find this John Mark is with Peter in Babylon. And then when you read Colossians, as well as Philemon 24, you find this John Mark is with Paul at Rome. And when you read II Timothy 4:11, Paul says, "Bring him with you, for he's profitable to me for the ministry." So John Mark evidently had a change of heart. And if he's the one that wrote the gospel of Mark, he certainly did. So "Marcus".

Then it says, "Sister's son" to Barnabus. And that word "sister's son" is cousin, it simply means cousin. A cousin to Barnabus. Then you have a parenthesis, "touching whom you received commandments: if he come unto you, receive him." That's a short parenthetical expression thrown in. It's an epitrechon one of those figure you have had. Epitrechon.

Colossians 4:11:

And Jesus, which is called Justus, who are of the circumcision. These only *are* my fellowworkers unto the kingdom of God, which have been a comfort unto me.

Now, you can look it up later, but Acts 18:7 talks about a certain Justus whose house was right next to the synagogue, a fellow that believed where Paul went and taught. And then finally the leader of the synagogue got involved and he believed. This could be that same Justus, Jesus which is called Justus. If his house was next to the synagogue, he could be of the circumcision and certainly this fellow was. Who are of the what? Circumcision. Now, not just Jesus, called Justus, but it's all three of these fellows. Aristarchus, Marcus and Jesus. All three of those are of the circumcision and they're the only ones of the circumcision in background, not currently, but in background. Of course, it's hard to uncircumcise yourself. But in background, as far as religion. These only are my fellowworkers in the kingdom of God. Now he had others, like Luke, Demas, Epaphras, Timothy who were with him, that were fellowworkers, but they were Gentiles in background. These were the only ones of the circumcision in background, the only believers

who were Paul's fellowworkers at Rome. "They only are my fellowworkers unto the kingdom of God, which have been a comfort unto me." These three, plus some of the Gentiles in background, the believers who stood with Paul at Rome, were also a comfort to him. But these are the only three that came out of the circumcision background that were a comfort to Paul.

The word "comfort" is not the normal word for comfort or encouragement. In Greek it's the word parēgoria, it means a consultation with someone or a soothing, when you consult someone you could have a soothing conversation. The verb form is used of medicines which allay the irritation, when you have an irritation. In English we have the word "paregoric" which is a medicine that soothes or lessens pain, provides relief. How would you spell relief? [Laughter] How would you spell paregoric?

Colossians 4:10, 11: (Literal)

Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, salutes you; and so does Mark, the cousin of Barnabas (of whom you received orders that if he comes, you are to be hospitable to him); and also Jesus, called Justus. These are of the circumcision [in background]. They alone are co-workers in the Kingdom of God, who have been a relief to me.

They've been a relief, they've helped me. They relieved some of the irritation going on here. Now verse 12.

Colossians 4:12:

Epaphras, who is *one* of you, a servant [bondslave] of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.

Where was he from? Colosse. It's interesting that he should say a bondslave of Christ and not a bondslave of Jesus Christ, because the question here is who's the head of the Body? What's the issue? The head. How many heads have you got? There should be one. Christ is the head, not those angels. Christ is the head of the body and he's [Epaphras is] a servant of that head, and he salutes you. "Laboring fervently", in Greek it's agonizomai, which means to compete as in a contest or the games. His means of competing here was in prayers. Although in chapter one verse seven, it mentioned Epaphras being a fellowslave, doulos, who taught them. He worked with the Colossians when he was there before. Now he's not with them, so how does he labor for them? In prayers. The written Word labors or serves in the contest. The spoken Word, you serve in the contest that way. But when you're not there to speak the Word, what do you do? Pray. And even if you're there with them you can pray. But when you're not there with them, you can't preach so you have to pray. That's the only thing you can do. Otherwise, in chapter one.

Colossians 1:28, 29:

Whom we preach [Christ in you], warning [confronting] every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present [cause] every man [to stand] perfect [fully mature] in Christ Jesus [Christ]:

Whereunto I also labour [work hard], striving [in the contest] according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.

Colossians 4:12:

Epaphras, who is *one* of you, a servant [bondslave] of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.

Here, he's not with them. So he cannot strive in the contest by preaching the Word, but he does it by prayers, long distance. Laboring fervently for you in prayers that ye may stand perfect. The word "perfect" is Gmir in Aramaic which is that word that means perfect or mature. And in Greek it's teleios which also means perfect or fully mature, the initiated one. The same word you had in 1:28. Now the word "complete" in Aramaic it's mla which means complete or full. It's the same word that's used in Colossians 2:10, where you are complete in him, but it's not used in that extra intensive form. It's a different form here. It just

simply means full or complete. The Greek word is *plēroō* which means to fill to capacity. And that is, in the perfect tense, the same as in Colossians 2:10. "You are absolutely complete" would be the sense of it or filled to capacity, in all the will of God. Now some Greek texts have another word which means fully persuaded or fully convinced, which is not a bad word either. Because, if you are full in all the will of God, or complete or absolutely complete in the will of God, wouldn't you be fully convinced of it, fully persuaded? So it's not a bad word there. We translated verse 12:

Colossians 4:12: (Literal)

Epaphras, who is one of you, a bonds slave of Christ, salutes you. He constantly competes ardently in the contest for you by prayers, that you may stand fully mature and completely persuaded in all the will of God.

When you're with someone, you've got the written Word and you preach the Word to get them to that point of standing fully mature. Standing completely, completely complete, convinced, persuaded of the will of God. That they're absolutely convinced and nothing can move them from the Word. But when you're absent you can still compete in the contest ardently in prayers for that individual that he can be fully mature. How often do you pray? "Father, help that person to be fully mature, to be fully persuaded, completely persuaded in the will of God." That should be on our prayer list for people that we lift.

Colossians 4:13:

For I bear him [Epaphras] record, that he hath a great zeal for you, and them *that are* in Laodicea, and them in Hierapolis.

We know he had the knowledge, because he taught them before, but he also has a great zeal. Very important. A lot of times we get so much knowledge, we lose the zeal. We can't afford to, foundational, you need zeal and knowledge. Not only for you but them at Laodicea and Hierapolis. And as I've told you before, those three cities formed within a ten to thirteen mile area there, a tri-city area, in Asia. And, of course, Hierapolis was the pleasure city at this time. Laodicea was the governmental center, political center. And Colosse was a small trade center at this time.

Colossians 4:13: (Literal)

I am a witness of his great zeal for you and for those in Laodicea and Hierapolis.

Colossians 4:14:

Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you.

He was a physician, a medical man. I think it's interesting how often you see Luke traveling with Paul in the book of Acts and you see him with Paul at Rome when he's writing some of these epistles. As a matter of fact, II Timothy says only Luke is with me, only Luke. He was a medical doctor, a physician that stood with Paul. And Demas on the other hand, you read about him in II Timothy 4:10. He forsook Paul later on, but here he's with Paul in Rome.

Colossians 4:14: (Literal)

Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas salute you.

Colossians 4:15:

Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the church which is in his house.

Now this Nymphas, he was a "she". It's a feminine ending on the word, although it could be a masculine name that had a feminine ending, although it is a normal feminine ending. The only difficulty is, in the Greek some of the manuscripts say "...the church which was in his house." Some say "her house". Some

say "their house". Now which one do you want? Well, I think "their house" was a cop out. I think "his house" doesn't make a lot of sense, because...salute the brethren which are in Laodicea, "and Nymphas". But if you say salute the brethren and a sister, Nymphas. That would make sense, wouldn't it? "And the church which is in her house." So we translated it that way.

Colossians 4:15: (Literal)

Salute the brothers in Laodicea, especially Nymphas and the church in her house.

I think the reason some of them changed it to "his" is because they didn't like women being the head of churches. That happened other places too, in texts.

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.

Now, as I've told you in the background, this could have been any encyclical. The epistles were encyclicals. That means they didn't just go to one church. They went from town to town, to town, to town. Copies were made and distributed, XEROX was in business. But, it was probably Ephesians. As you know in Ephesians 1:1 the words, "who are in Ephesus"... those words are omitted in some of the manuscripts. And it could have been that they were early added because Ephesus would have been its first place, its first deposit, where it went. Then as it came down the road from Ephesus, it came to Hierapolis, from Hierapolis over to Laodicea and now it's coming from Laodicea to Colosse. Now, read that letter when you get there. And why not, because he's correcting doctrinal error in the book of Colossians. Now to reinforce that, what should you read? The doctrinal epistle. Ephesians. That's the doctrine. To reinforce it. That's your collateral reading assignment, you Colossians. Think about it. He was giving them a collateral reading assignment. He was also giving the Laodiceans a collateral reading.

Colossians 4:16: (Literal)

When this epistle is read among you, make sure that it is read to the church of the Laodiceans also and that you read the one coming from Laodicea.

Colossians 4:17:

And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it.

"In the lord", means what? In service to the household. That thou *plēroō*, fulfil it, fill it to capacity. See, he wasn't even filling it to capacity, let alone going that extra mile, *plēthō*-ing, overflowing, being a *sundoulos*, a bondsman, being a fellow athlete, really putting his heart and soul into it. In Philemon two he's called a fellow laborer, but he's never called a fellow athlete or a fellow bondsman or a fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus. Look at Philemon one.

Philemon 1, 2:

Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and Timothy *our* brother, unto Philemon our dearly beloved, and fellowlabourer,

And *to our* beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellowsoldier [fellow laborer in the Aramaic], and to the church in thy house.

Philemon was written to these leaders here in Colosse, to set things in order for them. It's with the pastoral epistles, Timothy and Titus. He was a leader there, it's written to these leaders. And Archippus wasn't fulfilling his ministry as he should. Whereas Colossians is written to the people because of the

doctrinal error they were being led to because the leadership wasn't taking heed, they weren't taking a stand at Colosse. Isn't that something?

Colossians 4:17: (Literal)

Tell Archippus, "See to it that you fully attend to the ministry which you received for the lord's service."

Then verse 18. And this is the last verse of all the verses in the Church epistles, the only verse that hasn't been covered yet.

Colossians 4:18:

The salutation by the hand of me Paul. Remember my bonds. Grace *be* with you. Amen.

And we had Paul sign it on your literal according to usage for you there. [Laughter] I thought that little extra touch would bless you. The salutation by my hand, Paul, that's the way we put it. "Remember my bonds." He was in chains at Rome, chained to that soldier. And yet he wrote these tremendous epistles; Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians while he was chained to that soldier. And he says, "Remember my bonds." What do you think Tychicus is going to tell them about when he gets there? He's going to tell them how Paul kept moving the Word in spite of his bonds, how he kept teaching the Mystery. He preached the Word and that's what made known the written Word. "Grace be with you." Divine favor. Amen. And that last part of the verse, we left the same.

Colossians 4:18: (Literal)

The salutation by my hand: _____. Remember my bonds. Grace be with you. Amen.

And that closes the book of Colossians. I'd like to say that Paul, the leader, took the action that was necessary to correct the error at Colosse. And he basically did five things.

Number one, he sent an epistle, the written Word which preserved the truth regarding the Mystery and the head Jesus Christ, who is the head of that one Body. He sent an epistle, the written Word to correct the error at Colosse.

The second action he took to correct the error at Colosse was to send a top leader with that epistle. And that leader, who in this case was Tychicus, made the sense known. He caused them to understand the Word. He made known my affairs, our affairs and all things going on here. The things regarding the Mystery in action, the Mystery in action. Those affairs with Paul, the other believers and then all over Rome. He sent a leader.

Number three, he and the others, labored fervently in prayer, that they would be fully mature and complete in all the will of God, completely persuaded in all the will of God.

Number four, he gave them recommended collateral readings, namely the doctrinal epistle that's coming from Laodicea, that great book of Ephesians.

And number five, he corrected the leadership. He told Archippus, "Take heed to the ministry." Not only did he lay before them the doctrinal truths to correct the doctrinal error, but he said to Archippus, "Take heed to your ministry. You're supposed to be leader there, now do it." And he sent another epistle to him.

Similarly, in our times, to correct any error that arises. We've got to send them the letters, send the leadership there. It's Corps assignment time, and this sounds like a job for the Corps. We labor fervently in prayers. We recommend collateral reading. The Word and some of the other things. And, we correct the leadership where it needs it. When we studied the book of Galatians, did Paul send a written epistle to them? Yes. That was number one. Did he send a leader to deliver it? It doesn't say so, but I'll bet he did, to make the sense known to them and it was a much stronger epistle. Number three, did he labor fervently for them in prayer? I'm sure that he did. But he never mentions it in his epistle. He never says, "I'm praying for

you or I thank God for you." As a matter of fact, he tells them how he's travailing for them in childbirth, until Christ be formed in them. And he's standing in doubt of them. And fourth, did he recommend reading? Well, not specifically, but he makes numerous references to the law, to document what he's saying. And I'm sure the doctrinal epistle of Romans, when that became available, would certainly have meant a lot to them. And number five, correcting the leadership. He says, "O FOOLISH Galatians, who bewitched you?" There had to be a "who" there someplace that was causing the error. Let's try the book of Philippians. Did he send an epistle to them? Yes he did. This time he's correcting what kind of error though? Practical error. Did he send a leader? Yes he did. Epaphroditus. Number three, did he labor fervently for them? It says, "in every prayer I mention you." And number four, did he give them recommended reading? No he doesn't. But then they were into practical error, they were not into doctrinal error. They would not need a doctrinal epistle. They only needed to correct their practice, what they were doing wrong, along the lines of likemindedness and serving in the Body. Number five, did he correct the leadership? He even puts the leadership with the believers, with the bishops and deacons in verse one of chapter one, remember?

So all three of those sound like a job for the Way Corps. It sounds like we've got something to do in this day and time. To send the written Word, to send leaders. Why are Corps assigned as leaders in different areas around the world? To handle these situations, these problems. To handle the good things as well. Not always problems out there, but there are some. And your assignment might take you to an area where they really need to understand and you preach the Word, you make it known, you cause them to understand the sense. The preached Word makes known what? The written Word. And you need both folks, you need both. You can't just have the written Word. Otherwise we could sit here at International and write a bunch of books and sell them in the bookstore and forget about preaching it. But it just doesn't work that way. You need both. You need the written Word and you need the preached Word. And you need to labor fervently in prayers for the people. And you need that recommended collateral once in a while, just to bring it up into your heart again. And we need from time to time to correct the leadership that are causing the error.

And I saw in these three epistles, as well as I did in the book of Corinthians, the apostle Paul like a player coach, as Reverend Martindale talks about. He's a player coach. He's not a coach that sits on the lines but he's one there that's out playing. And he is directing the activities of the leadership; Epaphroditus, Tychicus, you go over there, now I want you over in Crete, now go back to Ephesus. Timothy I want you over in Ephesus, now go back over to Rome. Send Mark back here to Rome. Luke's with me, so and so forsook me. Now I've got to put somebody else over there to replace... You see, he was controlling, orchestrating the believer's activities the same way as Reverend Martindale told you the seed on the wrong side, orchestrates and manipulates the world, and tries to grab the believers' lives. So Paul was the one directing the traffic at that time. And leadership in our time directs the traffic. The assignments... Why are you going out on the field, why are you going to a certain area, why are you going to International, why are you going to some other root locations, why are you going to another country? Because God wants you there, He has a specific need to fulfil, just like Tychicus had to fulfil a need here. Like Timothy had to do some place, like Epaphroditus had to do. And Paul is doing that because the Adversary is coordinating his forces to try to win the contest or beat you in the contest, to defeat you, to cause you not to win, to steal the reward from you. Folks, we've got to keep pressing on the toward the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. The book of Philippians, the mark of the prize of the high calling. We strive toward that in this contest. And that's why, we're ready and willing to go where the need is, to see that the job gets done. It's a job for the Way Corps.

Father, we sure thank you for the greatness of your Word and thank you Father for all these Church epistles that live for us and Father just cause us to understand the sense of these things even more and more as time goes on. And I thank you Father for developing that maturity that everyone here, as well as your people around the world, may become fully mature in your Word. And that they may be fully persuaded of the will of God and stand complete before you, to receive the rewards when Christ returns. And we thank you Father for this tremendous time of working your Word together. And may we all go forth and never forget your Word, but always let it ring clear as we herald that Word to those that hunger and thirst after truth around the world. Thank you Father for the Corps here and wherever they are this day in the wonderful name of Jesus Christ. Amen! God bless you.