

Lesson 16 – Colossians 4:7-17

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Review/Introduction

In Colossians chapters one and two, the apostle Paul has presented the person and work of Christ and His supremacy and sufficiency for salvation and sanctification. Union with Christ is the doctrinal prerequisite to walking with Christ. Chapters three and four address how the believer is to walk in light of Christ's supremacy and sufficiency. Paul exhorts the Colossians (and us) to strive in the power of the Spirit to walk in our position; to live out in practice what we already are in Christ.

But living a consistently God glorifying life is only possible through Spirit-filling. The Christian life is not lived in one's own strength. It is a life lived filled with the Spirit as the life of Christ flows through you. As the believer repents of all known sin (Eph 4:30), bows before God in complete submission (1 Thess 5:19), and is immersed in the word (Col 3:16), they we will be filled with the Spirit and will therefore exhibit the fruits of the Spirit.

Being filled with the Spirit (letting the words of Christ to richly dwell within you) produces manifold blessings – observable, tangible manifestations of strength, character, and connectedness to God through Christ. Specifically, it produces supernatural words, worship, reactions, and fulfilling of relational roles in one's life. Those relational roles are all within the context of the family, the household – husband/wife, parent/child, and slave/master. Walking in the Spirit also results in missional (outreach) life demonstrated by prayer and conduct that promotes the gospel.

After finishing the practical section of his letter, Paul moves on to sending greetings from his team and greeting by name those at Colossae. The conclusion of this letter is an object lesson of the way a life committed to Christ and His word has an effect on the body. It is a list of people whose lives Paul affected, and in turn, lives that impacted him and his ministry.

Life in the all-sufficient Christ – Impactful Relationships (4:7-17)

1. Greetings FROM (4:7-14)

One commentator likens this section to Paul sending a photograph of the team to the churches in Asia via miniature word-portraits. These are people they know or know of and who they would be excited to hear about. This is similar to us when we receive word from the Okadas, Stroups, or DCN. We love these dear brethren who we uphold in prayer and close to our hearts and hearing of their condition and God's work in and through them is encouraging.

Tychicus (4:7-8)

⁷As to all my affairs, Tychicus, *our* beloved brother and faithful servant and fellow bond-servant in the Lord, will bring you information. ⁸*For* I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know about our circumstances and that he may encourage your hearts;

⁷Tychicus will tell you all about my activities. He is a beloved brother and faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord. ⁸I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are and that he may encourage your hearts, (ESV)

“As to all my affairs” is literally “the things concerning me all”. These things and “circumstances” are details about Paul’s condition (spiritual, physical, financial/material, relational, etc.) that are not detailed in this letter written for the purpose of encouraging the Colossians to remain steadfast in their commitment to Christ alone for salvation and sanctification against the onslaught of false teaching. In his letter to the Philippians, written at the same time during his first Roman imprisonment, Paul thanks them for a financial gift (Phil 4:10-20). His financial need, or lack thereof, may be included in the “things concerning him all” and the “circumstances”. Tychicus’ goal was to “encourage” the Colossians.

❖ **Do you get excited to hear of the work of God in and through the brethren?**

Tychicus is mentioned in five passages in the NT: Acts 20:4; Eph 6:21; Col 4:7; 2 Tim 4:12; and Titus 3:12. He was a gentile believer from Asia (modern day Turkey). He is first introduced in Acts 20.

⁴And he was accompanied by Sopater of Berea, *the son* of Pyrrhus, and by Aristarchus and Secundus of the Thessalonians, and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy, and **Tychicus** and Trophimus of Asia. (Acts 20:4)

During the third missionary journey from AD 53-57, towards the end, Paul spends three months in Greece (Acts 20:1-2) writing his letter of Romans from Corinth in AD 56/57. In AD 57, Paul returns to Jerusalem through Macedonia and then by sea (Acts 20:3-26). His purpose is to take a gift from the predominately Gentile churches to the poor, predominated Jewish believers, in Jerusalem.

²⁵but now, I am going to Jerusalem serving the saints. ²⁶For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem. ²⁷Yes, they were pleased *to do so*, and they are indebted to them. For if the Gentiles have shared in their spiritual things, they are indebted to minister to them also in material things. (Rom 15:25-27)

In order to reinforce to the apostles and elders of God’s grace among the Gentiles, to cement relations between the Gentile and Jewish churches, and to be above reproach with the sizable collection, he takes representatives from the churches with him to Jerusalem.

¹⁷After we arrived in Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly. ¹⁸And the following day Paul went in with us to James, and all the elders were present. ¹⁹After he had greeted them, he *began* to relate one by one the things which God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry. ²⁰And when they heard it they *began* glorifying God; (Acts 21:17-20a)

In Jerusalem, Paul was arrested and taken to Caesarea for his protection. From AD 57-59/60, Paul stays in Caesarea under arrest (“Caesarean imprisonment”) eventually appealing to Caesar (Acts 25:11) to judge his case. Presumably, Tychicus goes with him to Rome (AD 59/60) along with his ministry team.

¹When it was decided that **we** would sail for Italy, they proceeded to deliver Paul and some other prisoners to a centurion of the Augustan cohort named Julius. (Acts 27:1)

In Rome, Paul is under house arrest (AD 60-62) during his “first Roman imprisonment”. From Rome, Paul writes Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon. He sent Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon back to Ephesus (Eph 6:21) and Colossae (Col 4:7) with Tychicus and Onesimus (4:7-9).

²¹But that you also may know about my circumstances, how I am doing, **Tychicus**, the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will make everything known to you. (Eph 6:21)

⁷As to all my affairs, **Tychicus**, *our* beloved brother and faithful servant and fellow bond-servant in the Lord, will bring you information. ⁸*For* I have sent him to you for this very purpose... (Col 4:7-8)

It is surmised that in AD 62, Paul is released from his Roman imprisonment and embarks on a “fourth missionary journey”. Apparently, Paul visited several cities in which he had ministered including Ephesus, where he left Timothy, and traveled through Macedonia (northern Greece) from where he wrote 1 Timothy (1 Tim 1:3) and Crete where he left Titus (Titus 1:5). He then traveled to Nicopolis in Achaia (southern Greece) from where he wrote Titus (Titus 3:12) in AD 63/64. Tychicus had either returned to Rome after delivering Ephesians and Colossians or joined Paul again at Ephesus.

¹²When I send Artemas or **Tychicus** to you, make every effort to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. (Titus 3:12)

In AD 66, Paul visits Troas (2 Tim 4:13) where he is suddenly arrested and taken to Rome (second imprisonment in a dungeon). From Rome, in AD 67/68, Paul writes (2 Timothy) to Timothy to “come before winter” (2 Tim 4:21). Titus joins Paul in Rome before being sent to Dalmatia (2 Tim 4:10). He sends Tychicus to Ephesus not wanting to leave the church at Ephesus without Timothy.

¹²But **Tychicus** I have sent to Ephesus. (2 Tim 4:12)

Tychicus spends almost 10 years serving on Paul’s ministry team. Clearly, Tychicus was one of Paul’s most proven and trusted team members. Paul refers to Tychicus in clear terms that describe his commitment to the Lord, maturity of walk, and relationship to the body. He is literally, “the beloved brother and faithful servant and fellow slave in the Lord”. Paul used the same terms earlier for Epaphras.

⁷just as you learned *it* from Epaphras, our beloved fellow bond-servant, who is a faithful servant of Christ on our behalf, (Col 1:7)

“Beloved” refers to a feeling of love based on the preciousness of the object loved.

He was also “faithful servant”. “Faithful” means that he was trustworthy, dependable, reliable, faithful in the discharge of his duties. “Servant” is “diakonos” expressing the idea of service in general. He was a man who served Paul and the body generally faithfully.

❖ **Do you faithfully serve the body of Christ?**

“Fellow bond-servant” is literally “fellow slave” and describes a slave who is intimately associated with another slave because they belong to the same master. The believer has been enslaved to God positionally (Rom 6:22). But does your life demonstrate practically that you are in slavery to Christ? Tychicus was a servant in relationship to Paul, but a fellow slave with Paul in relationship to his Lord (both in position and practice).

❖ **Beloved brother, faithful servant, fellow slave in the Lord, could this describe you?**

Onesimus (4:9)

⁹and with him Onesimus, *our* faithful and beloved brother, who is one of your *number*. They will inform you about the whole situation here.

⁹and with him Onesimus, our faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They will tell you of everything that has taken place here. (ESV)

Next, Paul pictures Onesimus, the traveling companion to Tychicus. Onesimus, the runaway slave-convert, traveled back to his master Philemon with a letter from Paul.

Onesimus had stolen some money and ran away (Philemon 18). Along with thousands of other runaways, he made his way to Rome where he could hide among the throngs of people from all parts of the Empire. (*Speculation...*) One day, Onesimus “chanced” upon some people who were going to hear an unusual man, a prisoner chained to a member of the Praetorian Guard living under house arrest. This was the divine appointment that God had planned from eternity past. He heard the gospel, repented, surrendered to Christ as Lord and Savior, and became a new creature in Christ (Philemon 10).

Paul grew to love Onesimus and value his help in the ministry at Rome (Philemon 11-13). Eventually, Onesimus told Paul his story. Paul just happened to know Onesimus' master, since he was a believer, and the church at Colossae met in his home (Philemon 2). In fact, he was probably saved under Paul's ministry at Ephesus (Philemon 19). This created a dilemma. Onesimus was a criminal, having broken Roman criminal law by running away from his lawful master and civil law by defrauding him as well. These offenses were punishable by scourging, mutilation, or even crucifixion under Roman law. Paul knew that this issue needed to be dealt with (Philemon 14).

So, Paul wrote a personal letter to Philemon, offering to pay him back for his losses and urging him to forgive Onesimus and welcome him back as a brother in Christ (Philemon 15-17). For protection, Paul sent Onesimus back to Colossae with Tychicus. Paul sent him back to Colossae with Tychicus, not in chains but as a beloved brother in Christ who had proved himself faithful.

Paul refers to this outcast from society who was in hiding as a “faithful and beloved brother”. Onesimus did not just claim to know Christ, but it was demonstrated by a changed life.

❖ **Is your life a demonstration of God’s saving grace?**

Aristarchus (4:10)

¹⁰Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, sends you his greetings;

¹⁰Aristarchus my fellow prisoner greets you, (ESV)

Aristarchus was a Jewish believer (4:11). He is first introduced in Acts 19 during the riot in Ephesus instigated by Demetrius the silversmith because the silversmiths were losing money from people turning to the Way. He was Paul's traveling companion from Thessalonica in Macedonia (Acts 27:2).

²⁸When they heard *this* and were filled with rage, they *began* crying out, saying, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" ²⁹The city was filled with the confusion, and they rushed with one accord into the theater, dragging along Gaius and **Aristarchus**, Paul's traveling companions from Macedonia. (Acts 19:28-29)

We then see him with Tychicus traveling with Paul to Jerusalem.

⁴And he was accompanied by Sopater of Berea, *the son* of Pyrrhus, and by **Aristarchus** and Secundus of the Thessalonians, and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy, and **Tychicus** and Trophimus of Asia. (Acts 20:4)

Like Tychicus, he traveled with Paul to Rome.

²And embarking in an Adramyttian ship, which was about to sail to the regions along the coast of Asia, we put out to sea accompanied by **Aristarchus**, a Macedonian of Thessalonica. (Acts 27:2)

Since he was with Paul this long we can surmise that he, like Tychicus, would have been considered "beloved brother and faithful servant and fellow slave in the Lord". Paul calls him a "fellow prisoner".

"Fellow prisoner" is an unusual word and literally means "taken captive by the sword" and was used to refer to prisoners of war. It is unlikely that he was an actual prisoner since only Paul was the one taken to Rome as prisoner. There are two possible understandings of this. First, Aristarchus is a fellow captive to the will of God. Second, he was so faithful to Paul that it was like he was a fellow prisoner. Both are actually true.

❖ **Are you captive to the will of God? Are you faithful to your suffering brethren?**

Mark (4:10)

¹⁰... and *also* Barnabas's cousin Mark (about whom you received instructions; if he comes to you, welcome him);

¹⁰... and Mark the cousin of Barnabas (concerning whom you have received instructions—if he comes to you, welcome him), (ESV)

The next portrait is of Barnabas' cousin Mark. Mark's Jewish name was John; his Roman name was Mark. He was the son of Mary who owned the home where some believers met to pray for Peter's release from prison (Acts 12:12). Mary's home is traditionally where the Last Supper was held (Mark 14:15). Her home is also the probable place where the disciples met after the resurrection (John 20:19) and before Pentecost (Acts 1:13).

¹¹When Peter came to himself, he said, "Now I know for sure that the Lord has sent forth His angel and rescued me from the hand of Herod and from all that the Jewish people were expecting." ¹²And when he realized *this*, he went to **the house of Mary, the mother of John who was also called Mark**, where many were gathered together and were praying. (Acts 12:12)

Mark was the cousin of Barnabas and perhaps the spiritual son of Peter.

¹³She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you greetings, and **so does my son, Mark.** (1 Pet 5:13)

Mark accompanied Barnabas and Paul on their first missionary journey, abandoning them shortly after starting.

²⁵And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem when they had fulfilled their mission, **taking along with them John, who was also called Mark.** (Acts 12:25)

⁵When they reached Salamis, they *began* to proclaim the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews; and **they also had John as their helper.** (Acts 13:5)

¹³Now Paul and his companions put out to sea from Paphos and came to Perga in Pamphylia; **but John left them and returned to Jerusalem.** (Acts 13:13)

Barnabas' commitment to Mark's discipleship led to a separation between he and Paul.

³⁷Barnabas wanted to take John, called Mark, along with them also. ³⁸But Paul kept insisting that they should not take him along who had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not gone with them to the work. ³⁹And there occurred such a sharp disagreement that they separated from one another, and **Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus.** (Acts 15:37-39)

Late in Paul's life, Mark was ministering to/with Paul in Rome. Paul considered Mark useful for service.

²³Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, greets you, ²⁴*as do* Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke, my fellow workers. (Philemon 1:23-24)

¹¹Only Luke is with me. **Pick up Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for service.** (2 Tim 4:11)

Mark's life is a testimony to second chances and the blessings of a commitment of older, mature believers to younger, immature believers. Paul wanted to make sure that should the Colossians and those in the cities near there ever meet Mark that they were not to treat him differently because of his previous failure. Instead, they were to "welcome" him.

❖ Are you striving to make right your past failures?

Justus (4:11)

¹¹and *also* Jesus who is called Justus; these are the only fellow workers for the kingdom of God who are from the circumcision, and they have proved to be an encouragement to me.

¹¹and Jesus who is called Justus. These are the only men of the circumcision among my fellow workers for the kingdom of God, and they have been a comfort to me. (ESV)

Next is Jesus who is called Justus. Nothing else is known about him. Aristarchus, Mark, and Justus were the only fellow workers for the kingdom of God who were ethnic Jews. These three were an "encouragement". In the midst of multiple rejections by the Jews culminating in Acts 28:22-28 these three were a "comfort" to Paul.

²⁸Therefore let it be known to you that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles; they will also listen.” (Acts 28:28)

❖ **Are you a comfort to your brethren?**

Epaphras (4:12-13)

¹²Epaphras, who is one of your number, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, sends you his greetings, always laboring earnestly for you in his prayers, that you may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God. ¹³For I testify for him that he has a deep concern for you and for those who are in Laodicea and Hierapolis.

¹²Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ Jesus, greets you, always struggling on your behalf in his prayers, that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God. ¹³For I bear him witness that he has worked hard for you and for those in Laodicea and in Hierapolis. (ESV)

The gospel was probably taken to Colossae when Paul spent three years in Ephesus on his third missionary journey (Acts 19). It was most likely Epaphras who was the key worker in the evangelism and growth of the Colossian believers (1:5-7). He was apparently saved during a visit to Ephesus and then started the church when he returned home to Colossae. Paul had already mentioned Epaphras in his letter as the one who brought to Paul the concern of the heresy that was threatening the Church. He reported on the condition of the church (1:7-8), its abounding love for God and the brethren as well as doctrinal problems. Epaphras was so concerned about the problems at Colossae that he made the ~1000-mile trip to Rome to consult with Paul.

⁷just as you learned *it* from Epaphras, our beloved fellow bond-servant, who is a faithful servant of Christ on our behalf, ⁸and **he also informed us** of your love in the Spirit. (Col 1:7-8)

In mentioning Epaphras before at the beginning of his letter, Paul calls him “our beloved fellow slave, who is a faithful servant of Christ on our behalf”. Here at the close of his letter, Paul mentions this faithful servant again. He reminds the Colossians that Epaphras is “one of your number” since people, even believers, tend to think “out of sight, out of mind”. Paul wants the church to be stirred up by way of reminder to maintain a fervent love for their faithful servant.

❖ **What do you do to maintain an “out of sight, always on mind” attitude?**

Epaphras loved his local body at Colossae and also the surrounding churches in neighboring cities (v13). He was “always laboring earnestly for you in his prayers”.

“Laboring earnestly” translates the same word used Paul used previously, “striving”, to describe his ministry philosophy.

²⁹For this purpose also I labor, **striving** according to His power, which mightily works within me. (Col 1:19)

It means intensely struggling like an athlete; agonizing with great intensity, purpose and effort (this is the root word for the English “agony”). This is putting forth maximum effort. It is in the present tense indicating Epaphras was continuously laboring earnestly for believers in his prayers. The tense and the adverb “always” mean that Epaphras had dedicated himself to prayer for the believers. He prayed for the same things as Paul prayed for (Col 1:9-12). That they would mature and steadfast in their relationship with Christ.

Paul goes on to “testify” or “bear witness” that he had a “deep concern” for them. “Deep concern” presents an interpretive challenge as it translates a phrase that literally means “great” and “labor, toil or pain, anguish, distress, suffering”. Since Paul already said how he was “struggling, laboring earnestly” in his prayers, it seems redundant to think that Paul would repeat it here. Instead giving the servant’s motivation for his “always laboring earnestly in his prayers” as a “great distress” or “deep concern” for the Colossians. He labored earnestly because he had a deep concern.

❖ **How deep is your concern for the brethren? How is that manifested?**

Not only did Epaphras always labor earnestly in his prayers for the Colossians, but also for the neighboring churches of Laodicea and Hierapolis. Epaphras’ dedication to the body general must have been a huge encouragement and challenge to Paul and the team.

❖ **How often do we pray for our own local body elders and brethren? Other bodies?**

Luke (4:14)

¹⁴Luke, the beloved physician, sends you his greetings,

¹⁴Luke the beloved physician greets you, (ESV)

Luke was a Gentile (4:11) and physician. Early church tradition places Luke’s birth at Antioch, which explains how he met Paul and why much of the account in Acts is centered there. He is the only Gentile to pen NT scripture.

It appears from Acts that Luke began traveling with Paul during the second missionary journey around AD 50 (pronoun change in 16:10). He traveled with Paul until his death in Rome (2 Tim 4:0-11). Some have speculated that Paul suffered some illness on the first missionary journey in Galatia (Gal 4:13-14) and so, perhaps, took along Luke on the second. If so, this divine plan then allowed Luke access to the material he needed to pen his gospel and Acts and the non-“we” passages in Acts the time to research the material.

❖ **Do you use your talents, training, and even vocation to serve the body?**

Demas (4:14)

¹⁴... and *also* Demas.

¹⁴... as does Demas. (ESV)

The last word portrait is Demas. Little is known of this man’s past. At this time during Paul’s first Roman imprisonment (AD 60-62), he is referred to with the others on the team as “fellow workers”.

²³Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, greets you, ²⁴*as do* Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke, my **fellow workers**. (Philemon 23-24)

In AD 62, Paul is released and goes on his “fourth missionary journey” visiting several cities in which he had ministered until he is arrested in AD 66. In the meantime, in AD 64 Peter is martyred under Nero’s persecution. It appears that Demas is with Paul this entire time or perhaps up until his arrest. From Rome, in AD 67/68, Paul writes 2 Timothy in which he notes Demas.

⁹Make every effort to come to me soon; ¹⁰for **Demas, having loved this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica**; Crescens *has gone* to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia. ¹¹Only Luke is with me. Pick up Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for service. ¹²But Tychicus I have sent to Ephesus. (2 Tim 4:9-12)

Demas is an object lesson in the wrong way to love the world. He loved staying alive more than sharing the gospel with those who will already be dead. Some have speculated that Demas was not saved. Paul only says that he deserted himself not the Lord. So that is perhaps an unwarranted speculation.

❖ **Where is your highest love placed?**

2. Greetings TO (4:15-17)

¹⁵Greet the brethren who are in Laodicea and also Nympha and the church that is in her house. ¹⁶When this letter is read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans; and you, for your part read my letter *that is coming* from Laodicea. ¹⁷Say to Archippus, “Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it.”

¹⁵Give my greetings to the brothers at Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her house. ¹⁶And 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. ¹⁷And say to Archippus, “See that you fulfill the ministry that you have received in the Lord.” (ESV)

Here are Paul’s greeting to the churches who will be reading his letter. “Greet” means to enfold in arms, welcome, embrace and was the standard way to conclude letters. Paul asks the Colossians to give his warm regards to the neighboring church at Laodicea.

Nympha owned the home where the Laodicean church met or the church at Hierapolis which would have gone unnamed except for Epaphras’ commitment in prayer. The early church met in homes (Rom 16:3-5; 1 Cor 16:19-20). The Colossians met in Philemon’s home.

²and to Apphia our sister, and to Archippus our fellow soldier, and **to the church in your house:** (Philemon 2)

❖ **Do you use the resources that you have been entrusted with to serve the body?**

The early church was not consumed with material trappings of so-called worship, but of hearts bent in submission to the Lord, devoted to fellowship, remembering Christ’s sacrifice, and teaching of apostolic doctrine (Acts 2:24; 20:7; 1 Tim 4:13, etc.).

⁴²They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. (Acts 2:42)

¹³Until I come, give attention to the *public* reading of *Scripture*, to exhortation and teaching. (1 Tim 4:13)

❖ **What do you expect from a church service, entertainment or biblical worship?**

Paul then directs that his letter to the Colossians be read in Laodicea and the letter coming from Laodicea be read at Colossae. This is most likely Ephesians (Eph 6:21).

Archippus is a family member of Philemon and a leader in the Colossian church that met in Philemon and Apphia's (most likely his wife) home. Paul referred to him as a "fellow soldier" in his letter to Philemon.

"Take heed" conveys the sense of becoming aware of or taking notice of something, of perceiving or discerning or understanding. It is a command from Paul that carries a sense of urgency. Paul was exhorting this elder to keep his eyes open, stay aware, be discerning, understand your ministry.

This ministry, like all true ministries, was received from the Lord. This thought and the list of faithful servants previously mentioned would have been a great challenge and encouragement to Archippus (and to us).

"Fulfill" here means to make full, to fill up, to fill to the brim, or to cause to abound. It is the same word used to describe being filled with the Spirit. Archippus is to fulfill the Lord's service by being filled with the Spirit. Paul gave a similar exhortation to Timothy.

¹I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: ²preach the word; be ready in season *and* out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. ³For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but *wanting* to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, ⁴and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths. ⁵But you, **be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. (2 Tim 4:1-5)**

Paul's solemn charge need not imply Archippus' dereliction of duty. With the onslaught of false teaching at Colossae, fulfilling his duty to protect the sheep was paramount.

¹⁷Obey your leaders and submit to them, for **they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account.** Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you. (Heb 13:17)

❖ **Are you involved in ministry? Do you fulfill your ministry duties?**

Conclusion

Paul brings this challenging letter to a close with a picture of his ministry team – faithful men who are fully surrendered to Christ and dedicated to His body. He greets the churches and challenges a Colossian elder to fulfill his ministry, the same challenge to us.

Additional Study

1. Do you have a level of involvement in the body that you have deep relationships?
2. Are you committed to prayer for the body?
3. Are you challenged to fulfill your God-given gifts and ministry?