

Conduct towards Outsiders (vv. 5-6)

VERSE 5 Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of

the opportunity (Ἐν σοφίᾳ περιπατεῖτε πρὸς τοὺς ἔξω τὸν καιρὸν ἐξαγοραζόμενοι [*prep en* + *noun instr.f.s. sophia wisdom* + *pres.act.imper.2p. peripateo walk*; “Conduct” + *prep pros* toward + *d.a.acc.m.p.* + *adv exo outside* + *d.a.w/noun acc.m.s. kairos season*; *opportunity* + *pres.mid.imper.2p. exagorazo make the most of*]).

VERSE 6 Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt (ὁ

λόγος ὑμῶν πάντοτε ἐν χάριτι, ἄλατι ἠρτυμένος, [*d.a.w/noun nom.m.s. logos word*; *speech* + *pro.gen.m.p. su* + *adv pantote always* + *prep en* + *noun instr.f.s. charis grace* + *noun instr.nt.s. alas salt* + *perf.pass.part.nom.m.s. artus season*], **so that you will know how you should respond to each person** [εἰδέναι πῶς δεῖ ὑμᾶς ἐνὶ ἑκάστῳ ἀποκρίνεσθαι [*perf.act.inf. oida* know + *adv. pos how* + *pres.act.ind.3s. dei ought* + *pro.acc.p. su* + *adj.dat.m.s. eis one*; “person” + *adj.dat.m.s. hekastos each* + *pres.dep.infin. apokrinomai respond, reply*]).

ANALYSIS: VERSES 5-6

1. Paul here shifts the topic admonishing believers on their responsibility towards “outsiders” (v. 5).
2. “Conduct” (pres.imper. *peripateo* walk) is the Jewish expression for a person’s modus operandi.
3. This verb also occurs at 1:10; 2:6 and 3:7.
4. “With wisdom” (*en sophia*) refers to the realm of divine viewpoint learned in the local church versus the wisdom of the cosmos (cf. 1Cor. 2:1-13).
5. As a believer learns the directive will of God the believer is able to reflect the truth learned towards others and in this case those who are living their lives according to the human viewpoint.
6. In order to accomplish this directive the believer must put on the new humanity and so be a witness to those who are not apart of the local assembly.
7. From time to time an “opportunity” (*ton kairos*) arises in which the believer is placed in a situation to bear witness to some aspect of the plan of God.
8. The verb “making the most” (pres.mid.part. *exagorazo*) in the middle voice means ‘to make good use of’ something.

9. Of the four times this verb occurs in the NT twice it is used in the way it is used here; also in a similar way in Eph. 5:16 (“making the most of your time, because the days are evil.”; in Gal. 3:13 and 4:5 it is used in connection with salvation and is rendered in the active voice as “redeem”).
10. This includes inappropriate communication via social networks (FB).
11. Interaction between believers who are apart of the local assembly is another matter that requires discretion.
12. Also note 1Pet. 3:15 “but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always ready to make a defense to anyone who asks you to give an account of the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and respect.”
13. In v. 6 we are given the formula for the manner in which we are to carry out the admonition in v. 5.
14. Up front in our witness to those on the outside is “with grace” (prep *en*).
15. “Grace” is the touchstone of God’s plan for mankind, and we should always be sensitive to this in our witnessing to others.
16. This approach avoids undo criticism of those who are in need of repentance.
17. So frame your discourse in grace in order to encourage those whom you are attempting to win over.
18. Human sinfulness and ignorance is not an insurmountable barrier to forgiveness and the beginning of a viable relationship with God.
19. “Seasoned with salt” (perf.pass.part. *artuo* season, flavor) points to the consequences that will come upon those who fail to make the adjustments to God.
20. “Salt” (*alas*) is the primary and universal seasoning for foods, and without it even the best fare is tasteless and unappealing.
21. Cf. Lk. 14:34 “Therefore, salt is good, but if the salt has become tasteless, with what will it be seasoned?”
22. To have inadequate salt or no salt in food is akin to avoiding the doctrine of judgment (consequences) in witnessing to others.
23. Also Mk. 9:50 “Salt is good, but if the salt becomes unsalty (adj. *analos* without salt, insipid) , with what will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.”

Paul's coworkers and final instructions (vv. 7-18)

VERSE 7 As to all my affairs, Tychicus, our beloved brother and faithful servant

and fellow bond-servant in the Lord, will bring you information (Τὰ κατ' ἐμὲ πάντα γνωρίσει ὑμῖν Τυχικὸς ὁ ἀγαπητὸς ἀδελφὸς καὶ πιστὸς διάκονος καὶ σύνδουλος ἐν κυρίῳ [*d.a.acc.nt.p. to "affairs" + prep kata "As" + pro.acc.s. ego my + adj.acc.nt.p. pas all + fut.act.ind.3s. gnoρίζω make known "will bring...information" + pro.dat.p. su you + noun nom.m.s. Tychicus + d.a.w/noun nom.m.s. agapetos beloved, dear + noun nom.m.s. adelphos brother + conj + adj.nom.m.s. pistos faithful + noun nom.m.s. diakonos servant + conj + noun nom.m.s. sundoulos fellow-servant + prep en + noun loc.m.s. kurios*]).

VERSE 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 (ὃν ἔπεμψα πρὸς ὑμᾶς εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο, ἵνα γνῶτε τὰ περὶ ἡμῶν καὶ παρακαλέσῃ τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν [*pro.acc.ms. hos "this" + aor.act.ind.1s. pempsi sent + prep pros + pro.acc.p. su + prep eis + pro.acc.nt.s. autos this + pro.acc.nt.s. houtos "very" + conj hina that + aor.act.subj.2p. ginosko know + d.a.acc.nt.p. ta the things; "circumstances" + prep peri + pro.gen.p. ego "us" + conj kai + pres.act.subj.3s. parakaleo encourage + d.a.w/noun acc.f.p. kardia + pro.gen.p. su*]);

VERSE 9 and with him Onesimus, our faithful and beloved brother, who is one of

your number (σὺν Ὀνησίμῳ τῷ πιστῷ καὶ ἀγαπητῷ ἀδελφῷ, ὅς ἐστιν ἐξ ὑμῶν· πάντα ὑμῖν γνωρίσουσιν τὰ ὧδε [*prep sun with + noun instr.m.s. Onesimus + d.a.w/adj.instr.m.s. pistos faithful + conj + adj.instr.m.s. agapetos dear + noun instr.m.s. adelphos + pro.nom.m.s. hos who + pres.act.ind.3s. eimi + prep ek + pro.abl.p. su*]).

They will inform you about the whole situation here (πάντα ὑμῖν γνωρίσουσιν τὰ ὧδε [adj.acc.p. pas “whole” + pro.dat.p. su + fut.act.ind.3p. ginoukos make known + d.a.acc.nt.p. to “situation” + adv. hode here]).

VERSE 10 Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, sends you his greetings (Ἀσπάζεταιται ὑμᾶς Ἀρίσταρχος ὁ συναιχμάλωτός μου [pres.dep.ind.3s. apopazomai greet + pro.acc.m.p. su + noun nom.m.s. Aristarchus + d.a.w/noun nom.m.s. sunaichmalotos fellow-prisoner + pro.gen.s. ego]; **and also Barnabas' cousin Mark** (καὶ Μάρκος ὁ ἀνεψιὸς Βαρναβᾶ [conj + noun nom.m.s. Mark + d.a.w/noun nom.m.s. anepsios cousin] + noun gen.m.s. Barnabas **(about whom you received instructions; if he comes to you, welcome him)** ((περὶ οὗ ἐλάβετε ἐντολάς, ἐὰν ἔλθῃ πρὸς ὑμᾶς, δέξασθε αὐτόν [prep peri about + pro.gen.m.s. hos + aor.act.ind.2p. lambano receive + noun acc.f.p. entole commandment; instruction + conj ean if + aor.act.subj.3s. erchomai come + prep pros + pro.acc.p. su + aor.dep.imper.2p. dechomai welcome + pro.acc.m.s. autos]));

VERSE 11 and also Jesus who is called Justus (καὶ Ἰησοῦς ὁ λεγόμενος Ἰουδος, [conj + noun nom.m.s. Jesus + d.a.w/pres.pass.part.nom.m.s. lego “called” + noun nom.m.s. 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** (οἱ ὄντες ἐκ περιτομῆς, οὗτοι μόνοι συνεργοὶ εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ, οἵτινες ἐγενήθησάν μοι παρηγορία [d.a.nom.m.p. hos “these” + pres.act.part.nom.m.p. eimi + prep ek + noun abl.f.s. peritome circumcision + pro.nom.m.p. houtos these + adj.nom.m.p. monos only + pro.nom.m.p. suenergou fellow-worker + prep eis for + d.a.w/noun acc.f.s. basileia + d.a.w/noun gen.m.s. theos + pro.nom.m.p. hosits who + aor.dep.ind.3p. ginomai “proved” + pro.dat.m.s. ego + noun nom.f.s. paregoria encouragement])).

VERSE 12 Epaphras, who is one of your number, a bonds slave of Jesus Christ, sends you his greetings (ἀσπάζεται ὑμᾶς Ἐπαφρᾶς ὁ ἐξ ὑμῶν, δοῦλος Χριστοῦ [Ἰησοῦ], [pres.dep.part.3s. aspazomai greet + pro.acc.m.p. su + noun nom.m.s. Epaphras + d.a.w/noun nom.m.s. doulos slave + prep ek + pro.gen.p. su “one of your number” + noun gen.m.s. christos + noun gen.m.s. Jesus]), **always laboring earnestly for you in his prayers, that you may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God** [πάντοτε ἀγωνιζόμενος ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν ἐν ταῖς προσευχαῖς, ἵνα σταθῆτε τέλειοι καὶ πεπληροφορημένοι ἐν παντὶ θελήματι τοῦ θεοῦ [adv pantote always + pres.dep.part.nom.m.s. agonizomai labor + prep huper on behalf of + pro.gen.m.p. su + prep en + d.a.w/noun loc.f.p. proseuche prayer + conj hina + aor.pass.subj.2p. histemi stand + adj.nom.m.p. teleios complete, perfect + conj + perf.pass.part.nom.m.p. plerophoreo convince fully; “fully assured” + prep en + d.a.w/noun loc.nt.s. thelema will + d.a.w/noun gen.m.s. theos]).

VERSE 13 For I testify for him that he has a deep concern for you and for those who are in Laodicea and Hierapolis (μαρτυρῶ γὰρ αὐτῷ ὅτι ἔχει πολὺν πόνον ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν καὶ τῶν ἐν Λαοδικείᾳ καὶ τῶν ἐν Ἱεραπόλει [pres.act.ind.1s. martureo testify, bear witness + conj gar + pro.dat.m.s. autos “for him” + conj hoti + pres.act.ind.3s. echo have + adj.acc.m.s. polus much; “deep” + noun acc.m.s. ponos pain; “concern” + prep huper + pro.gen.p. su + conj kai + d.a.gen.p. ho “those” + prep en + noun loc.f.s. Laodicea + conj + d.a.gen.m.p. + pre en + noun loc.f.s. Hierapolis]).

VERSE 14 Luke, the beloved physician, sends you his greetings, and also Demas

(ἀσπάζεταιται ὑμᾶς Λουκᾶς ὁ ἰατρὸς ὁ ἀγαπητὸς καὶ Δημᾶ [pres.dep.ind.2s. aspazomai greet + pro.acc.m.p. su + noun nom.m.s. Luke + d.a.w/noun nom.m.s. iatros physician + d.a.w/adj.nom.m.s. agapetos + conj + noun nom.m.s. Demas]).

VERSE 15 Greet the brethren who are in Laodicea and also Nympha and the

church that is in her house (Ἀσπάσασθε τοὺς ἐν Λαοδικείᾳ ἀδελφοὺς καὶ Νύμφαν καὶ τὴν κατ' οἶκον αὐτῆς ἐκκλησίαν [aor.dep.ind.2p. aspazomai greet + d.a.acc.m.p. ho “who” + prep en + noun loc.f.s. Laodicea + noun acc.m.p. adelphos + conj + noun acc.f.s. Nympha + conj + d.a.w/noun acc.f.s. ekklesia church + prep kata + noun acc.m.s. oikos house + pro.gen.f.s. autos]).

VERSE 16 When this letter is read among you, have it also read in the church of

the Laodiceans (καὶ ὅταν ἀναγνωσθῇ παρ' ὑμῖν ἡ ἐπιστολή, ποιήσατε ἵνα καὶ ἐν τῇ Λαοδικέων ἐκκλησίᾳ ἀναγνωσθῇ, [conj + adv hotan when + aor.pass.subj.3s. anaginosko read + prep para + pro.dat.p. su + d.a.w/noun nom.f.s. epistole letter + aor.act.imper.2p. poieo do; “read” + conj hina + conj also + prep en + d.a.w/noun loc.f.s. ekklesia + noun gen.m.p. Laodiceans]; **and you, for your part read my letter that is coming from Laodicea** [καὶ τὴν ἐκ Λαοδικείας ἵνα καὶ ὑμεῖς ἀναγνώτε [conj + d.a.acc.f.s. “my letter” + prep ek + noun abl.f.s. Laodicea + conj hina + conj also + noun nom.p. su + aor.act.subj.2p. anaginosko read]).

VERSE 17 Say to Archippus, "Take heed to the ministry which you have received

in the Lord, that you may fulfill it (καὶ εἶπατε Ἀρχίππῳ· Βλέπε τὴν διακονίαν ἣν παρέλαβες ἐν κυρίῳ, ἵνα αὐτὴν πληροῖς [*conj + aor.act.imper.2p. eipon say + noun dat.m.s. Archippus + pres.act.imper.2s. blepo look; beware; "Take heed" + d.a.w/noun acc.f.s. diakonia ministry + pro.acc.m.s. hos which + aor.act.ind.2s. paralambano receive + prep en + noun loc.m.s. kurios + conj hina + pro.acc.f.s. he "it" + pres.act.subj.3s. pleroo fulfill*])."

VERSE 18 I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand (Ὁ ἀσπασμὸς τῆ ἐμῆ χειρὶ

Παύλου [*d.a.w/noun nom.m.s. aspasomos greeting + d.a.w/noun instr.f.s. cheir hand + possessive adj emos my + noun abl.m.s. Paulos*]).

Remember my imprisonment (μνημονεύετε μου τῶν δεσμῶν. [*pres.act.imper.2p. mnemoneuo remember + pro.gen.m.s. ego + noun gen.m.p. desmos bond; imprisonment*]).

Grace be with you (ἡ χάρις μεθ' ὑμῶν [*d.a.w/noun nom.f.s. charis grace + prep meta with + pro.gen.p. su*]).

ANALYSIS: VERSES 7-18

1. Paul ends this letter by naming his associates, conveying greetings from himself and his coworkers, providing final instructions, and sealing the letter with his own signature.
2. In vv. 7-9 he refers to the messengers (carriers) of the letter.
3. Paul assigns Tychicus as the letter carrier and the one who was to report to the Colossian church concerning Paul's situation.
4. Tychicus appears on Paul's third missionary journey when Paul returned from Corinth to Macedonia (Acts 21:29).
5. Tychicus one who made contact with Paul during his Roman imprisonment (also see Eph. 6:21).
6. He served as letter carrier to both the Colossian and Ephesian churches.
7. He was from "the province of Asia" (Acts 20:4).
8. In the final phase of Paul's ministry, Tychicus also appears as Paul's co-worker.
9. Paul sends him to Crete, where Titus is (cf. Titus 3:12).
10. In Paul's final letter, he sends Tychicus to Ephesus (2Tim. 4:12).
11. "As to all my affairs" (literally: "all the things concerning me" points to the fact that not only was he the letter carrier, but the one who provided a report concerning Paul.

12. What all this entailed can only be surmised.
13. Beyond providing the Colossians with up-to-date information on Paul's incarceration, Tychicus is to bring Onesimus back to Philemon (v. 9).
14. This individual was likely responsible for the public reading of this letter (cf. 1Thess. 5:27) and would provide commentary on the letter's contents.
15. In commending Tychicus to the Colossians, since they did not know him personally, Paul vouches for him with three descriptive terms.
16. "Beloved brother" or just "brother" (cf. Phlm. 20) is a title often applied to Paul's coworkers in the openings and closing of his letters (1:1; 4:9; cf. Rom. 16:23; 1Cor. 1:1; Eph. 6:2; Phlm. 1).
17. Here the implied subject could either be God (cf. Rom. 1:2) or Paul's own love for Tychicus.
18. "Faithful servant" refers to a subordinate who is delegated authority on behalf of another (Paul).
19. Again, this designation views Tychicus' relationship both to God and to Paul.
20. "Faithful" denotes Tychicus' dedication to the ministry of spreading the gospel under the authority of Paul.
21. Paul commends him as a man who is 100% reliable.
22. "Faithful" applies to both "servant" and "fellow bond-servant."
23. "Fellow bond-servant" (one word *sundoulos*) serves to show that both Paul and Tychicus were serving the same Master within the kingdom of God.
24. Paul earlier describes Epaphras in similar terms (1:2) in his role as messenger bringing Paul news of the situation at Colossae
25. He was the one who founded the church at Colossae (1:7-8).
26. So Epaphras reported to Paul the situation in Colossae and Tychicus is to report to the Colossians the situation concerning Paul in Rome.
27. Paul further details the purpose of sending Tychicus to Colossae in v. 8.
28. "I have sent" is an epistolary aorist which means that the author is self-consciously presenting the situation in his letter from the time-frame of the recipients.
29. V. 8 is reproduced verbatim in Eph. 6:22.
30. Paul sent numerous coworkers to others (e.g., 1Cor. 4:17; Phil. 2:19, 23, 25, 28; 1Thess. 3:2; Titus 3:12).
31. This serves to demonstrate Paul's apostolic authority as well as to illustrate the social network that connected the local churches of the era with letters and emissaries.
32. Two purposes here in v. 8 make it clear what is implied in v. 7.
33. "The things concerning me he will make known" from v. 7 is expanded in v. 8 to include "our circumstances" which include Paul's associates in Rome.
34. This "us" would include Timothy (1:1) and Epaphras (1:7; 4:12; Phlm. 23) as well as others mentioned in the letter.
35. Secondly, "he may comfort your hearts" points to another important aspect of the Tychicus' visit.
36. Tychicus represented Paul as his personal representative bringing encouragement to the Colossians to stay faithful to the truth under their current pressures.
37. Paul next mentions one Onesimus who will accompany Tychicus as they travel to Colossae (v. 9).

38. The relative clause in v. 8 “whom I am sending to you” is to be connection with the prepositional phrase “with Onesimus.”
39. Interestingly, the name Onesimus means “useful.”
40. It was a common name of a slave (Phlm. 11).
41. Onesimus is commended to the church as “a faithful and beloved brother” which points to his current status notwithstanding his illegitimate exodus from his master Philemon.
42. “Who is of you” (literally) denotes Onesimus’ new status after his flight from his niche.
43. While not one of Paul’s coworkers, Onesimus is a restored believer, who after his flight from Colossae and his master, shows up in Rome and comes in contact with Paul in prison.
44. Paul commends him as “faithful and beloved.”
45. Paul is seeking to ensure the proper reception of this slave on the part of the general assembly.
46. “They will inform you about the whole situation here” includes Onesimus as a second witness augmenting the primary report of Tychicus.
47. The subsection beginning with v. 10 has Paul providing greetings from his coworkers.
48. In vv. 10-14 there is greetings from a third party to the audience.
49. In v. 15 is greeting from the author to a third party.
50. All the names listed here, except for Jesus/Justus reappear in Philemon (vv. 23-24).
51. In Acts “Aristarchus” is called “a Macedonian from Thessalonica” (Acts 27:2), who was Paul’s traveling companion in his third missionary journey (19:29; 20:4).
52. Since he appears in the “we passages” (20:3-15, 27) of the book of Acts which contain Luke’s eyewitness accounts of Paul’s journeys.
53. So it is not surprising to find Luke also in this greetings section (cf. v. 15).
54. Aristarchus was with Paul during the riot in Ephesus (Acts 19:21-41).
55. They shared an Ephesian imprisonment, so the “my fellow prisoner” is apropos here.
56. And may literally refer to their sharing time in prison in Rome.
57. “Mark” here (v. 10) refers to the man who first appears as John Mark whom Luke identifies along with his mother Mary meeting with believers in her house in Acts 12:12.
58. After the Jerusalem relief visit, Paul and Barnabas brought Mark from Jerusalem to Antioch (12:25).
59. He joined Paul and Barnabas on the first missionary journey, but he abandoned them in Pamphylia (15:38).
60. Paul refused to bring him along on his second missionary journey; this led to a ‘sharp disagreement’ between him and Barnabas and they parted ways, with Barnabas and Mark sailing to Cyprus (15:39).
61. In Colossians and Philemon (Phlm. 24), Mark reappears in Paul’s letters.
62. Along with these mentions and Mark’s mention as being “helpful” in Paul’s ministry at the very end it seems evident that they were reconciled at some point (cf. 2Tim. 4:11).
63. Mark is identified as the “cousin” of Barnabas and the author of the book that bears his name.
64. Mark is also identified as a Jewish believer who is a coworker with Paul “for the kingdom of God.” (v. 11).
65. Breaking the sequence of the list of greetings, Paul reminds the Colossians of the instructions they have received about Mark.
66. What were those previously received instructions (*entolas*) that came to the Colossians?

67. This probably has something to do with Mark's past and the rift between him and Paul.
68. This is reinforced by the third class condition "if he comes to you."
69. This is followed with the directive "welcome/receive him."
70. The other name in this list of Jewish coworkers is "Jesus" (v. 11a) the Greek form of the common Jewish name, Joshua.
71. "Who is called Justus" is a Roman name which means law-abiding.
72. We know nothing of this believer apart from v. 11.
73. He along with Mark and Timothy (1:1) were "fellow workers" functioning in whatever capacity "for the kingdom of God" and were Jewish believers.
74. These men were a great source of encouragement to Paul during his ordeal.
75. This particular term for "encouragement" (*paregoria*) only occurs here and can refer to assistance, encouragement, and comfort.
76. Paul was encouraged that some of his kinsmen according to the flesh (Jewish believers) were on board with the mission to the Gentiles.
77. Epaphras (v. 12) represents a shift back to Paul's Gentile coworkers.
78. He has already been introduced in 1:7-8.
79. "Who is one from you" repeats Paul's description of Onesimus and confirms Epaphras as a native of Colossae.
80. He was the founder of the church (evangelist/missionary) and the one who brought Paul news of the situation there.
81. Paul and Epaphras have been speaking with one voice in the is letter (1:7) in their attempt to refute the false teaching at Colossae.
82. Paul applies to Epaphras the title of bond slave that he applies primarily to himself (Rom. 1:1; Gal. 1:10; Titus 1:1; cf. 1Cor. 7:22; 2Cor. 4:5; Eph. 6:6; Phil. 1:1).
83. Epaphras is someone who is "always striving" (pres.part. *agonizomai* fight, struggle, strive) in prayer on behalf of the Colossians.
84. This verb is also found in 1:20 in connection with Paul's ministry on behalf of positive volition ("For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works in me."; also 1Cor. 8:25; 1Tim. 4:10; 6:12; 2Tim. 4:7).
85. Here prayer is the subject of Epaphras' striving for the saints at Colossae while in Rome as he was the person who brought Paul a report on the situation there (1:7).
86. He is designated as Paul's "fellow prisoner" which means he was arrested and jailed with Paul (cf. Phm. 1:23; cp. 4:10; Rom. 16:7).
87. The focus of his prayers is the spiritual advancement of the Colossians with respect to the will of God (v. 12).
88. He prayed that these believers "may stand perfect" (aor.pass.subj. *histemi* stand w/adj. *teleios* complete) which points to the maturity adjustment which requires understanding of the "will of God."
89. In that regard he prayed that these believers would be "fully assured" (perf.pass.part. *plerophoreo* be fully convinced).
90. Here in the passive voice and in Rom. 4:21 (of Abraham with respect to the promise of an heir) and in 14:5 it means to be totally convinced with respect to something (also in the passive of things that transpired; e.g. 1st Advent; Lk. 1:1).
91. Otherwise it is used of something accomplished or fulfilled (2Tim. 4:5, 17).

92. Paul continues to commend Epaphras using an oath formula with the words “I testify” or “bear witness” declaring that “he has a deep concern for [them].”
93. The noun “concern” (*ponos*) is used in the NT for physical pain (Rev. 16:10, 11; 21:4).
94. But here it is used of a spiritual struggle that was part of Epaphras history with three churches in the Lycus Valley.
95. Local churches in close proximity to Colossae include “those who are in Laodicea and Hierapolis.”
96. “Hierapolis” only appears here.”
97. “Laodicea” recalls Paul’s statement in 2:1 “how great a struggle I have for you and those in Laodicea and those who have not seen my face in the flesh.”
98. So Paul is referring to Epaphras’ ministry to that general area.
99. Hierapolis was about 15 miles northwest of Colossae, as with Colossae, a Jewish settlement.
100. Epaphras’ involvement with these cities points to the fact that he functions as a missionary to these cities.
101. “Luke” appears only in Paul’s letters (cf. 2Tim. 4:11; Phm. 24).
102. He was with Paul as well during his second Roman imprisonment.
103. Luke is significant as a traveling companion of Paul’s and especially as the author of Luke-Acts (two books that surpass the length of Paul’s letters).
104. That Luke was with Paul in Rome at this time is consistent with the “we-passages” in Acts (16:10-17; 20:5-15; 21:1-18; 27:1-28:16).
105. Luke (Gentile) was a man of considerable learning and explains his polished Greek style as well as his knowledge of the institutions and geography of the Roman world.
106. His knowledge of the LXX can also be explained by the possibility that he was a God-fearer who worshipped in the synagogue.
107. The phrase “beloved physician” (*ho iatros ho agametos*) tells us that he was trained in the medical field and in this capacity assisted Paul in this regard.
108. The prologue to the gospel of Luke (1:1-4) has a style consistent with the writings of medicine of the times.
109. His interest in travel is consistent with itinerant doctors in ancient times.
110. “Demas” appears in only two other NT citations (Phm. 24; 2Tim. 4:10-11).
111. In 2Tim. 4:10, Paul says that Demas has “deserted” him and that he “loved the world.”
112. This sad reference to a fallen believer was something that Paul experienced in his second imprisonment.
113. In the first Roman imprisonment Demas is still considered among Paul’s trusted coworkers.
114. In v. 15 Paul extends his own personal greeting to those beyond the Colossian community.
115. This includes the local church in Laodicea as well as the woman “Nympha and the church in her house.”
116. The entire verse could be rendered as follows: “Greet the brethren who are in Laodicea even (epexegetical) Nympha and the church that is in her house.”
117. This would mean that this woman made available her private home for church services.
118. Apparently she was a woman of means who owned a sizable property and served as patron of the church at Laodicea.
119. Paul instructs the Colossian church to make this letter available to the church at Laodicea (v. 16a).

120. He also tells the church to read the “lost” letter he writes for the Laodiceans (v. 16b).
121. As a kind of postscript Paul has a personal admonition for Archippus telling him to “Take heed to the ministry which you have received from the Lord that you may fulfill it” (v. 17).
122. 2Tim. 4:5 supports the interpretation that Archippus was a local pastor-teacher (“But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.”).
123. Also note Paul’s earlier description of his ministry at 1:25 “Of *this church* I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, so that I might fully carry out the *preaching of* the word of God.”
124. Also Acts 20:24 “But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, so that I might finish my course and the ministry which I have received from the Lord Jesus, to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God.”
125. “Take heed” might mean that there was some issue with Archippus’ diligence or it was just an opportunity to exhort a key person in the church there.
126. Paul ends this letter with his own distinctive signature, and a call to remember his situation, and a short benediction (v. 18).
127. The signature in Paul’s own handwriting appears in 1Cor. 16:21; Gal. 6:11; 2Thess. 3:17; Phm. 19.
128. This likely points to Paul’s use of a secretary in the composition of his letters.
129. In the Roman letter where such an autograph is missing, there is explicit note of the secretary “Tertius” (Rom. 16:22).
130. Using a secretary was standard procedure in antiquity.
131. The purpose of a signature was to ensure the integrity of the letter (cf. 2Thess. 2:2; 3:17).
132. Paul’s request to “Remember my chains” (e.g. imprisonment) is a final summons to prayer (cp. 4:2-3).
133. It may also be an implied request for financial help (cf. Phil. 1:7).
134. Paul’s imprisonment was not an occasion for embarrassment, but a participation in the “sufferings of Christ” (1:24).
135. Paul’s imprisonment was not an occasion for the frustration of his gospel ministry, but on the contrary, was an opportunity to reach an audience that would otherwise be relatively inaccessible.
136. This letter ends with a prayer wish: “Grace be with you all.”
137. This reference to “grace” appears in the closing benediction of all of Paul’s letters.
138. “Grace” is featured in this letter at 1:2, 6; 4:6 and here.
139. “Grace” is the foundational principal of God’s plan for humanity.
140. Grace orientation is key to living the CWL (as per “grow in grace and knowledge”).

END: Colossians Chapter Four
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