

TITLE: Colossians (Lesson 21)

TEXT: Col. 4:15-18

INTRO: As we complete our study of the epistle to the Colossians, we have been examining the friends whose names the apostle Paul has listed in chapter four. We have met Tychicus who was a dependable friend. We have met Onesimus who was a relatively new friend. And then there was Aristarchus who was such a loyal friend. And then there was Marcus (John Mark) who was reconciled to Paul and considered a friend. Justus we learned was a comforting friend, Epaphras a praying friend. Luke was a close friend and if there ever was a fickle friend it was Demas.

I. (vs. 15-16) Nymphas (A Hospitable Friend)

A. Some translations read *Nympha* which would make *him* a *her*.

B. Regardless this believer opened up their home for a meeting place.

NOTE: While the pagans had their heathen temples, the Christians met in the homes of fellow believers. (Rom. 16:5; I Cor. 16:19) In some parts of the world this is still the norm because of persecution. We call these underground churches.

1. The church in Colossae probably met in Philemon's home.

NOTE: Phil. 1:1-2

C. Copies of Paul's letters would be circulated amongst the churches.

1. They would be read aloud.

NOTE: I Tim. 4:13

D. What was the epistle to the Laodiceans?

NOTE: There are two possible views. 1. Paul could have written a separate letter to Laodicea. (See example in I Cor. 5:9) 2. The church in Laodicea possibly had a copy of Paul's letter to the Ephesians that was to be circulated.

II. (vs. 17) Archippus (A Discouraged Friend)

A. He was possibly the pastor of the church.

NOTE: Phil. 1-2 It is speculated that "Archippus belonged to the family of Philemon. Possibly, he was Philemon's son and the pastor of the church... This would make Apphia the wife of Philemon." *Warren Wiersbe*

B. Ministry is a gift from God.

NOTE: "Ministry is not something we do for God; it is something God does in and through us." *Warren Wiersbe*

C. "Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it."

NOTE: **fulfil**: to fill to the full; to complete. Eph. 2:10; Rom. 11:29

III. (vs. 18) Paul's final salutation.

A. Paul's practice was to dictate his letters. Here he adds his last words.

B. "Remember my bonds."

NOTE: Heb. 13:3 "Paul was not handing out advice from an ivory tower; he was proclaiming truth purchased at great cost." *John Phillips*

C. "Grace be with you. Amen."

