Final Greetings 7.19.09

7 Tychicus will tell you all about my activities. He is a beloved brother and faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord. 8 I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are and that he may encourage your hearts, 9 and with him Onesimus, our faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They will tell you of everything that has taken place here. 10 Aristarchus my fellow prisoner greets you, and Mark the cousin of Barnabas (concerning whom you have received instructions- if he comes to you, welcome him), 11 and 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. 12 Epaphras, 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. 13 For I bear him witness that he has worked hard for you and for those in Laodicea and in Hierapolis. 14 Luke the beloved physician greets you, as does Demas. 15 Give my greetings to the brothers at Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her house. 16 And when this letter has been read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans; and see that you also read the letter from Laodicea. 17 And say to Archippus, "See that you fulfill the ministry that you have received in the Lord." 18 I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. Remember my chains. Grace be with you. Colossians 4:7-18 ESV

Overview of the Text:
Paul's intentions here would have been primarily personal and specific in nature. Even so, there is still much we can learn here.

Outline of the Text:
v.7-9 Remarks about the messengers carrying the letter.
v.10-14 Greetings from Paul's associates.
v. 15-17 Greetings to the Christians in Laodicea.
v.18 Letter closing.

P: Mission is a "team effort."
Am I being a good teammate?

"Tychicus... a beloved brother and faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord..." One of Paul's Gentile converts. A reliable associate. Letter carrier to Colossae.
"Onesimus, our faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you…" The runaway slave who prompted the writing of Philemon. A Colossian himself.

P: All of us have a "spiritual reputation."
What are others saying about me? At home? At work? In my neighborhood?

"Aristarchus…my fellow prisoner…" Faithful partner in the Gospel.
"Mark the cousin of Barnabas (concerning whom you have received instructions..." Writer of the Gospel. They have had some difficult history that seems to have been redeemed.

P: Our God is a God of second chances.
Have I experienced the grace of God? Am I showing this grace of God to others?

"*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."* Most of his countrymen did the opposite.

P: Sometimes the Gospel is not embraced by those closest to us.
Am I turning to God and the Church in my loneliness and discouragement?

"Epaphras, who is one of you…always struggling on your behalf in his prayers, that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God…he has worked hard for you and for those in Laodicea and in Hierapolis.

P: Epaphras is a good example for us both in prayer & hard work.
Do my prayers and work look anything like those of Epaphras?

"Luke the beloved physician greets you, as does Demas." Luke wrote a Gospel. Eventually Demas deserted Paul and the Mission.

P: We should strive to finish like Luke, not Demas.
What is warring for my affection for God and the Gospel? Repent.

"Give my greetings to the brothers at Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her house.

P: You don't have to have a building to have a church.

"And when this letter has been read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans; and see that you also read the letter from Laodicea.

P: The public reading of the Scripture (and Paul's letters) have always been important.

"And say to Archippus, "See that you fulfill the ministry that you have received in the Lord."

P: The Lord has given us all ministries.
Do I know what God has called me to do? Am I doing it? If not, what needs to change?

"I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. Remember my chains. Grace be with you."

P: We must be careful to not forget those suffering for the Gospel.
Do I ever pray for (or even think about) those who are suffering for the Gospel?

Works Consulted: *Expositor's Commentary, Life Application Bible, MacArthur Study Bible, ESV Study Bible*