

Finishing Well Together

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Date: 23 November 2025

Preacher: Pastor Andrew

[0 : 00] Well, we're closing out our time in this letter to the Colossians. And we're going to encounter a number of names as the Apostle Paul is providing his closing benediction.

! In many ways, it seems like a photo album, this little collage of portraits that he's putting in front of us. The names of those who were involved with him in ministry, who were instrumental in helping to support and encourage the work of God through the Apostle Paul, but also in strengthening the church that was there in Colossae.

As we think about the Apostle Paul, as I think about his life and testimony, I think that the one word that comes to my mind is the word disciple maker. He was the quintessential disciple maker. And I imagine if we were to take some time this morning and think about the specific names of those who were part of Paul's ministry team, a number of those names would come to your mind. Maybe names like Mark, or names like Barnabas, or maybe even Silas, or maybe Titus, or Timothy. Those kinds of names that would come to your mind.

[1 : 20] But do you realize there were as many as 63 different names that the Apostle Paul alludes to throughout his letters in the Pauline epistles, those letters that he wrote to the churches.

63 names. Individuals that were partners with him in ministry. People who shared the load. People who walked beside and people who were working with him as they sought to carry out this work of Christ.

Names like Epaphroditus, Epaphras, Tychicus, Aristarchus, and Justice. Maybe the name Priscilla in Aquila comes to your mind.

Apollos and many, many others who might come to your mind. Those who were known and those who were maybe unknown that God used to carry out his work through the Apostle Paul to the known world.

Of course, this list doesn't include four names of those who were started well but then didn't finish. Those like Hymenaeus and Alexandra.

[2 : 28] Fagellus or Hermogenes. Those who started well in the gospel service and for whatever reason they abandoned the faith and they jettisoned this work that God had called them to.

The Apostle Paul describes his co-laborers in a number of different ways. He gives them various designations. He calls them fellow laborers and fellow soldiers and fellow ministers and fellow prisoners.

I wonder how did a guy who was so busy in ministry build so many relationships. So many strong partners in the work.

We find that his ministry strategy is kind of laid out for us in Colossians chapter 1 verses verse 28. It says, That was Paul's desire.

Not only to communicate the gospel but to lead the people who came to faith in the gospel to mature and stable faith. Those who were partners with him in the work that God had called him to.

[3 : 39] We've seen throughout this letter this intensity of the Apostle Paul in deliberately communicating doctrines and theologies. The message of Christ.

Who was Christ? What did Christ do? Why is that important? But he's not so interested in theology in itself. Just in building up the mind and what we know about God.

His desire was that what we knew about God would transform the way we lived. Would transform the heart. And so Paul in chapter 3 and chapter 4 will share a number of commands.

35 to 40 commands that he is one after the other after the other. This rapid fire commands. Here's how you to live. When you know Jesus, this is what it looks like or should look like in your life.

This intensely practical section of this letter the Apostle Paul gives. But now we're going to move into an intensely personal section.

[4 : 43] We learn about Paul's ministry team. We see his heart and strategy for the work. And we come to appreciate. And you're going to come to appreciate this in this passage this morning.

That Paul's ministry team was not a team of one. His ministry team was a team of multiple individuals. Called out by God for gospel service.

And that Paul's heart is going to come through. We're going to see really his philosophy of ministry. His love for people. And not just sharing Christ with them. But raising up a team.

Equipping saints for the work of the ministry. And entrusting that work to them. You knew that work didn't depend on himself. It depended on Christ working in and through the lives of others.

So please, if you would, turn with me to Colossians chapter 4. Colossians 4. And we're going to see this ministry profile of the Apostle Paul. As he's interacting with various individuals on his ministry team.

[5 : 46] We're going to begin to see some things about his ministry that we can take to heart. Colossians chapter 4. Beginning in verse 7. If you're using the Pew Bible, it's on page 985.

Beginning in verse 7. It says this. Tychicus will tell you all about my activities. He is a beloved brother, a faithful minister, and a fellow servant in the Lord.

I have sent him to you for this very purpose. That you may know how we are. And that he may encourage your hearts. And with him Onesimus, our faithful brother.

Who is one of you. They will tell you of everything that has taken place here. Ten different individuals will be mentioned throughout this passage.

And those couple of verses just mention two. Men who will be used instrumentally in the Apostle Paul's life. And instrumentally in the church. These names will serve as living examples.

[6 : 48] Of the kind of investment that God also calls every single one of us to fulfill. Remember from Ephesians chapter 2 verse 10. It says we are his workmanship.

Created in Christ Jesus for good works. Which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. You see God is desiring for us to be partners in ministry.

This partnership in ministry is what we see here at the outset of this passage. As I think about partnership in ministry.

I'm reminded even on this Sunday. I'm reminded of a man who is a faithful servant here at Maranatha Baptist. Pastor Kenoyer.

Those of you who know Pastor Kenoyer will know that he served as a faithful leader. A faithful pastor for 30 plus years here at Maranatha Baptist Church. And wouldn't you know he has the opportunity this morning to be part of an installation service in Lafayette Indiana.

[7 : 53] Another person who kind of grew up here at Maranatha. Rob Green is going to be installed as the senior pastor at Faith Church in Lafayette. And Pastor Kenoyer is going to be able to do his installation service.

What a beautiful picture of gospel partnership. What a beautiful picture of what God has called us to. Serving one another.

And I imagine if you had the chance or any of us had the chance to ask Rob. Who was instrumental in your life to help you grow. And to fan in your heart a love for Jesus.

He would probably talk about Pastor Kenoyer. But more than that he would talk about all of the teachers. The Sunday school teachers. The nursery workers. The Christian school teachers.

The youth group leaders. And the parents of his friends that were instrumental in building into his life. And week after week coming here to Maranatha Baptist. And the instrumental ministry that you had in his life.

[8 : 56] That God used to get him to be a pastor there at Faith. Partnership in ministry is what God has called us. Every single one of us to participate in.

And so as we move through this final passage. We're going to draw our attention to kind of the nuts and bolts. This pattern that God has put in front of us.

This pattern of building gospel partnerships in ministry. We're going to notice the example of the Apostle Paul. That he set for us.

We're going to see that his approach to ministry was effective. Because of his dependence upon the Savior. The Apostle Paul wasn't a ministry person of one.

He included the significant investment of others. We'll see that there are things that ministry leaders will do.

[9 : 52] But we're going to also understand that the ministry that God has called us to. Is a ministry as a congregation. There's something for all of us to do as members of the body of Christ.

All of us have a significant role to play. So we turn to this first quality. This ministry partnership. Partnership in the ministry.

And we see that Paul will mention two names here in the first couple of verses. He'll refer to Tychicus. And then he'll refer to Onesimus. And like I said there are ten others who kind of fall in line.

We're going to cover them as we make our way through this. And on the back of your outline. Your sermon outline. You're going to kind of see the summary list of those ministry partners. That Paul will address here in this part of the letter. And all of those endearing terms that he will use of them. To talk about their investment in his life.

[10 : 48] And their work in the church. We see this community of believers. We see that they're connected to one another. They care for one another. They're interested in one another.

Notice in verse 7. Tychicus. What will he do? Well he's going to tell you about my activities. Listen to Tychicus. He's coming for a specific purpose.

He wants you to know how I'm doing. Because you care. And notice. He says I've sent him for this purpose. That you may know how we are. That he may encourage your hearts.

That's in verse 8. What do you hear? What do you hear from these words? Well I think what you hear is the Apostle Paul saying. You know I can't be there.

I can't be there with you in person. But I want you to know I care about you. I care about you. And I care so much. That I'm going to send one of my representatives.

[11 : 46] He's going to come and he's going to share about my ministry. And I want to hear about what God is doing in your life. And that kind of exchange is happening throughout the letters that the Apostle Paul writes.

We understand that he's vested. We understand that he's interested in the progress. We understand that he is interested. And he's saying you matter to me.

This is the kind of community that Christ purchased with his blood. And by the way this is the kind of community the Apostle Paul has vested himself into.

We see that even from Colossians chapter 2. In his letter chapter 2 verse 1 says this. Paul says. I want you to know how great a struggle I have for you and for those at Laodicea.

And for all who have not seen me face to face. That their hearts may be encouraged. Being knit together in love. To reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding.

[12 : 44] And the knowledge of God's mystery which is Christ. I want you to know that you matter to me. I want you to know that the struggle that I'm facing is worth it.

Because Christ is building himself in your life. And I'm praying that God will help to knit you together. I'm praying that you'll be a community of saints that demonstrate the love of Christ.

I want him to work that out in your life. And so we see in the Apostle Paul this deep dependent relationship. Dependent on his ministry team.

And entrusting that team to this church. They're trusted ministry workers. Dear friends. They're consistently called to represent the Apostle Paul.

He trusts them to carry a message. And he trusts that they're going to strengthen the churches. You see in Paul's mind they're essential. They're essential for the health of this church.

[13 : 45] In building it up in a way that pleases the Lord Jesus. This first individual Tychicus. Maybe you are unaware of Tychicus. But surprisingly Tychicus is almost in every single church that we find throughout the New Testament.

We find him in Colossians. We find him in Acts. We find him in Ephesians. We find him in a little letter to Titus. This guy is sent across the known world to support the churches that the Apostle Paul had helped to build.

He's in Colossae. He's in Ephesus. He's in Crete. He's willing to travel. He's willing to take the risk. He's willing to subject himself to the dangers of the ministry that God has called him to.

And he is this trusted spokesman for the team. And then there's Onesimus. We find him there in verse 9. And with him Onesimus.

Our faithful and beloved brother who is one of you. They will tell you. He and Archippus. Or Tychicus. They will tell you everything that has taken place here.

[14 : 52] Onesimus. Called the faithful and beloved brother. And if you remember Onesimus' background. You'll remember the providence of God in leading Onesimus to faith.

You'll remember that Onesimus was formerly a slave. Right? And as a slave he ran away from his master Philemon in Colossae.

That's where the home base was. And wouldn't you know that providentially Onesimus runs straight into the Apostle Paul. Somehow Paul's in prison in Rome.

And Onesimus will encounter Paul there. And as a result of that interaction. God will rescue Onesimus' heart.

He'll lead him to faith in Christ. There'll be salvation that will take place. And so the Apostle Paul in seeing the work of God in Onesimus' heart. Sends him back to his master Philemon.

[15 : 47] And we get a sense of this in Philemon verses 10 to 14. It says this. I appeal to you. This is Paul talking to Philemon.

I appeal to you for my child. Hear the endearing terms there. My child Onesimus. Whose father I became in my imprisonment.

Formerly he was useless to you. But now he is indeed useful to you and to me. I am sending him back to you. Sending my very heart.

Don't you love that? I would have been glad to keep him with me. In order that he might serve me on your behalf during my imprisonment for the gospel. But I preferred to do nothing without your consent.

In order that your goodness might not be by compulsion. But by your own accord. I love this man Onesimus. He is useful for you.

[16 : 43] He is a beloved brother of mine. God has rescued his heart. And he has entrusted him to you. Along with Tychicus. To send this word. To be gospel partners.

You see. The beauty of sending Onesimus back to his hometown. Is to paint this wonderful gospel picture.

Of the redemption that can happen when things are broken. And how God can now make them useful. This visible representation of gospel transformation.

And that now Onesimus is vested. He knows these people. He loves these people. He is one of these people. And God delights in using his people.

His people who are sent and useful for gospel work. God called Onesimus. God called Tychicus. God is using them in this body.

[17 : 42] As representatives of the apostle Paul. But most importantly. As representatives of Christ. And we as part of the body have the same privilege. The same opportunity. To be useful.

To be useful. Where you are. Just like Onesimus. Being planted back in his home church. Back in his home community. To speak the wonders of gospel transformation.

The work that God had created in his own life. Partnership in ministry is what we saw. Now we turn to perseverance in ministry. In verses 10 to 14.

Perseverance in ministry. And by talking about perseverance. We're talking about staying power. We're talking about the ability to endure. The ability to go the distance.

And of course as we examine the life of Paul. We see him as one who has staying power. As we read in his letter. To the Colossians.

[18 : 40] In Colossians chapter 1 verse 24. We see something of that staying power. That enduring work. That God has had produced in Paul. He says now. I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake.

And in my flesh. I'm filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions. For the sake of his church. You see. Paul is this example of endurance.

And willing to suffer affliction for the sake of Christ. For the sake of the gospel. For the sake of the work of Christ in this church. He was this seasoned veteran.

He was this one who had grit. Who had learned endurance. Who was willing to persevere. It hadn't made him hard. In calloused.

Like most opposition and adversity does for us. But it made him. Graciously. Courageously tender. This tenderness of Christ.

[19 : 38] This grace and truth. That we see in our Lord Jesus. Is working its way into the apostle Paul. And Paul's ministry is a ministry of endurance.

And we see the enduring quality of his example. Working its way out. In several of these individuals. We'll encounter here in this passage.

Beginning in verse 10. It says. Aristarchus. My fellow prisoner greets you. And Mark. The cousin of Barnabas. Concerning whom you've received instruction.

If he comes to you. Welcome him. In Jesus. Who is called justice. These are the only men. Of the circumcision. Among my fellow workers.

For the kingdom of God. And they have become a comfort. Aristarchus. Who Paul refers to as my fellow prisoner. He is experiencing the hardship.

[20 : 36] Of that prison life. And many commentators believe. That both Aristarchus and Epaphras. Who we'll encounter in just a bit. Were kind of self-elected prisoners.

That they chose to be with Paul. In prison. For the sake of encouragement. And comfort. And strengthening. And service. And help. They desired to partner with Paul.

In hard ministry. For the sake of the gospel. Aristarchus is one of those. This sacrificial companionship. Of suffering. We find him repeatedly.

Throughout the New Testament. And he's one of Paul's companions. In travel. Who was actually dragged off. Into the theater there in Ephesus.

He experienced the hardship. He was there. When things were really intense. Fearing for his own life. And he was there. Aristarchus was there. And it would be Aristarchus.

[21 : 34] That we would find also. Who is a travel companion. Of the apostle Paul. When he was shipwrecked. On the way to Rome. He had staying power. He knew what it meant to endure.

He knew what trouble was. And it didn't. It didn't keep him. From the work. That God had called him to. He's there. He's vested. He's a companion. And a fellow worker.

With the apostle Paul. And then there's Mark. And Mark's. Mark's story. Is also a beautiful one. It's a beautiful story. Of endurance. And if you remember.

John Mark. He was. He was an associate. With Barnabas. And it was Paul and Barnabas. On the first missionary journey. And they would go. And they would launch out. And begin this gospel work. And John Mark was there as well. But then in Acts chapter 13. We see. That the enduring quality. Of Mark. Wasn't. Wasn't very strong.

[22 : 29] Acts 13. 13 says this. Now. Paul and his companions. Set sail from Paphos. And came to Perga. In Pamphylia. And John. That's John Mark. Left them.

And returned. To Jerusalem. Well. Why did he leave? Well. Things were hard. Adversity. And opposition. Were bombarding him. And he left. The team. But.

Notice what Paul says here. He's writing. About Mark. He says. If he comes to you. Welcome him. What happened? What the work. Of God.

Through Barnabas. And others. Had. Gotten. John Mark. To the place. Finally. Of endurance. Of going the distance. And here is John Mark. A restored.

A worker. For the Lord. A faithful. Minister. Of God. And now. An associate. Of the apostle Paul. Working. For the sake. Of the gospel.

[23 : 27] And the work. Of God. In John Mark's. Life. Is so. Significant. That there's actually. A gospel. That's written. By his name. The gospel of Mark. And Peter.

Is likely. The one. Who have to oversee. That writing project. We find. Peter. In first Peter. Chapter five. Verse. Verse 13. Says this. She who is in Babylon. Who is likewise chosen.

Sends you greetings. And so. Does Mark. My son. That instrumental work. Of the apostle Peter. In Mark's life. Along with Barnabas. To make him useful.

For ministry. And now. This enduring work. Could happen. This work of God. In restoring Mark. And making him. Useful. What a beautiful picture. And then we come. In verse 11.

To a man. By the name of Justice. He's one of. These few. Jewish. Coworkers. That we see. In this passage. And very little. Is said about him. In the New Testament.

[24 : 23] His name is only. Mentioned here. In the New Testament. But. But as we read. We understand. That. That even. Justice. In the midst. Of his anonymity.

Is a comfort. To the apostle Paul. Notice. At the end. Of verse 11. They have become. A comfort. To me. A comfort. To me. Well.

Why. Might they have become. A comfort. Well. I wonder. If it's because. Again. Of their staying power. Of their endurance. In ministry. Notice. This troubling statement. In verse 11.

These are the only men. Of the circumcision. Among my fellow. Workers. For the kingdom. Now just pause there. For a moment. Let that settle in. Think about.

The gravity. Of that statement. Of 20 plus years. Of ministry. The apostle Paul. Of the hundreds. If not thousands.

[25 : 15] Of individuals. That Paul. Invested his life in. And. And. And how many. Dozens of them. Became. Fellow workers. Of the apostle Paul. And. And for.

For Paul. To make this statement. These. Are the only men. Of the circumcision. Among. My. Fellow. Workers. Three men. Aristarchus. Mark.

And. Justice. Only three men remain. Can. Can you even begin to think. How you would feel. If all of those.

Ministry workers. That you had invested in. Had abandoned you. For something else. But. But here. We don't find. The apostle Paul. Jaded. We don't find him.

Cynical. We don't find him. Bitter. We don't find him. Defeated. We find him. Encouraged. I'm comforted. By justice. You see. How the apostle Paul.

[26 : 10] Was able to do this. Is because. Of his commitment. To faith. In Christ. And I. And I think this is. The reason. Why the apostle Paul. Gives so much. Attention. To thanksgiving.

Throughout this letter. Thanksgiving. Helped. To cement. His faith. To purify. His confidence. In God. And to look. Like we saw.

Last week. This. This watchful. Prayer. That Paul. Was willing. To make. He's watchful. Remember. Continue. Steadfastly. In prayer. Being watchful.

In it. With thanksgiving. The apostle Paul's. Commitment. To prayer. With thanks. Helped to bolster. His heart. When things were very. Very hard.

We find him. Even when things get worse. In the end. Of second. Timothy. Many years. Would still go by. And we find. This would happen. That Paul.

[27 : 05] Is still clinging. To Christ. In second. Timothy. Chapter four. Verse 16. It says this. At my first defense. No one came. To stand by me. But all. Deserted me.

May it not be charged. Against them. But the Lord. Stood by me. And strengthened me. So that through. Me. The message. Might be fully. Proclaimed.

And that all the Gentiles. Might hear it. So I was rescued. From the lion's mouth. The Lord. Will rescue me. From every evil deed. And bring me. Safely into heaven.

His heavenly kingdom. To him. Be glory. Forever. And ever. Amen. This faithful. Enduring. Work. Of the apostle Paul.

Entrusted to a ministry team. And we see. This working itself out. In his team. And we come to three other members of his team. And I'm just going to direct your attention.

[28 : 02] To verse 14. To start. It says. Luke the beloved physician. Greets you. As does Demas. And so. While. While Mark becomes. A good example to us.

Of one who. Had abandoned initially. And then returned. Demas is one. Who is there initially. And then leaves. Because you remember. What happens. In 2nd Timothy. Chapter 4.

Verses 10 to 11. It says. For Demas. In love with this present world. Has deserted me. And gone to Thessalonica. Cretans. Has gone to Galatia. Titus. To Dalmatia.

Luke. Alone. Is with me. Luke. Alone. Is with me. The significance. Of enduring ministry. In the work.

That God. Intends. Or will. Produce. Through a life. That remains. Committed. Demas. Abandoned. But Luke. This beloved physician. This beloved. Fellow worker. Remained.

[28 : 54] And went. The distance. And then we come to Epaphras. In verse 12. And 13. And we see. What's written of Epaphras. It says. 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. We see. That he is committed. To prayer. He's committed. To this church. He's struggling. With them. It's the same word. That we've seen.

Throughout this letter. This word. Soon agonizami. It's. To struggle with. To agonize. With. And Epaphras. Was agonizing. For this church. Struggling. With them.

In prayer. For them. We find. From Philemon. 23. That Epaphras. My fellow prisoner. In Christ Jesus. Sends greetings.

[29 : 46] To you. You see. Epaphras. Was also. A self-elected. Prisoner. Of Christ. And of. And associated. Then. With the apostle Paul.

In his ministry. He. He did this. By election. And he did this. On his own. But on his own. Behalf. So that he could be. A ministry to Paul. And he could pray. He. He prays. And continues. To struggle. In ministry. For the church. Through prayer. This ministry team. Their staying power.

Their endurance. Their perseverance. And then. We begin to see. This philosophy. Of ministry. Especially. For specific churches. Begin to emerge. In the remaining verses.

Verses 15 to 17. It says. Give my greetings. To the brothers. At Laodicea. And to Nympha. And the church. In her house.

[30 : 40] And when this letter. Has been read. Among you. Have it also read. Among the churches. Of the Laodiceans. And see that you also. Read the letter. From Laodicea. And say to Archippus.

See that you fulfill. The ministry. That you have received. In the Lord. I Paul. Write this greeting. With my own hand. Remember. My chains. Grace.

Be with you. This philosophy. Of ministry. As we see. The Apostle Paul. Interacting with the churches. And what should really. Stand out. Through these verses. Is that.

Is that. The interconnectivity. Of these churches. They depend. On one another. They relate. To one another. They're a community. Of believers. Even in three. Different cities.

That are found here. Notice. What Paul has said. To Epaphras. In verse 13. For I bear him witness. That he has worked hard. For you.

[31 : 33] And for those. In Laodicea. And in Hierapolis. These three cities. Colossae. Hierapolis. Laodicea. And. And. And Epaphras. Is kind of that. That preaching.

Pastor. That leader. In all three. Of those places. There is this. United. Body. They're united. In purpose. They're united. In leadership.

They're united. In mission. They're united. In resources. The apostle Paul. Calls attention. To this. This regular. Interaction. That's happening.

Between the churches. Notice there. In verse 15. Greet. The brothers. In Laodicea. You church. Of Colossae. You're receiving. My letter. Send greetings. To them. Strengthen.

That relationship. That you have. With Laodicea. Tell them. That I said hello. And. And he says. Then in verse 16. And when. This letter. Has been read. Among you. Have it read.

[32 : 27] In Laodicea. And read. Their letter too. I want you to be strengthened. In relationship. I want that. That interconnectivity. What Christ has created. That oneness. That you share.

Because of Christ. You share. With one another. Express that. In a. In a real. Physical. Literal way. An interconnected church. But also.

A hospital. A hospitable church. Notice verse 15. This lady. Nympha. This church. That's meeting. In her house. We see here. This lady. From Laodicea.

She's been faithfully. Vested. In the church. This example. Of hospitality. This example. Of generosity. Her interest. In care. For others. In this church.

It's a reminder. That early. Christian gatherings. Were often. Composed. In this way. This church. That. That shared community.

[33 : 22] With one another. That was related. And interconnected. But we also see. This example. Of. Of the responsibility. That the church has. For the health.

Of their other members. When we come to verse 17. In this. Direct instruction. Given. About Archippus. Notice. And say to Archippus. This is verse 17.

See that you fulfill. The ministry. That you have received. In the Lord. Here we encounter. A young man. This young man. Who. For whatever reason.

Is on the brink. Of giving up. We don't know. What was. The struggles were. We don't know. The specifics. Of. Of what he was going through. But we can imagine. That he's become weary.

We can imagine. That he's become discouraged. We can imagine. That because of. Constant opposition. And adversity. That's related. To. To his role. Of building up the church.

[34 : 16] He's been. He's been afflicted. In a. In a significant way. An ongoing way. It's battered him. It's wounded him. It's disheartened him. His name is mentioned.

In. This little letter. To Philemon. In verses 1 and 2. It says. Paul a prisoner. For Christ Jesus. And Timothy. Our brother. To Philemon. Our beloved fellow worker. And Appiah.

Our sister. And Archippus. Our fellow soldier. In the church. In your house. See he was at Colossae. And he was likely.

Related in some way. To these family members. Who are here. So that Philemon. Is likely his dad. In. In this. Work of ministry. But.

As a fellow soldier. We. We get some. Descriptions. The apostle Paul. Describing himself. As a fellow soldier. And describing Timothy. As a fellow soldier. This labor. In mission.

[35 : 12] This spiritual. Warfare. This fight. For the faith. This side by side. Need for endurance. Certainly. Through the hardship.

Of ministry. Archippus. Has become discouraged. He's become. Disheartened. He's become. Weary.

And. And. And. And. And. Here. We find. This encouragement. The apostle Paul. Doesn't. Doesn't encourage. The church. To kick. Archippus. To the curb. He. They're not.

To leave him alone. They're not. To. To tell him. To. To work things out. On his own. They're not. To. To. To. To give him. Some strong.

Commendation. Or. Condemnation. That. That he's. That he's not. Doing the work. That he's been called to. They're not to criticize him. Or ignore him. But they're. To address him.

[36 : 08] Notice the tender words. That Paul uses. Here. Where he says. Say. To archippus. It begins with speaking. It begins with encouragement. Do this together.

Have this conversation. This. Verb. Is in the plural. And it invites the entire church. There in Colossae. To be part of this work. Of strengthening. This young man.

In the hardship. That he's facing. This. Is your. Responsibility. He needs to know. Church. That you care. For him. And God has put him.

In community. For a reason. These are the times. Where. Where. It was. Significant. For the. For this church. To come alongside. And encourage. This faint hearted.

Young man. Don't. Let him flounder. Don't give him. An opportunity. To fail. Rather. Come alongside. And strengthen. This young man. Remind him.

[37 : 02] Of the ministry. That God has called him to. Fulfill. The ministry. This word. Fulfill. That we've seen. Throughout the letters. Of the apostle Paul. It's the word. To fill up.

It's the word. To make complete. To do the work. That God has called you to do. Don't let parts. Of the work. That God has called you to. To flounder. Don't let them go.

See them through. Have endurance. This is the same work. The same. Encouragement. For all of us. See. The work. Through. To the finish line.

Go the distance. For the glory of God. Why? Because it's not your ministry. Notice what it says. See. That you fulfill the ministry. What church?

That you have received. In the Lord. That you received. In the Lord. This is an entrustment. It's an entrustment.

[37 : 56] This is a stewardship. This is a ministry. You've received. So it's a ministry. You need to see. Through. To the end. And there's a promise here. A promise.

That is given to us. About this ministry. From 1 Corinthians 15. 58. It says. Therefore my beloved brothers. Be steadfast. Immovable. Always abounding. In the work of the Lord.

Knowing. That your labor. Is not in vain. In the Lord. When you carry out. The work of the Lord. You are doing. The work that God has called you to.

In the strength. That God has given to you. And God's work. Will always have its way. You can trust it. What a privilege. It's not our ministry.

It's a ministry. That we have received. In the Lord. May we be faithful. With that ministry. And then we come to this. This closing. This closing phrase. In here. In verse 18.

[38 : 50] And we see this personal nature. This personal nature. Of Paul's ministry. When he says this. I Paul. Write this greeting. With my own hand. Remember.

My chains. Grace. Be with you. Often Paul. Would dictate his letters. And. But then at the end. In several instances. We find this closing greeting.

That is given by the apostle Paul. And it says. Personal seal. Of. Of expression. Of his heart. To this church. I've communicated.

To you. These words. But I want you to see. This physical expression. Of my care for you. I'm signing off. With my own. With my own hand. In Galatians chapter 6.

Verse 11. Paul does the same thing. To the church of Galatia. He says. See with what large letters. I am writing to you. With my own hand. This was intensely.

[39 : 49] Personal. For the apostle Paul. There's something. You know. Powerful. About getting. That text message. That unexpected message. From someone. Who is thinking about you.

In the moment. And maybe. Even. To receive. That note. Or email. From somebody. Who is just putting. A very special.

Personal touch. On communicating with you. But there's. There's something. Quite significant. About a handwritten note. There's something. Quite personal.

And intimate. About this. This personal. Expression. Of kindness. And love. And especially. As somebody. Who is notable. Is communicating.

To you. In that way. And that's what Paul. Is doing here. Paul says. Remember my chains. Don't forget about me. I haven't forgotten. About you.

[40 : 44] And I might be. Separated from you. Because. Of prison. But. But my heart. Is with you. I'm present with you. I care. About you. I'm vested in you. I'm interested.

In what God. Is doing. In your life. Remember me. Not just. For my suffering. But especially. Remember me. Because of my savior. And remember the grace.

Grace. May the grace. Of God. Be with you. May the grace. Of God. Carry you. May the grace. Of God. Support you. And help you. As you continue. The work. That God has called you.

To do. And might your life. Be. This living. Vessel. This living. Portrait. Of Christ's work. In your life. As you seek to carry out.

That work. Wherever God puts you. And so. The apostle Paul. Becomes a great example. To us. Doesn't he? This example. Of this man. Who is. Handing off.

[41 : 40] The baton. He's finishing well. And he's entrusting. This ministry. To us. This ministry. The apostle Paul. Has as a ministry. That he commends. All of us. To take part in. May the Lord.

Help us. As we seek. To be faithful. To be workmen. Who need not. To be ashamed. Rightly dividing. The word of truth. And rightly. Exercising. And working out. The ministry. That God has called us.

To. Oh Lord. I pray. That you would help us. To be faithful. Representatives. Of Jesus. Thank you. For the apostle Paul. And thank you. For the portrait. That he paints.

Of all of these men. And this. This lady. Who was. Who were a part. Of the ministry. There in Colossae. And the surrounding cities. May we learn. From their example.

May we. Pick up the baton. And may we. Faithfully serve. Our Lord Jesus. In the world. In which you've entrusted. To us. We praise you. In Jesus name. Amen. Amen.

[42 : 35] Amen. Thank you.