

THE BOOK OF COLOSSIANS

“Epaphras Man with a Passion”

Colossians 4:12, 13

Introduction

1. God has His precious children. Many are listed by Paul as his companions. Thank God they are recorded in Scripture for all believers.

2. Consider with joy the following listed in Colossians 4:

- a. Tychichus - man with a Message
- b. Onesimus - man with a Past
- c. Aristarchus - man with a Heart
- d. Marcus - man with a Future
- e. Justus - man with a Name

3. Now the text continues and presents Epaphras -- man with a Passion. He is mentioned elsewhere in Colossians and Philemon. What an unusual man. Read for yourself how Paul, by inspiration, writes of him here.

1. EPAPHRAS HAS GREETINGS v. 12

The Greek term _____ is used commonly of conveying greetings. It demonstrates this man's love for the Colossians. He did not miss an opportunity to express his interest. How great is his example for us! Note the plural pronoun evidencing his greetings to all the Colossians.

2. EPAPHRAS HAS IDENTITY v. 12

This is understood in two directions:

a. He is one of Colossians

Clearly Epaphras belongs to the assembly of Colossae. This cancels out the view that he is to be identified with Epaphroditus (Phil. 2:25-30) who was obviously from Philippi.

b. He is a slave of Christ

The common word for bond-slave (_____) is used of Epaphras. He did not have any more honored title. This is the lot of all believers (Ro. 6:16, 18, 20). The incredible “of Christ” (_____) adds eternal divine dignity to the role “slave.”

3. EPAPHRAS HAS PRAYERS V. 12

a. Their Time

The adverb of time here (_____) simply means always, at all times. Paul must have had long prayer lists.

b. Their Kind

The figure of the verb “laboring” is that of “wrestling” (_____). The present middle tense affirms continuous action, persistence and personal interest.

c. Their object

1) The Colossians. The preposition (_____) notes the prayers were in behalf of all Colossians as is supported by the plural pronoun.

2) To God. The prayers of this man were addressed to God, not to men.

4. EPAPHRAS HAS PURPOSE v. 12

The clause beginning with “that” expresses purpose or goal. There are two of them:

a. Perfection

The aorist subjunctive “stand” is just that (_____). No idea of the willy nilly doctrine or behavior here. “Perfect” means something fully grown, finished, or mature. Thank God for such a prayer. Oh God, send mature believers.

b. Completion

The perfect passive verb (_____) is critical to the prayer. To be filled full “in all the will of God” is the highest goal. So much praying concerns lesser issues of minor importance. This is real stuff!

5. EPAPHRAS HAS PASSION v. 13

a. It is witnessed

The verb “bear record” (_____) has its root in the concept “martyr.” So strongly is Paul persuaded of Epaphras that he is prepared to die for his testimony about him.

b. It is stated

The present tense verb “has” is critical. There is no doubt about Epaphras -- he has it! What? The “TR” text reads zeal (_____). He had a genuine enthusiasm. The “WH” text has “deep concern” (_____), the result of toil. Both would be true of this man!

c. It is detailed

Three are mentioned as being prayed for by Paul: Colossians, those of Hierapolis, those of Laodicea. Each group has its own peculiar needs which a burdened Epaphras carried in his heart.

Conclusion: All kinds of men are needed and found in the body. None is more important than the likes of Epaphras. Amen!