

5.15.16 Primer

Friends, Romans, Countrymen

The Point:

Even our ability to serve God is a gift from God and a stewardship entrusted to us, so, serve well by serving thankfully, serving joyfully, and serving gloriously!

Hear the Good News:

Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.

Tychicus will tell you all about my activities. He is a beloved brother and faithful minister and 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 and beloved brother, who is one of you. They will tell you of everything that has taken place here.

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), 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. 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. For I bear him witness that he has worked hard for you and for those in Laodicea and in Hierapolis. Luke the beloved physician greets you, as does Demas. Give my greetings to the brothers at Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her house. 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. 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.
(Colossians 4:5-18 ESV)*

From the ESV Gospel Transformation Study Bible:

In this final section of the letter, Paul encourages believers with several points that follow from his insistence that, since Christ is Lord and Savior of all, they have every spiritual blessing in their union with Christ. Here we see that **the gospel fuels the Christian life in three ways: in prayer, partnership, and purpose.**

First, we must cultivate a life of persistent prayer (4:2; cf. Mark 1:35; 14:32–39). As those who have been adopted into God’s very family, we have full and free access to the Father and should seek him for his gracious blessing upon our lives, which he delights to give. We are liberated to come to him not tepidly or reluctantly but “with thanksgiving” (Col. 4:2).

Second, we must humbly partner with others for the sake of gospel ministry (vv. 3–4, 7–17; cf. Mark 3:13–19). Not all of us are preachers, but we are all invited into the adventure of spreading the preached gospel by praying for preachers in our community to have “a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ” (Col. 4:3).

Third, our lives must be purposeful, so that through the testimony of our conduct (words and deeds), Christ may be seen (vv. 5–6; cf. Eph. 4:29). We treat others in a “gracious” (Col. 4:6) way, as God in Christ has treated us.

Embrace the Good News:

1. What does this passage teach about God? (His commands, his expectations, his characteristics, his desires)
 - a. You can answer this question by looking at what Paul commends as people who are fulfilling their calling.
2. What does this passage teach about man in his natural, unspiritual state? (His failures, his tendencies, his struggles)
3. What does this passage teach about God’s expectations for followers of Jesus? (The way we are called to follow him, the grace we receive from God, etc)
4. With what we’ve discussed, try to summarize the passage in your own words as if you were explaining it to a friend.

Live the Good News:

1. What does this passage mean for disciples who make disciples?
2. What does it mean for leaders who make more leaders?
3. How does this passage impact the way that you live out the Good News in your home and in your relationships with friends and family?
 - a. Parents: How can you model these truths to your kids and help them to understand these complex concepts?
4. How does it impact the way that you weave the thread of the gospel as you interact with your church family? In our local community? To the ends of the earth?
5. Come up with 1-3 “I will” statements in response to this passage that address the way you view God or the way that you live your life.