

GLENKIRK CHURCH



WEEKLY DEVOTIONS

The DEVO

NOVEMBER 16 - 20, 2020

Above All

8.30 - 11.22

BOOK OF COLOSSIANS



MONDAY

Colossians 4:7-18

When we come to the end of Colossians and these verses, many are inclined to skip over them as not being relevant today. In this time of global pandemic, chaos, tensions and increased anxieties, Paul's words to the Colossians refocus our thoughts again to Christ's supremacy and our valued place in the kingdom of God. Like Paul in prison, we have a chance to name those around us who have been a source of hope and help in our new settings. We also have a chance to gain insight into our own purpose and place in the kingdom of God.

Throughout Paul's letter to the Colossians, he has encouraged all believers that Jesus is the true image and first-born of Creator God. At the cross, Jesus reconciled man and now dwells among us as the body's head. Paul also encourages all believers to not compromise or turn from Jesus. Through the resurrection of Jesus, all believers become part of a new humanity that is joined to Him, and their lives are changed and transformed here on earth. Christians, as part of this new humanity, serve and please Jesus alone.

Like a family photo at Thanksgiving, Paul gives us a tangible snapshot of this new humanity. In this passage, we see eight friends who were with him in prison, and he mentioned and greeted friends at two other churches, Colosse and Laodicea. The one thing that brought all these

relationships together was Christ and the gospel they shared. They had all been saved by the gospel, and it was this gospel that energized them as they sought to reach the world for Christ.

In our culture, letter writing is not often done. But what can we do to connect with friends, family, or our neighbors? One of my neighbors began a sidewalk campaign of encouragement for her neighborhood. She and her children would write short notes, draw pictures and hearts galore to bring joy and connection to the increasing number of neighbors out walking. What will you do this week?

QUESTIONS

What encouragement and/or challenge do you receive from these final words from Paul in Colossians?

PRAYERS FOR OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

Pray for Operation Christmas Child as they share the Good News of Jesus Christ with millions of boys and girls in more than 100 countries each year. Many of these children have never before received a present or heard the true meaning of Christmas—until they open a gift-filled shoebox.

TUESDAY

Colossians 4:10

“My fellow prisoner, Aristarchus, sends you his greetings.”
(Colossians 4:10)

Aristarchus is likely to have chosen to partner with Paul and care for his needs while Paul was in prison. This is not the first or only time Aristarchus has suffered with or for Paul (check out Acts 19:29 and Acts 27:2). He is the kind of friend who would suffer with you. Are you a friend like Aristarchus?

When we choose to follow in the ways of Jesus, we walk with those who are in difficult circumstances, financial troubles, relationship struggles, sickness, or brokenness and sin. Sometimes we do not reach out or walk with our fellow Christian because we are only seeing our needs, or we simply do not want to take on the messiness of others' troubles. Sometimes we do not bear others' burdens because we feel awkward or we do not know what to say. Make no mistake, getting into the messiness of life with another will be hard; but with the Holy Spirit's help to open our eyes, ears, hands, and heart, it is possible and good.

Jesus said, *“There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends”* (John 15:3).

Christ took the sin and pain of the world, and Christ calls us to love one another in the same way. He commands us to love one another

as He loved us, which is sacrificially. Aristarchus is our example to follow this week. Amid global pandemic it is difficult to connect or bear another's burdens, but we can always reach out with loving words.

We should also be like Paul, who was humble and thankful to accept help while in prison. Some of us struggle with pride and refuse any help. Jesus asked His disciples to pray with Him when He was in need. It takes humility to allow others to express their love for Jesus in caring for our needs.

QUESTIONS

How can we better identify and suffer with other Christians?
Do you struggle with accepting help from others? Why or why not?

PRAYERS FOR OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

Pray for Operation Christmas Child as they deliver gift-filled shoeboxes to difficult places. From densely populated inner cities to deserts and jungles, local churches are using these gifts to share the gospel where the gospel has never been heard.

WEDNESDAY

Matthew 5:16; Colossians 4:8-9

(Jesus said) *“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”* (Matthew 5:16)

When I drive up Grand Avenue at night, I notice hundreds of lit-up signs advertising companies and services. Some are incredibly bright and some barely flicker. Some are big and bold, and some are more subdued. Every one of them, though, advertises something.

In the same way, every person is like a neon sign shining in the darkness, communicating a message to anyone who notices. Jesus tells us that we can create our life’s sign and determine how it shines for people to see. God has chosen us as believers to “advertise” the grace, mercy, kindness, and purposes of our Heavenly Father.

All of us made choices long ago that have shaped our lives and the signs we have designed, but God gives us the opportunity to create a new design if we need to. By His grace, we can trust Jesus to transform our hearts so that far more of His love shines through.

We all need to take a few minutes to reflect on what we have been advertising and what we want on our signs. Paul, while in his prison cell, sent his friends, Tychicus and Onesimus, to be neon signs of hope and encouragement (Colossians 4:8-9). What have your words this week

advertised about God’s love and care in the global pandemic? Where has your sign been its brightest for Jesus this week?

This little light of mine,
I’m gonna let it shine.
Ev’rywhere I go,
I’m gonna let it shine.
Jesus gave it to me,
I’m gonna let it shine.
Let it shine, let it shine, oh let it shine.

QUESTIONS

What changes need to happen so that your sign directs people to the grace and truth of your Father in heaven?

PRAYERS FOR OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

Pray for the logistics of Operation Christmas Child—from the churches that hand out the boxes to the thousands of people who fill the boxes to the distribution centers that collect the boxes and prepare them to ship all across the world.

THURSDAY

Jeremiah 33:3; Colossians 4:12-13

“Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.” (Jeremiah 33:3)

God’s promise to answer the prayers of His people was given at a time of desperate need. The children of Israel were in deep trouble—under siege from the brutal, vicious Babylonians. Survival was uppermost on their minds, but God had bigger plans, more wonderful plans for them than merely surviving. In fact, God’s plans for them were beyond their comprehension.

The promise was clear and strong, but the path to deliverance was going to be difficult. If the children of Israel responded, they would experience the cleansing of suffering before God would free and restore them back to their land. After the exile, Israel laughed and cried because they were so happy (Psalm 126).

Epaphras was probably the founder of the church in Colosse and one of its elders. He came to Paul speaking of the problems in the church and hoping to get his counsel. Paul’s letter sent to the church is his response that we have been studying. But Epaphras does more for his flock in prayer! Paul describes Epaphras as “always wrestling in prayer” for them (v. 12). His prayers were constant and fervent for this church he loved. He prays that the church will stand firm in the will of God so that

they will not be led astray by false teachers attacking the church. He is praying for them to be mature and fully assured of their faith.

God has great and mighty things to show us today, especially as we come to trust God and wrestle in prayer for our fellow Christian. Call on Him today, asking God to help each of us to remember how God has worked in the past lives of men and women who trusted Him with their lives, their hopes, and their futures.

QUESTIONS

How does your prayer life reflect what you believe about prayer?
How does Epaphras’ example encourage or challenge you in prayer?

PRAYERS FOR OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

Gift-filled shoeboxes through Operation Christmas Child provide a unique way for churches to connect to unbelievers. Millions of the boys and girls who receive them are also invited to participate in The Greatest Journey discipleship course, where they learn to faithfully follow Christ and share Him with others. Pray for these children to accept this invitation.

FRIDAY

Colossians 4:17

“Tell Archippus: ‘See to it that you complete the work you have received in the Lord.’” (Colossians 4:17)

Paul had encouragement for a man named Archippus: “See to it that you complete the work you received in the Lord.” We do not know what work God assigned to the man. What we can discern is that he was probably discouraged. Maybe he felt like giving up.

Since the church had been infiltrated by false teachers and a cult, many of the members were probably discouraged, and some even left. Obviously, this Archippus had a prominent role, and maybe he was one of the pastors or elders. Paul encourages this man in the ministry God had given him.

Every church and every ministry are filled with ups and downs and discouragements. Gospel-centered relationships are not guaranteed to be without problems because we still struggle with our sin nature. Moses, at times, prayed for God to take him home. He did not want to live anymore (Numbers 11:1-15). Job said it would have been better if he were never born (Job 3:1). Elijah, after a great victory, became discouraged. He felt lonely; he told the Lord that he was the only prophet left. He also prayed that his life would be taken (1 Kings 19:4). Even greater than these men of faith, we see Christ who was weary unto death (Matthew 26:38).

We too need encouragement in these tough times! We need godly Christians who pray for us, who are speaking words of encouragement into our lives, and who challenge us to keep going in the callings God has given us. Our church leaders today especially need words of encouragement and prayer as they navigate the difficulties of our current culture of global pandemic, racism, politics, and anxiety. Jesus said to His troubled disciples (you and me), *“In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world”* (John 16:33).

QUESTIONS

How are you encouraging your fellow Christians in their calling and ministry? How are you encouraging those who serve and lead in your church?

PRAYERS FOR OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

Operation Christmas Child encourages supporters to pack more Operation Christmas Child gift-filled shoeboxes than ever before as the global pandemic is creating greater opportunities to share the gospel with children around the world. Pray that the church can meet this goal at a time in which the world needs it most.



Glenkirk Church | 1700 Palopinto Ave. Glendora, CA 91741 | 626.914.4833
www.glenkirkchurch.org |  @GlenkirkChurch |  Facebook: GlenkirkChurch