

Epaphras... a Model Intercessor!

Text: Colossians 4:12,13

Introduction

- It is striking that only two representatives of the churches came to see Paul during his first imprisonment in Rome.
- Epaphras came from Colosse, and Epaphroditus came from Philippi.
- Both were outstanding men, much used of God, and held in high esteem by Paul. God gives them honor for their sacrificial service.

I. EPAPHRAS... THE MAN:

1. A native of Colosse, called a *servant of Christ, a faithful minister of Christ... our dear fellow servant.* (4:12; 1:7)
2. He was the founder of the church in Colosse (Col. 1:7-8), led to Christ through Paul's ministry in Ephesus and had returned home to share the good news of salvation.
3. It seems likely that he also founded churches in Laodicea and Hierapolis. (vs 13)
4. Epistle to Colossians was written while he was with Paul.

II. EPAPHRAS . . . THE PRAYER WARRIOR:

1. Now a fellowship prisoner; Paul would have known of his prayer life as he was in voluntary confinement in order to be with Paul.
2. Here was a man of zeal, concern, and burden.
3. He prayed **constantly** -- **always** -- Cf. Col. 4:2; Did not pray because he was told to pray, or when others prayed, but he must have lived a life of prayer.
4. He prayed **fervently** - **laboring**, *fervently, the word is the same as agonizing... used of Christ in the garden (Lk 22:44)* This was serious business with Epaphras! He must have prayed the way athletes give themselves. . . with total abandonment. Do we put as much concern and effort into our praying as the effort we would put in a baseball game. etc ?
5. He **prayed personally** (vs 12... *for you*) He did not pray around the world, in general, and for nobody in particular... he centered his intercession toward the saints of Colosse, Laodicea, and Hierapolis. This was not some impersonal exercise of some general praying for effect to the minds of the hearers.
6. He **prayed definitely** (vs 12) *you might stand perfect, complete, in all the will of God."*

III. EPAPHRAS... THE BURDENED ONE:

- The will of God is paramount for to be in the center of the will of God is what He desires. What God chooses, His plans, His preference for us is to be our desire!
- WE must be obedient souls -- liked unto planets -- that move about the sun in orbit of obedience; whereas disobedient souls are like *wandering stars... refuse to be in orbit of God's will, wander in the blackness, and darkness.*
 1. **Know the will of God** -- Satan's desire is that we be self-willed, rebellious, yes, we must have our wills conquered.
 2. **Stand in the Will of God** -- Not just get in; but stand therein, a place of restfulness, fruitfulness, and victory. Satan desires to keep us dislodged from this place of God's divine will for us. We will be tested and tried to see if we will stand.
 3. **Stand perfect in the will of God** -- We must want it, love it, seek it, desire it, choose it... live life in the heart of it regardless of hardship or perplexity.
 4. **Stand complete in the will of God** -- God's will for us is that we become fully assured in His plan for us, filled with delight in that will, and walking full gale in His will.

OR it will become

- a) **antagonism** toward --
- b) **reluctantly submissive** to
- c) **acquiescence**, out of duty,
- d) **or a delight in**, Heb. 10:5-10

Christ example is seen both in prayer life and yieldedness!