Colossians 4

A Short Summary of The Epistle to The Colossians — Chapter 4

A. P. Cecil

Chapter 4

Lords were to give to their servants what was just and equal, for they had a Lord in heaven. Towards those without in the world, they were to walk in wisdom, redeeming the time. Their speech always with grace, seasoned with salt, so as to know how to answer every man. Different servants of the Lord are mentioned at the end. There are commendations to each, with the exception of Demas, who afterwards forsook Paul. If it is Tychicus, he is a beloved brother, and a faithful minister and fellow-servant. If it is Onesimus, he is a faithful and beloved brother. Aristarchus is his fellow-prisoner. Marcus, related to Barnabas, was to be received. 38 Jesus, called Justus, was also mentioned. All these had been a comfort to Paul. Then there was a valuable saint like Epaphras, who labored much for them in prayer that they might stand perfect and complete in the will of God. The epistle was to be read in Laodicea, and a warning given to Archippus there to take heed of the ministry which he had received of the Lord that he might fulfil it. A salutary word both to the assembly and the messenger, which they would have done well to have heeded. Laodicea (see Rev. 3:14), as not holding the Head, was finally to be spued out of Christ's mouth. Much they had to boast of, but alas! there was want of heart to Christ. This Epistle, then, is an address both to the Colossian and Laodicean Church. It is addressed to them as having heard of their faith in Christ Jesus, and their love to all the saints. It was written that they might stand perfect and complete in all the will of God which is developed first as to their hope, then as their relationship with the Father and Son, and their meetness for heaven and perfect standing in the heavenly kingdom of the Son, then as to the double glory of the Son, and as His being the full manifestation of God in His fulness, then as to the future purpose of God for the reconciliation of all things, and the present reconciliation and administration of the Church, Paul having a double ministry connected with each. He labored that the saints might come to the full assurance of understanding to the full knowledge of this mystery. If the Laodicean saints had listened to this word, we should not have had the sad word addressed to them in Rev. 3, from Him who was the Amen,

38. Cp. Acts 12:25; 13:13; 15:37-39. Godhead was revealed bodily, they would have held the Head in sensible weakness, instead of being lukewarm and indifferent to Him. Oh, may the Lord use the study of this Epistle as the antidote to Laodicean lukewarmness, and use it to save the saints from the seducing influences of this world! On the one side there is the Gentile philosophy and rationalism of the day, which has had its result in the rival sects (see 1 Cor. 1), on the other side there is the danger from Judaism (see Galatians and Hebrews). The truth is in the Person of the Christ, in whom dwells the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and who is Head over all things; Head of His body, and the saints are complete in Him. The saints are responsible to stand together in conscious union with Him, holding the Head!