TALKING POINTS

Uniting Heaven and Earth:
Christ in Philippians & Colossians
Q1L13: "Standing in All the Will of God"

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MEMORY VERSE: "In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." 1 Thessalonians 5:18, NKJV

LESSON STUDY INTRO

This lesson extracts practical lessons for ministry from the closing verses of Paul's letter to the Colossians.

1. People are the best investment in ministry (Sab, Sun, Mon)

- Like Jesus, Paul ministered to *and through* people.
    - In the closing twelve verses of Colossians, Paul highlights Tychicus, Onesimus, Aristarchus, Mark, Justus, Epaphras, Luke, Demas, Nymphas, and Archippus.
        - "Through personal visits during his travels and, especially as a prisoner, through his epistles, Paul was constantly linking people and churches. He recognized that the success of the gospel mission depended upon everyone working together." Qtly, Sab, par 3

> When one soul is soundly converted, he is the one particle of leaven introduced into the mass… The consistent example of one truly converted soul no human being can estimate. There is a moral power from God by which the lowest subject, if properly instructed, will become an instrument of righteousness. 2SAT 22

- In our churches today, we should invest most in teaching, training, and deploying people for soul-winning service.

> Just as soon as a church is organized, let the minister set the members at work. They will need to be taught how to labor successfully. Let the minister devote more of his time to educating than to preaching. CCh 69.1

> In laboring where there are already some in the faith, the minister should at first seek not so much to convert unbelievers, as to train the church members for acceptable co-operation… When they are prepared to sustain the minister by their prayers and labors, greater success will attend his efforts. ChS 70.1

2. The church is always at risk of becoming Laodicean (Tue, Thu, Fri)

- The church of Laodicea was planted around the same time as Colossae, likely by Epaphras (see Qtly, Tue, par 2).
    - By the time Revelation was written, the church of Laodicea was "lukewarm" (see Rev. 3:14-19).

- Paul's letter to the Laodiceans was written several decades (around 61AD) before Christ's message to them in the book of Revelation (around 95AD).
    - "Looking at the history of God's people through the ages, the same problems occur again and again." Qtly, Thu, par 1

- Nevertheless, God will finally be victorious through His people. (Is. 60:1-3; Is. 62:1-5; Rev. 18:1; Rev. 19:6-8).

3. We become tomorrow what we choose today (Mon, Wed)

- Mark and Demas serve as examples that we grow—for better or worse—according to our choices.
    - Mark
        - Mark is first introduced when he joined Paul and Barnabas in Acts 12:25.
        - Mark later abandoned the mission for a time which led to a division between Paul and Barnabas. (Acts 15:37-40)
        - Yet, by the time Paul wrote Colossians, Mark was with him again as a "fellow worker for the kingdom of God" having "proved to be a comfort to me." (Col. 4:10, 11)
        - A few years later he instructed Timothy to "Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministry." (2 Tim. 4:11)
    - Demas
        - Paul affirms Demas as one of "my fellow laborers" with Mark, Aristarchus, and Luke. (Philemon 1:24; see also Col. 4:14)
        - Yet, in the same letter to Timothy where Paul called for Mark, he laments how "Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world." (2 Tim. 4:10)

CONCLUSION

We must inevitably be under the control of the one or the other of the two great powers that are contending for the supremacy of the world. It is not necessary for us deliberately to choose the service of the kingdom of darkness in order to come under its dominion. We have only to neglect to ally ourselves with the kingdom of light. If we do not co-operate with the heavenly agencies, Satan will take possession of the heart, and will make it his abiding place. The only defense against evil is the indwelling of Christ in the heart through faith in His righteousness. DA 324 (Qtly, Fri, par 1)