

faith in Christ. Some are in Communist countries; others are in Muslin countries; others are in countries where Christianity is not an accepted religion.

- 4) There is a sense that some missionaries endure a form of persecution. They are isolated from family and friends. They are exposed to sickness and disease. The people around them are often threatening and violent.

**b. Persecuted Christians need our care.**

- 1) Paul commanded that they remember his bonds. The word “*remember*” means to call to mind, to think of and feel for a person, or to make mention of.
- 2) One of the ways we can do this is to pray for them. It is easy to forget to pray for those who are enduring difficult times, but this we MUST do. (Hebrews 13:3) “*Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.*”
- 3) Another way to remember them is to write to them. Our missionaries have email. It is not difficult or costly to write to them. When you write, be sure to tell them who you are and where you go to church. Tell them news about our church. Tell them about your family. Mention their specific requests that you have been praying for. This will encourage them. DO NOT send large attachments if you are not sure they have cheap and fast Internet.

**Conclusion:** In the closing verses of this book, God has given us three oft neglected duties. 1) We must read God’s Word. 2) We must encourage our pastor. 3) We must pray for the persecuted. Have you been neglecting one or more of these duties? If so, you need to ask God to forgive you and take steps to change. Let’s not be guilty of neglecting what God has given us to do.

**Song:** His Way with Thee - 367

# Oft Neglected Duties

30 April 2017 PM – Colossians 4:16-18 – Series – Scott Childs

**Introduction:** If you are like me, you have many jobs around the house that you know need done, but you neglect to do them. Often my neglect is not that I am trying to be bad but it is that I forget or I place other things ahead of those jobs.

If we are not careful the same thing will happen in our spiritual lives. Duties will get neglected that we know need to be done. This evening I want to motivate us to do those oft neglected duties.

**Transition:** As Paul closed the letter to the Colossian church, he noted three oft neglected duties that they (and we) must not neglect.

## 1. Read the Word of God (v.16)

### a. The Bible is precious

- 1) In the first century, copies of the scriptures were produced with great difficulty. Paper was course and expensive. Copying the text must be done by hand.
- 2) The average Christian did not have his own copy of even one book of the Bible. Instead, the Bible was to be read in the public church meetings. Christians listened eagerly to the scripture readings. They memorized large portions of it. They studied it with a passion. The Bible was very precious to those early Christians.
- 3) Today we live in a privileged age. Each of us owns one or more copies of the entire Bible. It is available in Bible study software where we can easily search it, compare verses, view meanings of original words, read commentary explanations, and print it. We can even read it on a phone app. Recordings of the Bible are readily available for listening. Though we are privileged people we must not forget that the Bible is precious.

### b. The Bible must be read to be of help

- 1) Paul assumed that the Colossian church leaders would read this epistle to the congregation.
- 2) Paul also commanded them to share it with the church at Laodicea. He also wrote a letter to the Laodicean church

which was not accepted as scripture that he wanted them to read.

- 3) The Bible is God's mind concerning everything we need to know. To read it is a privilege and a duty!
- 4) Yet with all these great privileges, many Christians neglect the Bible. Oh, they may know some Bible facts, but they know little of the Bible itself because they do not passionately read and study it. We need THIS Book!
- 5) **"My Old Bible"** —Author unknown
  - Though the cover is worn,  
And the pages are torn,  
And though places bear traces of tears,  
Yet more precious than gold  
Is this Book worn and old,  
That can shatter and scatter my fears.
  - This old Book is my guide,  
'Tis a friend by my side,  
It will lighten and brighten my way;  
And each promise I find  
Soothes and gladdens the mind,  
As I read it and heed it each day.
  - To this Book I will cling,  
Of its worth I will sing,  
Though great losses and crosses be mine;  
For I cannot despair,  
Though surrounded by care,  
While possessing this blessing Divine.

## 2. Encourage your Pastor (v.17)

### a. Pastors have great responsibilities.

- 1) Archippus is only mentioned here and in Philemon 1:2 where Paul calls him a fellow soldier. Many believe that he was a pastor of the Colossian church.
- 2) Paul tells us that Archippus had received his ministry from the Lord. God had called him to the work, yet preachers are humans. They can get discouraged. When the work gets difficult, when people oppose, when attendance is down, when Christians do not appear to be growing, preachers need to remember that God called them to the work.
- 3) His ministry needed to be *fulfilled*. The word here means

to fill up, to furnish liberally, to make to abound or to complete. The pastor does this by constantly preaching the word, defending truth, detecting error, reproofing vice, visiting the sick, and comforting the feeble minded. <sup>Gill</sup>

- 4) In Peter's first letter, God tells preachers to: (1 Peter 5:2-3) "*Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.*"

### b. Archippus, their pastor needed encouraged.

- 1) The congregation was to encourage him to *take heed* to that ministry. In other words, they were to encourage him to stay focussed. He must keep his focus on the Lord and not on frustrating circumstances. He must keep preaching the Word! In another letter Paul wrote, "*And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves.*" (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13)
- 2) How can Christians encourage their pastor?
  - a) Fervently pray for him daily.
  - b) Let him know when a sermon speaks to your heart.
  - c) Apply what he preaches to your life so that he can see spiritual growth in your life.
  - d) Share encouraging verses with him that you find in your personal Bible study.
  - e) Spend time with him as a friend.
  - f) Get involved and help him in the ministry.
  - g) Stand with him when oppositions arise.

## 3. Pray for the Persecuted (v.18)

### a. Paul was writing from prison.

- 1) He was in bonds because of his preaching.
- 2) Paul did not enjoy being in prison any more than you or I would enjoy it. It was a burden. It was unpleasant. It was lonely.
- 3) There are Christians today who are persecuted for their