Finishing Strong
Colossians 4:17
November 8, 2026

Colossians 4:17 – *And say to Archippus: "See that you fulfill the ministry that you have received in the Lord."*

Introduction

"I know of nothing which I would choose to have as the subject of my ambition for life than to be kept faithful to my God till death." — C. H. Spurgeon

A simple question – "What should I do next?" **A simple answer** – "Keep going. Finish your race."

- ✓ ***Summary Idea:*** What gives you confidence that your life will be _____…that you will be like the 2 faithful spies and not the 10 faithless ones from *Num. 13*?

Who Was Archippus?

I. From *Phm. 1:1-2* we can gather at least **three** observations about Archippus.

a. He is very likely to be a part of the _____ of Philemon and Apphia, possibly Philemon's son (see *Phm 1:16* and *Col. 4:7-9*).

b. There is a house church that meets in Philemon's home.

c. He is called a "fellow _____" of Paul and Timothy.
   1. *systratiōtēs* → combines the term "soldier" with the prefix for "with, besides, or accompany." Paul uses this to describe an associate in labors and conflicts for the cause of Christ.

II. From *Col. 4:17* we can gather at least **three more** observations about Archippus.

a. Archippus had a ministry (*diakonia*)…a _____ role to proclaim and promote Yahweh among men whether through speech or through action (see also *I Pet. 4:10*)

b. Archippus had a ministry that he _____ from the Lord

c. Archippus had a ministry that was yet to be _____. It was incomplete.

- ✓ ***Summary Idea:*** Archippus was a man of faith, with a position of responsibility in the Colossian church, and Paul is calling him to fulfill the ministry that the Lord has entrusted to him.

Why Did the Faithful Service of Archippus Really Matter?

I. Firstly, the sovereign rule of God over all things is _____ (*Psa. 103:19*).

II. The obedience of Archippus will certainly be to his earthly advantage and his heavenly reward (*Col. 3:17*).

III. But Colossae also needed faithful men whose light was shining forth so that Christ would be proclaimed into the _____ of that place. (*Mat. 5:14-16*)

- ✓ ***Summary Idea:*** Like all men, the obedience of Archippus was of utmost importance for his own well-being, for the flourishing of those around him, and for the glory of God's holiness made evident through his image bearers.

What About Us?

I. Like Archippus, we are…

✓ ***Summary Idea:*** Paul's exhortation to you today is the same as it was for Archippus. Do not lose _____! Continue to _____! Despite the costs and the trials, entrust your days to him and finish the race that he has set before you (*Phi. 2:17*)!

Finding Our Way Toward Fulfillment

I. Ministry is entrusted from God, not self-chosen. Do not seek to _____ what is a stewardship.

a. *2 Tim. 2:4* – *No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please* ***the one who enlisted him.***

II. Faithful stewardship involves completion in God's eyes. Do not _____ what God has assigned.

a. *2 Tim. 4:5* – *But as for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist,* ***fulfill*** *your ministry.*

b. *Act. 20:24* – *But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may* ***finish*** *my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.*

III. Ministry offers accountability and corporate oversight. Do not resist _____ God has designed.

a. *Gal. 6:5* – *For each will have to bear his own load.*

b. *Rom. 14:12* – *So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God,*

IV. Ministry can be shipwrecked by our immorality. Do not be caught _____ of the devil's schemes.

a. **STAY** _____ the Scriptures (*Psa. 119:9, 11*)

b. **STAY** _____ to the saints (*Heb. 10:24-25*)

c. **STAY** _____ from compromise (*Jam. 4:4*)

d. **STAY** _____ to the enemy's schemes (*I Pet. 5:8-9*)

V. God-given ministry includes God-given enablement. Do not be _____ about the Lord's provision.

a. *2 Pet. 1:3* – *His divine power has granted to us* ***all things*** *that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence,*

Questions for Reflection:

I. What specific responsibilities has God entrusted to you in your relationship with Christ, your family, your church, and other people you influence? Are you faithfully fulfilling them?

II. How are your spiritual habits and patterns today either drawing you toward or withholding you from the fulfillment of the ministries that the Lord has entrusted to you. Which of the four "STAY" disciplines most needs your attention this week so that this week is NOT the week that of your ministry shipwreck?

Conclusion:

I. A legacy of faith is not built overnight. But through steadfastly walking before God in humility and obedience, he can do in you what he has done in the saints before us…to link your life into the centuries-long chain of everyday faithfulness that builds his church and accomplishes his will (*2 Tim. 1:5*)

II. The Riverwood Bible Church Elder board does not want to enroll you into mere busy-ness here at church or in your lives outside of this church. We exhort you to finish your race as Paul did (*2 Tim. 4:7*) with your eyes upon the same Person who called you at the beginning: Jesus Christ (*Phi. 1:6*).