

On his return he was the bearer of a letter from S. Paul, interceding for him with Philemon. This letter has been preserved, and has found a place in the canon of the New Testament. In it S. Paul sends salutations not only to Philemon himself, but to a lady named Apphia, and to one Archippus, whom he speaks of as his "fellow-soldier." Apphia would appear almost certainly to have been the wife of Philemon, and it would seem most natural to suppose that Archippus was his son. At about the same time with this letter to an individual Christian in Colossae, S. Paul addressed another letter to the Church in that place. In this epistle to the Colossians we find Archippus mentioned again. From the mention here it would look as if Archippus were actually residing in Laodicea, which was within walking distance of Colossae. "When this epistle is read among you," writes S. Paul, "cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea. And say to Archippus take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord that those fulfil it."

This mention of the ministry which Archippus had received in the Lord leads Abp. Trench to infer that possibly Archippus was the "Angel of the church of the Laodiceans." The difference between the date of the epistle to the colossians and the date of the Apocalypse cannot be at the outside more than 33 or 34 years, so that as far as chronology is concerned there is no doubt that it may be so. And Trench quotes a passage from the *Apostolic Constitutions* in which Archippus is actually named as the first bishop of Laodicea. It is interesting to note that if Archippus was really the son of Philemon he was probably a man of private means; at any rate he was more or less accustomed to the companionship of men of wealth.

There evidently must have been a constant communication kept up between the Church in Laodicea and the Church in Colossae. S. Paul requests that his epistle to the Colossians should be read also in the church of the Laodiceans, and he desires that the Colossians should likewise read an "epistle from Laodicea." This "epistle from Laodicea" must either be some letter of S. Paul's which has been lost, or else, as Bp. Lightfoot supposes, the epistle to the Ephesians, a copy of which may have been forwarded to Laodicea. Then again S. Paul sends his message to Archippus in his epistle to the Church in Colossae; and salutations in general to "the brethren which are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the church which is in his house."