

Life Messages (Part One)

Dr. Jim Cecy

Introduction:

Colossians 4:7 ff = “Paul’s Group Photograph”

Colossians 4:7-18 “As to all my affairs, Tychicus, *our* beloved brother and faithful servant and fellow bond-servant in the Lord, will bring you information. *For* I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know about our circumstances and that he may encourage your hearts; and with him Onesimus, *our* faithful and beloved brother, who is one of your *number*. They will inform you about the whole situation here. Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, sends you his greetings; and *also* Barnabas’s cousin Mark (about whom you received instructions; if he comes to you, welcome him); and *also* Jesus who is called Justus; these are the only fellow workers for the kingdom of God who are from the circumcision, and they have proved to be an encouragement to me. Epaphras, who is one of your number, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, sends you his greetings, always laboring earnestly for you in his prayers, that you may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God. *For* I testify for him that he has a deep concern for you and for those who are in Laodicea and Hierapolis. Luke, the beloved physician, sends you his greetings, and *also* Demas. Greet the brethren who are in Laodicea and also Nympha and the church that is in her house. When this letter is read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans; and you, for your part read my letter *that is coming* from Laodicea. Say to Archippus, “Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it.” I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. Remember my imprisonment. Grace be with you.”

I. Paul’s Faithful Couriers (Colossians 4:7-9)

A. Tychicus

Colossians 4:7-8 “As to all my affairs, Tychicus, *our* beloved brother and faithful servant and fellow bond-servant in the Lord, will bring you information. *For* I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know about our circumstances and that he may encourage your hearts;...” (cf. Acts 20:4; 1 Cor. 16:1-9; Titus 3:12; 2 Tim. 4:12)

Tychicus: The Faithful Brother with the Servant’s Heart

- Responsibility #1. Tychicus was to protect and carry Paul’s letters. (cf. Eph. 6:21-22; Col. 4:9)
- Responsibility #2. Tychicus was to present an accurate report concerning the Apostle Paul.
- Responsibility #3. Tychicus was to encourage the hearts of his fellow believers.

B. Onesimus

Colossians 4:9 “...and with him Onesimus, our faithful and beloved brother, who is one of your number. They will inform you about the whole situation here.”

Philemon 1:10-18 “I appeal to you for my child Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my imprisonment, who formerly was useless to you, but now is useful both to you and to me. I have sent him back to you in person, that is, *sending* my very heart, whom I wished to keep with me, so that on your behalf he might minister to me in my imprisonment for the gospel; but without your consent I did not want to do anything, so that your goodness would not be, in effect, by compulsion but of your own free will. For perhaps he was for this reason separated *from you* for a while, that you would have him back forever, no longer as a slave, but more than a slave, a beloved brother, especially to me, but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord. If then you regard me a partner, accept him as *you would* me. But if he has wronged you in any way or owes you anything, charge that to my account...”

Onesimus: The Beloved Brother Freed by the Grace of God

“I am writing to you, little children, because your sins have been forgiven you for His name’s sake.” 1 John 2:12

II. Paul’s Friendly Greetings (Colossians 4:10-14)

A. From His Three Hebrew Companions (Colossians 4:10-11)

Colossians 4:11b “...fellow workers for the kingdom of God who are from the circumcision...”

1. Aristarchus

Colossians 4:10 “Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, sends you his greetings...” cf. Acts 19:29; 20:4; 27:2

Aristarchus: The Fellow Prisoner of the Lord

2. Mark (aka: John Mark)

Col. 4:10 “...and also Barnabas’ cousin Mark (about whom you received instructions: if he comes to you, welcome him)...”

Mark deserted Paul (Acts 12:25; 15:36-39) but things changed...

“Pick up Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for service.” (2 Tim. 4:11)

Mark: The Man Given a Second Chance

“...when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.” (Luke 22:32)

3. Jesus (aka: Justus)

Colossians 4:11a “...and also Jesus who is called Justus...”

Colossians 4:11b “...these are the only fellow workers for the kingdom of God who are from the circumcision; and they have proved to be an encouragement to me.”

Justus: The Relief Worker

encouragement = Greek: paregoria = deep comfort

Proverbs 18:24 “A man of *too many* friends *comes* to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.”

B. From His Three Gentile Companions (Colossians 4:12-14)

1. Epaphras

Colossians 4:12-13 “Epaphras, who is one of your number, a bonds slave of Jesus Christ, sends you his greetings, always laboring earnestly for you in his prayers, that you may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God. For I testify for him that he has a deep concern for you and for those who are in Laodicea and Hierapolis.”

Colossians 1:7 “...our beloved fellow bond-servant, who is a faithful servant of Christ on our behalf...”

Epaphras: The Prayer Warrior

Colossians 4:12 “...always laboring earnestly (Greek agonizomai) for you in his prayers, that you may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God.”

cf. Col. 1:29...engaging in agonizing labor to see the Colossians become mature in Christ.

2. Luke

Colossians 4:14 “Luke, the beloved physician, sends you his greetings...”

Luke chose to minister TO Paul and WITH Paul....as a physician and capable helper. (cf. 2 Cor. 11:25-28)

Dr. Luke: The Beloved Physician and Willing Servant

3. Demas

Colossians 4:14 “...and also Demas.” (cf. Philemon 24)

2 Tim. 4:10 “Demas, having loved this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica.”

Demas: The Spiritual Deserter

Conclusion to Part One

“Oh may all who come behind us find us faithful.”

Prayer Requests:



Growth Group Homework

For the week of February 3, 2013

SERMON SERIES: COLOSSIANS

Message Title: "Life Messages (Part One)"

Dr. Jim Cecy

February 3, 20123

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

1. In the sermon this week we saw that people played a major role in the ministry of the Apostle Paul. Describe some of the people who have contributed significantly to your life and service to the Lord.

2. It is clear from the people mentioned in Colossians 4:7ff that the ways in which ministry occurs are as diverse as the gifts of those who serve.
 - How would you describe the mix of gifts, talents and abilities you have been given?

 - In what ways are you using those abilities to serve Christ's Kingdom?

 - In what ways might you be able to serve Christ differently in the future?

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DIGGING DEEPER

3. According to the sermon, what three ways did Tychicus display faithfulness? Can you think of a single term which could encompass all of these aspects of his faithfulness?

4. Onesimus is described as “freed by the grace of God”. In what ways (personal and in society) do people need freedom in the 21st century?

5. Choose one of the following: Aritarchus, Mark, Justus, Epaphras or Luke, and tell why you feel drawn to their story. In what ways are you different from this companion of Paul’s? In what ways might you be similar?

6. Sadly, there are those who seem to begin well in serving Christ, but drop out later for one reason or another. What can cause this to happen? How might it be prevented?

TAKING IT HOME

7. On a scale of 1 – 5 (1 = not faithful; 5 = very faithful) how would you describe your service to Christ?

8. As you reflect on this week’s sermon, is there a single issue that stands out as being the most helpful, insightful, or thought-provoking to you?