



THE
SUPERIOR WORD
COMMUNITY FELLOWSHIP

COLOSSIANS

(For access to all available commentaries and written sermons of Charlie's click [HERE](#))

Tychicus, a beloved brother, faithful minister, and fellow servant in the Lord, will tell you all the news about me. Colossians 4:7

This and the next verse are almost an exact repeat of Ephesians 6:21, 22. Tychicus would have been sent out with Paul's letter(s) of instruction, and he would have carried along other information about how he was and what he was up to. This Tychicus is mentioned several times in the New Testament. He is found in Acts 20:4. There he is described as being a person "of Asia." He was also accompanying Paul from Corinth to Asia. He is mentioned in Ephesians 6:21, 2 Timothy 4:12, and in Titus 3:12 as well.

In this letter, he is called "a beloved brother, faithful minister, and fellow servant in the Lord." The word used for "minister" is *diakonos*. This is the source of our word "deacon," and it comes from two separate words – *dia*, meaning "through," and *konis*, meaning "dust." Therefore, it is someone who scurries through the dust, and is thus a servant or a minister. In this verse, he is doing exactly what the name implies. He is traveling with the message through the dusty streets of cities for the benefit of the saints. This term is probably not being applied to him in the technical sense of a "deacon," but rather it points to the duties which he is carrying out. He is ministering to Paul as a friend, a brother, a faithful minister, and a fellow servant.

It is this hardy soul who was with Paul in such a close relationship who "will tell you all the news about me." Not only would he bring the beautiful epistle in his hands, but he would also tell all about how Paul was doing. He would also answer any further questions that would come about concerning Paul and his ministry.

Life application: How willing are you to relay the good news concerning the gospel to others? Tychicus was willing to travel by land and sea in order to get the news out to those who were hungry to hear it. Are you at least willing to share it in the circles you travel? Do the people at the restaurant you frequent even know that you are a Christian? Do the people you work with know this? Get the news out!

ἐν ᾧ ἔχομεν τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν διὰ τοῦ αἵματος αὐτοῦ, τὴν ἄφεσιν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν·

I am sending him to you for this very purpose, that he may know your circumstances and comfort your hearts, Colossians 4:8

The word “him” is speaking of Tychicus of the previous verse. The words, “for this very purpose,” relate to what Paul just said to them in that verse. It is he who “will tell you all the news about me.” He then reexplains this in fuller detail with the words, “that he may know your circumstances and comfort your hearts.” He had sent Tychicus to Colossae with his epistle, entrusting him to fill in all of the information about him which was unstated in the letter, and certainly also to determine their condition in the Lord.

In so doing, and in answering any questions they had about Paul and his associates, he says that he would be able to “comfort your hearts.” Tychicus was obviously faithful in his ability to recount anything that Paul passed on to him. If there was a personal greeting, he would relay it. If there was a note of commendation, he would relay it. If someone needed correction, Tychicus was competent and faithful to ensure it was passed on. For the most part though, the duties of Tychicus were to relate how Paul and those with him were faring.

They certainly would want to know how he was getting along while in prison. They would want to know about his care, any visitors, how he was treated, and so on. With this knowledge, their hearts would be comforted. It appears that Tychicus was eminently suited to this task, because it was he who performed the same mission to Ephesus as is recorded in that epistle. Paul’s use of him in this manner is a confirmation of complete confidence in him. It stands as a personal commission concerning him.

Life application: It is always good to know that a person can be completely trusted. Is this how others see us? Are we willing to conduct our lives with such high integrity that we can be relied upon with even the most sensitive or personal material? Let us endeavor to be such people at all times.

...with Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, who is *one* of you. They will make known to you all things which *are happening* here. Colossians 4:9

Onesimus is the runaway slave for whom Paul makes a passionate appeal in the book of Philemon. Here, he is called “the faithful and beloved brother.” There is a definite article in front of faithful, and so it says “the” not “a.” Paul is carefully highlighting the high status of Philemon, who was once a slave on the run. He then says, “who is *one* of you.” This is more than probably a reference to his being from Colossae.

In the words selected, and with the emphasis on “faithful and beloved,” Paul is showing that this former slave is on an equal level with them in Christ, and that they should acknowledge him as such. Paul’s true love and concern for Onesimus is seen in this short verse, but it will

ἐν ᾧ ἔχομεν τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν διὰ τοῦ αἵματος αὐτοῦ, τὴν ἄφεσιν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν·

literally pour out of him in his letter to Philemon. He had become a believer in Christ under Paul, and it was Paul's highest desire for him to be treated as a fellow brother in Christ because of this.

Together with Tychicus, these two men would "make known to you all things which *are happening* to me." These words signify everything that was of note concerning Paul and his interactions with the church there in Rome. The letter was for guidance, exhortation, and knowledge, being a prescriptive writing for those at Colossae (and eventually as an epistle for the entire church). On the other hand, the things that would be conveyed by these men would consist of matters not necessary for doctrine and teaching.

Life application: The person at church who works as a garbage man all week is to be considered as being on the same level as the millionaire who runs a large company, or the congressman who attends when he is in town. It is really not appropriate to exalt others over one another because of their position in life. Instead, those who are faithful to the word, who are productive in the church, and who give themselves for Christ are the truly exalted ones among their brethren.

Aristarchus my fellow prisoner greets you, with Mark the cousin of Barnabas (about whom you received instructions: if he comes to you, welcome him), Colossians 4:10

Aristarchus is a fellow Jew who is listed three times in Acts (19:29, 20:4, and 27:2). He is mentioned one more time in Philemon. Though a Jew, he was a Macedonian from Thessalonica as well (just as Paul was from Tarsus of Cilicia). Curiously, he is called "my fellow prisoner" here, but in Philemon, he is called "my fellow laborer." At the same time, Epaphras is called "my fellow prisoner" in Philemon.

There is much speculation about this, such as that they chose to be voluntarily imprisoned with Paul at times in order to help him. This is not impossible to suppose as Paul had an affliction which seems to have required much help (many believe it to be poor eyesight). However, what is just as possible is that terms such as "fellow prisoner," "fellow servant," and "fellow laborer" apply to both of them during each instance (all being equally true), but Paul chose to focus on one term or the other for each individual for his own reasons. Whatever the case, Aristarchus is, at this time, a fellow prisoner with Paul. In this capacity, he sends his greetings to those at Colossae.

Along with him is "Mark, the cousin of Barnabas." He is also a Jew. This would be John Mark who went along with Paul and Barnabas on their missionary journey, but who left that task before it was finished. Because of this, on the next missionary journey, there was a sharp disagreement between Paul and Barnabas. Barnabas wanted to bring Mark along again. The

ἐν ᾧ ἔχομεν τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν διὰ τοῦ αἵματος αὐτοῦ, τὴν ἄφεσιν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν·

disagreement was so severe that they split apart, each going their own way. Barnabas took Mark and Paul took Silas, and off they went in different directions.

Now, this long time later, it is noted that Paul has received Mark with an open hand once again. What appears to be the case is that at some point Paul had mentioned the strife between himself and Mark to those at Colossae, and he had given instructions that the rift was mended between them. This seems evident from the words “about whom you received instructions.” In telling them about Mark in a favorable manner, he now implores them that “if he comes to you, welcome him.” The old wounds were healed and Paul wanted those at Colossae to be sure to treat him with a warm welcome.

This Mark, also known as John Mark, is noted in 1 Peter 5:13. There Peter calls him “Mark my son.” This is then the same Mark who wrote the Gospel of Mark, and who according to extra-biblical tradition became both the bishop at Alexandria, and who was martyred there.

At the ending of Paul’s years, during the writing of 2 Timothy, Paul writes, “Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministry.” The old wounds had healed, and Paul saw great value in Mark’s assistance in his ministry which he had once, long ago, abandoned. Paul had forgiven, and Mark had grown up. Together towards Paul’s end, they were a united force in the work of sharing the gospel to the world.

Life application: Forgiving old offenses can be a difficult thing to do, but it is also the right thing to do when there is a uniting in repentance and a willingness to move forward in a new direction. If this is the case, then let the past go, and strive to make a new start with the one you either offended or were offended by. Life is short, and eternity is forever. Which will you direct your actions towards? Look to the long term, be forgiving when it is right and proper, and do great things for the Lord in a united way when it is possible.