

Tychicus: A Faithful Servant in the LORD (Titus 3:12)

Tychicus is mentioned five times in Scripture (Acts 20:4; Ephesians 6:21; Colossians 4:7; Titus 3:12; 2 Timothy 4:12)

1. Tychicus counted the cost of following Christ (Acts 20:4)

Paul is nearing the end of his 3rd missionary journey and planned to return to Jerusalem through Macedonia. Paul had collected a love offering from several of the Gentile-Christian churches in Greece, Asia Minor, and parts of the Roman Empire to be distributed to Jewish Christians in Jerusalem (1 Corinthians 16:1-9).

Tychicus is one of seven men who met Paul as he went through Macedonia (Acts 20:4). Tychicus, as well as the other 7 men (including Luke) were all Gentiles. Tychicus, as a Gentile, knew that there would be intense cultural tension as he made his way into Jerusalem. Tychicus may have been a representative from a Gentile church in Colossi or Ephesus.

Tychicus committed in following Paul to Jerusalem, but experienced “unplanned” events:

- The Plot to Kill Paul (Acts 20:3)
 - The Jews in Macedonia were plotting to kill the apostle Paul
- Farewell to the Ephesian elders (Acts 20:17-38):
 - The Spirit testified that “in every city afflictions and imprisonment awaited him” (v.23)
 - Tychicus witnessed the Spirit-infused bond between Paul and the Ephesian elders, including how much they loved the apostle (v.36)
 - Paul had told them they would never see him again (v.38)
- Philip the Evangelist’s House (Acts 21:7-14)
 - The apostle Paul along with his associates stayed in Philip’s house; Philip had four unmarried daughters who prophesied (v.9)
 - Agabus the prophet came from Judea to give Paul and his companions a visual lesson; he took Paul’s belt, bound his own hands and feet, and told Paul that he would be bound in Jerusalem. The people with Paul begged him not to go to Jerusalem (v.11-14)

Tychicus would have witnessed these exchanges.

Tychicus may have known Titus previously, and may have been the “brother” mentioned in Paul’s second letter to the church in Corinth (2 Corinthians 8:22). If this was the case, Tychicus would have known Paul and Titus prior to Acts 20:4.

2. Tychicus was a Faithful Servant in the LORD (Colossians 4:7-9)

Faithfulness must be a hallmark and defining characteristic of the Christian:

- The Christian is referred to as the bride of Christ (Ephesians 5:22-33). God expects his bride to be faithful to Him.
- The Christian is likened to a son or daughter (Hebrews 12:7-11) who has been adopted and must listen to his Father in heaven (John 17:6, 11).
- The Christian is compared to a servant/slave (Matthew 6:24; Luke 6:46) and is expected to obey his Master Jesus Christ.
- The Christian is a steward who must be found faithful (1 Corinthians 4:2).

Paul in both of his letters to the Ephesians (Ephesians 6:21) and Colossians (Colossians 4:7-9) provides adjectives of Tychicus. He is:

Beloved (agape): The Greek word describes this kind of love as a love that bursts out of one’s heart because of the preciousness of the object loved. This word is only used of Christians who are united with God or with each other in love.

A Brother: referring to eternal kinship between Paul and Tychicus through adoption into the family of God.

Faithful: In the Greek it means “fulness, or trustworthy.”

A Servant: In the Greek, this is where we get “deacon” from. It does not suggest that Tychicus held the office as Deacon but was a “waiter” who was ready to offer help and aid at any time.

In Colossians 4:7-9, the same adjectives are used to describe Tychicus, but Paul includes one more: Fellow-slave. Tychicus was a servant in relation to Paul, but a bondservant with Paul in relation to the LORD.

In both letters, Paul tasked Tychicus to give more details. Paul trusted Tychicus to speak what was true; Paul did not confine Tychicus to just the letters.

Tychicus was the courier for at least two of the four prison epistles (Ephesians, Colossians). He may have delivered Philemon as well. Who is mentioned in Colossians 4:7-9? Tychicus would have met Onesimus while tending to Paul’s need in Rome, during Paul’s first imprisonment (59-62 AD).

Tychicus was so dependable and so reliable, that he was the only one of Paul’s companions who was trusted to relieve Timothy in Ephesus (2 Timothy 4:12) and one of two who was competent and faithful to relieve Titus in Crete (Titus 3:12).

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